

**TAXI PLATES — CAP REMOVAL**

*Statement*

**HON COLIN TINCKNELL (South West)** [5.20 pm]: Tonight I want to make a member's statement regarding the taxi industry. I have had delivered to me a letter from concerned taxidriviers and owners who are currently feeling the full impact of the government drive to reform the on-demand transport industry. If I may, I would like to read this letter out to the house, but before I do, I would like to add that this letter is accompanied by almost 1 000 signatures from taxidriviers and owners who agree with the points raised in this letter. I would also like to bring to the attention of the house that a very large body of people, all of whom clearly feel let down by the government, are voicing their concerns about the budget consultation processes being undertaken in the reform of the transport industry and the measures that are being proposed. These hardworking men and women, who have for many years provided a valuable public service, have paid a heavy price, both financially and mentally, for working within the regulations of the taxi industry. I urge the government to carefully consider the hardships that the current compensation package will confer and further urge that the government honour an agreement given by Hon Rita Saffioti in November 2017 to retain the cap on taxi licences for a further four years. I note that in asking for such a concession, the primary driving force of all these signed letters in support of this position is that it simply would be reduced and even cover their debt. The letter states —

I have put this petition together for you in regard to concerns I have about a recent change made to an offer to taxi owners by The Minister for Transport, Hon Rita Saffioti.

It was announced on 17 March 2018 that the cap for the maximum number of taxi plates in use in Western Australia was to be removed. This is a significant move away from an original offer given by the Hon Rita Saffioti on 02 November 2017, in which it was stated that the cap would be kept in place for 4 years to allow the taxi industry to adjust to the change.

This announcement was a big shock to me, I have spoken to numerous people and through my research I have found that prior to this reversal, there has been next to no consultation with taxi owners, drivers or major taxi bodies. This change will impose considerable hardships on my taxi business and put untold pressure on me and hundreds of taxi operators like me.

As you will see from the below/attached signatures that there are many others who will also be adversely affected by this recent back flip. All of us are feeling the pressure of the current situation, in particular the knowledge that this will cause significant financial hardship and emotional distress. Western Australia is already experiencing a high level of mental health issues, some leading to such drastic measures as suicide. This recent decision will only contribute to the deteriorating mental health of another section of the community through the stress of the financial uncertainty and unfairness of this situation. I believe that the government should be made aware of the impact this will have and should be ashamed of their decision.

There are many who agree with my concerns please find below/attached the signatures of many other concerned taxi operators.

Regards ...

Thank you.