

HILLARYS BOAT HARBOUR — SMALL BUSINESS OPERATORS

Statement by Member for Hillarys

MR P.A. KATSAMBANIS (Hillarys) [12.59 pm]: I rise today to speak on behalf of the business operators at Hillarys Boat Harbour who have been severely impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic and highlight the lack of small business assistance provided by the McGowan government. Prior to the pandemic, many businesses at the boat harbour were already struggling because of the sluggish WA economy. Compounded with the fallout from the COVID-19 health emergency, business at the boat harbour have been decimated. Even when the state government belatedly acted, the landlord structure at the boat harbour meant that many small businesses were not eligible for the one-off electricity credit or for the rent relief offered by the Department of Transport. Many did not qualify for payroll tax waivers, because their payroll was below \$1 million. Even the government's tourism recovery fund specifically excluded many small businesses such as travel agents who operate at the boat harbour.

Other state governments have been proactive and sympathetic to their small business sector. South Australia has provided \$10 000 emergency crash grants to small business operators and New South Wales had a similar support package. The McGowan government has failed our small business sector. If the state government does not step up to assist businesses like the ones at Hillarys Boat Harbour, the three walking trails that the Premier so proudly recently announced will only showcase his lack of help to our small business sector and end up showcasing nothing more than a boulevard of broken dreams, with boarded up shops, destroyed lives and businesses, and destroyed jobs as well. It is just not good enough.

Sitting suspended from 1.00 to 2.00 pm