

GST DISTRIBUTION

3. Ms C.M. ROWE to the Premier:

I refer to WA's hard-fought GST deal, which was achieved through the advocacy of the WA Labor government.

- (1) Can the Premier outline to the house how the Cook Labor government has secured this deal into the future?
- (2) Is the Premier aware of anyone trying to undermine WA's fair share?

Mr R.H. COOK replied:

- (1)–(2) Let me use my first proper question of the day to welcome everyone back to the forty-first Parliament and to the last year of this Parliament sitting. Once again, east coast commentators have been trying to drag down our fair share of the GST. Those east coast commentators enjoy their comfortable lifestyle over there thanks to the engine room of the nation's economy—Western Australia. They are whipping up ways to try to dismantle WA's success and our fair share of the GST. It is incredible that after everything the state of Western Australia has done for this nation, those people are still trying to bite the hand that feeds them. Those east coast commentators have no idea about the realities of the Western Australian economy and WA's contribution to the nation. Today we have a fair share of the GST. It is a deal that means we get 70¢ back for every GST dollar. It has been breathtakingly labelled as corrupt by some east coast commentators. Those same commentators attempt to undermine WA's hard-fought success and our mining industry that delivers jobs and opportunities for all Australians. If it were not for our determination, endeavour and great leadership, the resources boom that we continue to enjoy would not have been enjoyed under those on the other side. Their activities and commentary are undermining investment in Australia and undermining not just Western Australian jobs, but also Australian jobs.

I am happy to say that Western Australia's share of the GST is guaranteed; it is locked in. That is a public guarantee, a written guarantee and a national cabinet guarantee. It is a guarantee that Prime Minister Anthony Albanese stands behind. This agreement was achieved because of the relentless advocacy of this WA Labor government. We know that the Liberal and National Parties locked us into a dud of a GST deal. In 1998, former Liberal leader Colin Barnett said that the GST would be great for Australia and Western Australia. He said in 2006 that the GST deal was sensible and a good piece of economic reform for WA. However, under that deal, which the Liberals and Nationals put together, our share of the GST would have fallen to 10¢ in the dollar. That is what would have happened if not for the 2018 agreement secured by the WA Labor government.

Those commentators overlook a range of issues that I want to put on the record. For the purposes of helping those opposite, we are also educating those on the east coast. For instance, under the fair share deal, WA will receive 70 per cent of its population share of GST in 2023–24, which is still by far the lowest rate of all the states. The next lowest state is Victoria, which will receive 92 per cent. No other state would even contemplate the idea of their share going down to 70 per cent. No state is worse off under the GST reforms. Under the 2018 GST deal, WA has gifted more than \$13 billion in GST to other states and territories. We have sent \$13 billion to the east coast in the past five years. WA Treasury estimates that the cost to the commonwealth of the GST reform is less than half of the increased company tax collections received by the commonwealth as a result of our strong mining industry. Anything it loses in GST it gains in company tax. Our successful export industry is the backbone of the national economy. WA may have only 11 per cent of Australia's population, but, members, we carry the nation.

Our GST deal is secure under my government. East coast commentators can keep typing away on their keyboards, sipping their chardonnays and choking on their foie gras, but nothing will get between my government and our fair share of the GST. That is my guarantee, because we will always do what is right for WA.