

CORONAVIRUS — SMALL BUSINESS GRANTS

**482. Hon COLIN de GRUSSA to the parliamentary secretary representing the Minister for Small Business:**

I refer to the COVID-19 small business lockdown assistance grant and businesses that are currently ineligible to apply for those grants.

- (1) How many pieces of correspondence has the minister received relating to small and medium enterprises missing out on COVID-19 support grants?
- (2) Is the minister considering broadening the COVID-19 support grants to businesses that are currently ineligible, such as allied health professionals, boutique clothing stores, tavern owners, wine cellar door operations and printing companies?
- (3) What action is the minister taking to ensure that SMEs such as those in (2) do not fall through the cracks and end up missing out on COVID support?
- (4) Given the likelihood of an extended hard border with the eastern states, has the minister considered long-term solutions to this issue, such as codes of conduct, policies or regulations?
- (5) If yes to (4), what are these, and have they been discussed with the industry bodies or ministers such as the Minister for Commerce; and, if yes, can the minister please provide details?

**Hon MATTHEW SWINBOURN replied:**

I provide the following response on behalf of the Minister for Small Business.

- (1) The minister received 45 pieces of correspondence relating to small and medium enterprises whose applications did not meet eligibility for the COVID-19 support grants.
- (2) The McGowan government's \$3 000 small business lockdown assistance grants program is a dedicated program designed to deliver one-off cash flow assistance to small businesses operating in the sectors most impacted by the restrictions. The program is in addition to the more than \$1.3 billion of COVID-19 assistance the McGowan government has provided to Western Australian businesses, which has included electricity bill relief, payroll tax and business licence fee waivers, grants and other industry-specific measures. For the member's benefit, taverns are eligible for the assistance grant.
- (3) The state government's strong approach to COVID-19 has enabled WA to return to pre-lockdown life quickly, without the need for venue and crowd limits, mask wearing or other disruptions to small businesses. As we have experienced in WA, necessary, short, circuit-breaking lockdowns allow small businesses to return to normal trade as quickly as possible.
- (4)–(5) It is unclear what the member is referring to with these questions. The member is respectfully requested to rephrase them.