

RESIDENTIAL HOUSING

11. Ms L. METTAM to the Premier:

I have a supplementary question. Following the collapse of another WA builder, will the Premier now admit that his government's \$30 million head contractor relief scheme has been a total failure?

Mr M. McGOWAN replied:

No. We worked with the Master Builders Association and it was very excited and happy about that activity that we took. I have spoken to it. It was very excited by it and its view is that it has worked. But sometimes, as has always happened under every government, businesses will become insolvent for one reason or another. That has been the history of the construction sector. We have put in place a whole range of measures to support the construction sector over our time in office. They include the deed retention trust program for the majority of construction projects over \$1 million, which is the first of its kind in Australia; the anti-phoenixing measures to stop builders who go bankrupt and then just start again the next week to ensure that so-called dodgy builders do not come back in; the expansion of the retention trust scheme; shorter payment time frames; and government being more available for alliance contracting and also for topping up some of those projects for which the cost of construction has climbed, and we have certain funds set aside for those purposes. The cost of construction has climbed. The price of steel has doubled or tripled. The price of timber has doubled or tripled. A lot of things have occurred because of factors outside of our control, predominantly the Russian invasion of Ukraine, the demand pressures caused by COVID around the world and the disruption of supply chains. The one thing that members can have faith in is that this government is actually doing something about it. We do not just whinge like the Liberal Party does every time a new development comes along. We actually get out there and we make things happen.

Ms L. Mettam interjected.

The SPEAKER: Order, please!

Mr M. McGOWAN: I was driving through the western suburbs the other day and I saw the Blackburne development in Peppermint Grove. Do members know who will live in it? People downsizing in the western suburbs are the ones who will live there. Then I drove through Subiaco and I saw the new high-rise there that the member for Cottesloe opposed. There it was, coming out of the ground. Do members know who will live in that? It will be people downsizing or younger people wanting to live in Subiaco and enjoy the lifestyle. Then I looked at Princess Margaret Hospital for Children, which is not there. I did not look at it, because it is not there; I looked at the site, and I looked at Subiaco Oval, which is also not there. I looked at those things, and over the next few years, they will have that medium-density exciting development, so lots of people will live there. Do members know what will happen then? All the shops, restaurants and bars will be lively and fun, like they are in the centre of Sydney and Melbourne. What is wrong with that? Why does the Liberal Party always oppose that? Why does the party of capitalism hate capitalism? What is wrong with you? Liberal Party members do not really know what they stand for.

Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: Order, please, members!