

FUTURE MINES CENTRE — FEDERAL LABOR POLICY

**172. Mrs J.M.C. STOJKOVSKI to the Minister for Mines and Petroleum:**

Before I start, on behalf of the member for Southern River, I acknowledge the group from Thornlie Christian College in the public gallery today.

I refer to the McGowan Labor government's commitment to driving jobs in the resources sector and ensuring that Western Australia is at the forefront of mining, technology and innovation.

- (1) Can the minister advise the house what the federal Labor opposition's commitment to establish an Australian future mines centre in Perth if it wins the next election would mean to the state?
- (2) Can he advise whether he is aware of any federal government commitment to set up a similar centre?

**Mr W.J. JOHNSTON replied:**

- (1)–(2) I am very pleased to answer that question. I was very pleased to hear today Bill Shorten's announcement that a future Labor government would establish an Australian future mines centre here in Western Australia. In an absolutely fabulous decision, the Shorten Labor Party will support Western Australia with a \$46 million contribution to an Australian future mines centre. Mr Shorten announced the intention of an Australian future mines centre recently at the Resources Week dinner in Canberra and it was welcomed by everybody in the industry. I am very pleased that he has today announced that such a centre will come to Western Australia because we are the centre for mining in Australia; indeed, we are the global centre for mining. This is in great contrast with the current government, which, when it set up METS Ignited to support research, development and marketing in the mining equipment, technology and services sector, placed it in Brisbane where the minister lives rather than in Western Australia where the industry lives. I am very disappointed that the current government has ignored Western Australia's mining sector. I have warned the federal government that its mining strategy should not get in the way of Western Australia's successful industry. The position I have put to the federal government is that I am happy to see support for mining in other states, but it cannot be done at the expense of Western Australia. If it is done at the expense of Western Australia—if we divert resources to Tasmania, Victoria or South Australia away from WA—it is the nation that suffers. I am disappointed that METS Ignited is housed in Queensland, but I am very pleased that the Shorten Labor Party has promised to bring the Australian future mines centre to Western Australia. Remember: future mines will be deeper, under cover and harder to find, so this is a very important initiative.

I want to finish by saying that when the current Prime Minister returns to Western Australia next week for Liberal Party fundraising, I invite him to announce that he is supporting the Future Battery Industries Cooperative Research Centre for Western Australia, because that is the best place for it. Perhaps when members on the other side are at those fundraising dinners with the Prime Minister next week, they can ask him to make the announcement and give Western Australia the —

Several members interjected.

**The SPEAKER:** Member for Dawesville, I know you do a lot of bike riding, but not a lot of talking goes with it; I call you to order for the first time.

**Mr W.J. JOHNSTON:** When the Prime Minister is here next week for the series of fundraising events, I want to make sure that the Liberal members on the other side of the chamber put pressure on him to make the announcement that Western Australia is going to get the CRC for future battery industries.