

ANIMAL ACTIVISM — SMALL BUSINESSES

**279. Mr R.S. LOVE to the Minister for Small Business:**

I refer to recent incidents of extreme activist behaviour across Australia, and I draw the minister's attention to the fate of the Gippy Goat Cafe in Victoria that was forced to close its doors permanently after months of constant threats and harassment.

- (1) What steps has the state government taken to protect Western Australian small businesses that are operating legally from these extremist groups?
- (2) Has this support been communicated to Western Australia's small business sector?

**Mr P. PAPALIA replied:**

I thank the member for his question.

- (1)–(2) I think there have been several responses to this matter by the Premier, the Minister for Police and even the Attorney General. As the member knows, we, as a government, condemn this sort of behaviour. We have defended our farmers and our other small businesses. I hear the Premier doing it all the time. In fact, only yesterday I was at a press conference where the Premier responded to a question about this matter. He stated publicly that there should be no disruption of small businesses like cafes and farms. He condemned it and we will use the full force of the law to respond to it. The Attorney General is investigating alternative measures to increase the response.

That aside, I do not think there has been any shortage of response to our small business community about the matter. We as a government absolutely condemn that sort of behaviour. We absolutely defend our small businesses and a farmer's right to carry out lawful activities. I find it extraordinary that the member would refer to a cafe in Victoria as though I am somehow going to be able to give him some detailed response about that matter. It is interesting that the member is grasping for matters. I commend him for his innovation in searching out any matter around the nation that we may be able to comment on, but I assure members that we are responding to this matter as appropriate and using all the powers of the government and the law.