

PLANNING REFORMS

**476. Mrs J.M.C. STOJKOVSKI to the Minister for Planning:**

I refer to the McGowan Labor government's landmark reforms to planning law that will drive economic activity as the state recovers from the impacts of COVID-19.

- (1) Can the minister outline to the house what will be the next stage in delivering this government's comprehensive package of planning reforms and how they will support local jobs and businesses?
- (2) Can the minister advise the house whether she is aware of anyone who wants to compromise or undermine this government's efforts to support the state's economic recovery?

**Ms R. SAFFIOTI replied:**

I thank the member for Kingsley for her question and, of course, her interest in planning, given her substantial experience in that area.

- (1)–(2) First of all, I put on record my thanks to everyone in this house and the upper house who supported the Planning and Development Amendment Bill 2020, which we have just passed through this house. This is very important legislation to drive jobs and economic activity in this state. I put on record my thanks to the Liberal Party and the Nationals WA for their positive engagement and to the crossbench in particular in the upper house who put forward some amendments and also worked with us to get this bill through. I thank everybody.

I also thank my team, in particular Kathy Bonus, Stephen Ferguson and Gail McGowan from the department; David McFerran and Emma in my office; John Carey, the parliamentary secretary; and also the Premier and cabinet for their support for what is very significant legislation.

This legislation of course will help streamline approvals in WA and really drive new projects to drive jobs in WA. As part of the negotiations, the threshold for projects going into the significant pathway has dropped to \$20 million for the metropolitan area and \$5 million for regional WA. That will probably see more projects go through that significant pathway. It was a negotiated outcome and I think it will do a lot to create more jobs in WA. We are now moving to establish that team in the department. The new assessment team is being established as we speak. We are also making sure that we draft the necessary regulations as soon as possible to have them in place, particularly the measures to cut small business costs and also to facilitate a smoother approvals process. I think this pathway will really help drive jobs and new projects in WA.

Of course, as part of our economic confidence and our confidence in the community, one of the key reasons that WA is moving forward rapidly is the hard borders in this state. And there are many who are trying to break that by challenging that. Yesterday, I described the many times the Leader of the Opposition has called for us to abandon the hard borders in Western Australia. Many times, both in this house and also through the media, there is quote after quote after quote about getting rid of that border and, if we did that, of course that would undermine confidence in our economy and in our community.

Other people out there are trying to challenge those hard borders, including, for example, Clive Palmer who has put forward a High Court challenge in relation to the borders. We understand that he is now supported by the federal government, members, in trying to undermine our stance on the borders. The question is: what is the WA Liberal Party's stance on the Clive Palmer challenge? Does the Leader of the Opposition support the Clive Palmer challenge in the High Court? Does the WA Liberal Party support the Clive Palmer challenge? No response. Obviously, it might do. It might already have had negotiations; we do not know that. Maybe they have compared notes. Does the Liberal Party support the challenge?

**Mr Z.R.F. Kirkup:** We cannot be asked a question in question time, Speaker.

**The SPEAKER:** But you cannot ask me a question either!

**Ms R. SAFFIOTI:** I think it is incumbent on the opposition today to outline whether they support the High Court challenge. Do they line up with Christian Porter and the federal Liberal Party who are challenging the validity of our borders in the High Court?