

LOCAL GOVERNMENT RATES — INCREASES

381. Mr P. PAPALIA to the Premier:

Firstly, I acknowledge in the public gallery the students and teachers from Kolbe Catholic College in the member for Rockingham's electorate.

I refer to the huge increase in rates by councils around Western Australia, including 8.9 per cent in Rockingham, 7.9 per cent in Joondalup, and 10 per cent in Albany.

- (1) Will the Premier accept responsibility on behalf of the government for these massive increases incurred because of this government's huge water, electricity, waste and emergency service levy increases?
- (2) Will the Premier apologise to ratepayers around Western Australia for these massive imposts?
- (3) Will the Premier now remove the outrageous landfill levy tax grab to ease the burden on Western Australian households?

Mr C.J. BARNETT replied:

- (1)–(3) I actually agree with the member for Warnbro that some rate increases are extraordinarily high. Although an increase in the price of electricity and in landfill levies are factors, in no way do they account for the increase in some council rates. I am a bit disturbed that some local councils have taken it upon themselves to issue rate notices that include statements that blame the state government for the rate increases. I will remind local government that their powers are not shared powers; rather, they are powers delegated to them by the state government. I will remind local governments of their responsibilities. The member for Warnbro has a point: some rate increases have been high. If he really wanted to do some work, he should calculate the component of the rate increases that can be attributed to each source. If he did that, he would be doing the work of a member of Parliament. He should take a sample of local governments and ask them to disaggregate their rate charges. In doing that, he would be doing some work.