

SENIORS — COST-OF-LIVING INCREASES

**305. Mrs L.M. HARVEY to the Minister for Seniors and Ageing:**

I refer the minister to the massive cost-of-living increases imposed by his government.

**Ms R. Saffioti** interjected.

**Mrs L.M. HARVEY:** He was asleep. I wanted to wake him up.

Several members interjected.

**The SPEAKER:** Members, you will show respect for the minister. You might think he was sleeping, but he said he was reading. You will have respect —

**Dr M.D. Nahan** interjected.

**The SPEAKER:** Leader of the Opposition, you might think it is funny, but I do not. He is a minister of the Crown and you will respect him. Member for Scarborough, ask your question again.

**Mrs L.M. HARVEY:** Thank you. Minister, I meant no disrespect.

**Ms S.E. Winton** interjected.

**The SPEAKER:** Member for Wanneroo, I call you to order for the first time. Member, start again.

**Mrs L.M. HARVEY:** I refer to the massive cost-of-living increases imposed by the government, including the more than 30 per cent increases in electricity bills imposed on struggling pensioners in one year alone. Why does the minister refuse to stand up for seniors in Western Australia when the government imposes such increases and when will he stand up to oppose Bill Shorten's attack on those seniors who have tried to provide for themselves in retirement?

**Mr M.P. MURRAY replied:**

I thank the member for the question. I was a little distracted because it is the first question I have had about seniors this year. I was a bit shocked to say the least; in fact, I was very, very shocked.

**Ms L. Mettam** interjected.

**The SPEAKER:** Member for Vasse, I call you to order for the third time.

**Mr M.P. MURRAY:** I can tell members one thing: our government takes seniors and the issue of elder abuse very, very seriously, unlike the federal government, which has provided no funds to address that issue at all. We also understand that some seniors out there are doing it tough and we have put programs in place to help them. We also had a seniors summit, if I can call it that, at which we called all the departments together to work out what we can do moving forward. We are doing further work to see what we can do in the budget—members will have to wait for that time will come—to help seniors in the future, unlike the former government, which left them behind.