

INTERNATIONAL EDUCATION STRATEGY

839. Mr C.J. TALLENTIRE to the Premier:

I refer to the McGowan Labor government's comprehensive plan for jobs including its \$2 million investment to implement the state's first international education strategy. Can the Premier outline to the house how this strategy will help to drive growth in the number of international students and make Perth a key destination for study, and advise how the international education sector has responded to this strategy, which is something the Liberal-National government failed to deliver in eight and a half years?

Mr M. McGOWAN replied:

I thank the member for Thornlie for the question. Prior to answering the question, on behalf of all members I pass on our thoughts and regards to the Minister for Tourism, Paul Papalia, whose mother unfortunately passed away at the weekend. His mother, Edna, passed away after a long illness. He is not here today and he may not be here for this week.

During the course of the election campaign, we committed to putting in place a long-term strategy for international students. That strategy has been worked up in conjunction with education providers and industry bodies. I must say that the new head of StudyPerth, Rod Jones, an eminent Western Australian and a very significant person when it comes to international education, has assisted us in putting this strategy together. The strategy recognises that students pick their destination first and their institution second. I launched the strategy last week at a major industry event. It basically sets out that Perth, Western Australia, is a wonderful place to live, learn and launch a career. The strategy has more than 20 actions and commitments to increase our share of international students, with a more coordinated approach with StudyPerth members for destination marketing, establishing a one-stop shop to provide students with information, advice and assistance, building on our educational strengths in areas that are critical to the future of the home countries of students and expanding work experience and placement programs for international students. We have allocated \$2 million to deliver this strategy, as we committed to at the election. Indeed, StudyPerth is working with institutions to try to secure more financial support so that there are joint programs and it is not just the government funding these sorts of initiatives, because, obviously, with institutions private and public, there is a significant benefit to them. For the first time, Western Australia has a strategy to attract international students.

Ms L. Mettam interjected.

The SPEAKER: Member for Vasse!

Mr M. McGOWAN: There was no strategy before under the former government—there was nothing there. We have Rod Jones, an eminent Western Australian—probably someone the opposition will attack, because that is the way it acts—heading up StudyPerth with a real strategy and real money to drive international student growth in WA.