

SENIORS AND DISABILITY PENSIONERS — TRAVEL CONCESSIONS

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

I refer to the Premier's comments during estimates about a Liberal Party election policy.

Mr D.A. Templeman interjected.

The SPEAKER: Member for Mandurah, there are other opportunities in this place to ask the question you are asking. I formally call you for the first time. I ask the member for Gosnells to start again.

Mr C.J. TALLENTIRE: Thank you, Mr Speaker.

I refer to the Premier's comment during estimates when he said about a Liberal Party election policy, "I thought it was an ill thought out proposal during an election campaign." I ask the Premier about another election commitment. Notably missing from the budget papers is any funding towards extending free travel for seniors and disability pensioners to 24 hours a day, seven days a week. Given that the government committed in the election to review the seniors travel concession up to 24/7 within six months, I ask —

- (1) When will this review be made public?
- (2) When will seniors be able to access this unlimited free travel?
- (3) Does the Premier believe that this is another ill-thought-out proposal?

Mr C.J. BARNETT replied:

- (1)–(3) The government introduced free travel for seniors and those with disabilities and other status from 9.00 am to 3.30 pm, longer hours than those contemplated by the former government. The member comes with some environmental credentials. I thought he would be very conscious of the need to spread the passenger load on the public transport system. If free travel was provided 24/7, we would have seniors—retired people if we like—travelling in peak hours, which would add to congestion and other environmental problems. The purpose of free travel for Seniors Card holders during 9.00 am to 3.30 pm is to provide an extended period of time and encourages those people to choose to travel in non-peak periods so that the infrastructure is used to its greater capacity and the environmental impact is minimised. It is a good result; a far more generous one than that contemplated by the Labor Party and, I must say, it is very warmly received by Seniors Card holders in Western Australia. It is a fantastic reform. The member for Gosnells, as a person who claims to have environmental credentials, should be endorsing and supporting it.