

LIVING WAGE PROPOSAL — FEDERAL LABOR POLICY

238. Ms L. METTAM to the Minister for Small Business:

I have a supplementary question. At what point will the McGowan government stand up and support small and family business owners across WA who are doing it tough, are working long hours, have taken great financial risks and have put their homes on the line to employ people?

Mr P. PAPALIA replied:

It is extraordinary that the Liberal Party of Western Australia, having put up land tax three times, which had a flow-on effect to small businesses right across the state far in excess of any threat that might be represented by people getting a living wage, has suddenly discovered the small business sector. Congratulations—it is a good thing that members opposite are so desperate that they are now grasping a federal campaign and pretending they have any interest at all in small businesses.

Dr M.D. Nahan interjected.

The SPEAKER: Leader of the Opposition, I have warned you three times. I call you to order for the first time.

Mr P. PAPALIA: If they had an interest in small businesses, members opposite would have done something about the subcontractors who suffered under the previous government. The Leader of the Opposition was the minister who said that the previous government could not do anything about subcontractors who were not paid by prime contractors for government contracts. We are solving that problem. The opposition asks us what we are doing for small businesses. We are solving the problem that the former minister over there failed to even respond to. Thousands of people lost their businesses, many lost their homes, and some people took their own lives because of the inaction of the Leader of the Opposition when he was responsible for looking after small businesses.

The SPEAKER: Before the member for Perth pops up, I would like to acknowledge staff and students from Harvey Primary School, on behalf of Robyn Clarke, MLA.