

**SMALL BUSINESS FRIENDLY LOCAL GOVERNMENTS INITIATIVE**

*Statement by Minister for Small Business*

**MR P. PAPALIA (Warnbro — Minister for Small Business)** [12.09 pm]: I rise briefly to bring members' attention to a fantastic partnership between the state and local government sectors and to their combined efforts to help support and grow small businesses in WA. Local governments play a significant role in the life cycle of small businesses as they oversee approvals for planning, signage and trade. Fortunately, many local governments recognise the critical role they play and are proactively working to make it easier for businesses to open, run and thrive in their towns, cities and regions. I wish to specifically acknowledge the 24 local governments that are currently participating in the Small Business Friendly Local Governments initiative. In the metropolitan area, we have Armadale, Cambridge, Canning, Claremont, East Fremantle, Gosnells, Joondalup, Kwinana, Melville, Stirling, Subiaco and Victoria Park. From regional WA, we have Brookton, Bunbury, Busselton, Chittering, Collie, Dandaragan, Kalgoorlie–Boulder, Karratha, Nannup, Narrogin, Northam and Waroona. Collectively, these local government areas are home to 40.5 per cent of all small businesses in the state. This means that close to 90 000 small businesses are reaping the rewards of local governments that have made the commitment to value, support and work with their small business communities.

I would like to congratulate the Small Business Development Corporation, which tirelessly works to support small businesses in this state. The SBDC developed and oversees the initiative and is working closely with these local governments to make it easier for small businesses to start, grow and prosper. The government recognises the importance of the small business sector to the state's economy and to employment, and has made small business a priority under the WA plan for jobs. We are actively working to boost opportunities for small businesses to compete for government contracts through the Western Australian Jobs Act 2017, which established the Western Australian industry participation strategy. We are also making good progress with liquor reforms and growing our state's tourism industry.

The Small Business Friendly Local Governments initiative is another great way the government is collaborating with the local government sector to bring some great results for WA's small business community.