

PERTH PARKING LEVY

Statement

HON SIMON O'BRIEN (South Metropolitan — Minister for Transport) [9.58 pm]: I take note of what the honourable member just said. I do not know whether it was implied by anything he said—I am sure he is familiar with the legislation—or whether he was not intending to imply that the levy applies to the parking space of an individual in his or her own private residential property, irrespective of whether it is strata titled. There are a number of automatic exemptions from the Perth parking levy. These exemptions include residential parking and they also apply to businesses with six or fewer parking spaces. That means that the vast majority of businesses in the area affected are, in fact, exempt from the Perth parking management levy. The member indicated that he was not, as I thought he was not, implying that the people suffering in the way that he described were doing so because of their residential arrangements. I just pause on that so that no members here and no observers of *Hansard* are under any impression that that is the case, because it is not.

Hon Ken Travers: I think I made the comment at the beginning about long-term parking bays, and I thought that was clear. I am referring to those bays which are covered under the act and which are commercial, not residential.

Hon SIMON O'BRIEN: Indeed, they are commercial, and I am making it explicit that they have to be. That is just one criterion. Most businesses are not subject to a levy, and no residents are. I think that is now quite explicit.

However, I take note of the substantive matter that the member raised. I notice that he indicated that he has had a constituent make this complaint to him.

Hon Ken Travers: Yes.

Hon SIMON O'BRIEN: I do not care if it is one constituent or more; he is free to refer them from his own office to me directly, as minister, and I will make inquiry and respond. I will also undertake to seek some further information about the other matters that he has raised. Compassion, which is the term that he used over and over again, is not a commodity that this government is short of or that I am short of. At the same time, there are also some other responsibilities that governments have to make sure that when a law is applied to people who are required, for example, to pay a levy, it is applied equally to everyone who is obliged to pay such a levy. Nonetheless, I will examine the matter. However, I cannot let the moment pass without asserting that this is a government which is capable of compassion and which exhibits it in all its policies. At the same time, I reject the notion that we are a business that victimises small government. I think that is a claim which is easily made but which does not stack up to examination. Nonetheless, I note what the member has raised, and it will be responded to.