

CANNABIS — LEGALISATION

**1026. Hon Dr BRIAN WALKER to the parliamentary secretary representing the Minister for Racing and Gaming:**

I refer the minister to a recent academic paper, published in the journal *Health Policy*, which shows that for every dollar spent on legalised recreational cannabis across seven Canadian regions, a drop of between 74¢ and 84¢ was seen in alcohol sales.

- (1) Is the Cook government committed to tackling the health and economic impacts of excessive alcohol use in Western Australia, and regional Western Australia in particular?
- (2) If yes to (1), what is being done to further that goal?
- (3) Will the government consider a regional trial here in Western Australia, allowing cannabis to be consumed legally, so as to monitor the impacts of such a move on problematic alcohol consumption and associated antisocial behaviour; and, if not, why not?

**Hon DARREN WEST replied:**

I thank the member for some notice of the question. On behalf of the Minister for Racing and Gaming, I provide the following answer.

- (1) Yes.
- (2) A number of policy interventions are underway to reduce the impacts of excessive alcohol use in Western Australia. This includes the provision in section 175 of the Liquor Control Act 1988 for dry communities. There are 26 communities across Western Australia that have elected to be dry communities, with no sale or consumption of alcohol. Under section 64 of the act, liquor restrictions are implemented across multiple towns. The banned drinkers register and takeaway alcohol management systems are implemented in towns with daily alcohol limits. The banned drinkers register is currently in place in the Kimberley, Pilbara, goldfields, Carnarvon and Gascoyne Junction, following the passage of new legislation through Parliament—the Liquor Control Amendment (Banned Drinker Register) Bill 2023. There is also the implementation of carriage limits in the Kimberley region and the Shire of Carnarvon to support liquor restrictions and combat sly grogging.
- (3) No. It is not a priority of the Cook Labor government to modify the existing laws and penalties in place regarding cannabis possession and use.