

PUBLIC TRANSPORT — COST-OF-LIVING RELIEF — C-SERIES RAILCARS

230. Mrs L.A. MUNDAY to the Minister for Transport:

I refer to the Cook Labor government's commitment to public transport, including cheaper fares and the return of local railcar manufacturing to WA.

- (1) Can the minister outline to the house how this government's policies are relieving pressure on household budgets and creating more Western Australian jobs?
- (2) Can the minister please advise the house how these policies compare with the Liberal Party's new plan to increase public transport fares and move local manufacturing jobs out of WA?

Ms R. SAFFIOTI replied:

- (1)–(2) I thank the member for the question. We on this side of the house know that the Labor Party has supported public transport over many decades. That could not be demonstrated more than by what we have already done over two terms, including building Metronet and bringing railcar manufacturing back to Western Australia, and introducing free public transport on Sundays, free public transport travel for students and, of course, capped fares. As we have discussed many times, in relation to the cost of living, which the opposition keeps ignoring, it means we are delivering thousands of dollars in savings to families in our outer suburbs. We know that the Nationals WA does not care about the suburbs. It hates it when we deliver services to the suburbs. We know that the Liberal Party does not like public transport; it is in its DNA that it hates public transport. If anyone listened to the MPI yesterday, they would have realised that that hatred is worse than ever. It completely ran down our new rail lines to places such as Byford, Ellenbrook, Canning Vale and Yanchep.

It hates Metronet. Yesterday we saw another chapter in what a Liberal government would do to public transport in WA. The member for Vasse said that we should be making trains in Queensland, saying it is better for the national economy to be making trains in Queensland than Western Australia. The Liberal Party is against local manufacturing. This is the party that tried to build the Matagarup Bridge in Malaysia. Then it lost it. It could not find it; it was on a container somewhere. Yesterday the Liberal Party said that building trains in Queensland added to national economic activity. The Liberal Party is against building trains in Western Australia—a new insight. Yesterday, we heard the same from the member for Cottesloe.

Members may recall that the previous Barnett government had a policy to increase public transport fares to reduce the level of subsidies to 50 per cent. Yesterday the member for Cottesloe said that our subsidies on public transport are too high. How do we change that? If the Liberal Party wins government, it will increase public transport fares. It will remove the two-zone fare cap.

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It will remove free public transport for students and there will be no free public transport on Sundays if the Liberal Party is elected. When the member stands up, like he did yesterday, there are consequences for what he says. If he says the subsidy is too high, it means the opposition will increase public transport fares for all the people of Dawesville, Mandurah, Byford and Ellenbrook. They will all have increased public transport fares.

I do not know whether members saw the graph produced by the member for Cottesloe yesterday. Now we know why the printer has broken down; the member for Cottesloe was out there and even the opposition's printer could not handle what was being produced yesterday! Again, yesterday: increased public transport fares and taking manufacturing away from Western Australia. Nationals WA members want to appeal to densely populated areas, but they cannot even bring themselves to like public transport. They try, but they cannot do it.

It is very, very clear. This is a party that closed the Midland workshops and closed the Fremantle train line. It committed to the Ellenbrook rail line and did not deliver it over eight years. It broke a commitment to MAX light rail, after the then Premier said, "Buy real estate on the alignment"! That is the record of members opposite. Yesterday we saw the way they say "public transport"—like they are spitting poison! They cannot even say it properly. We have seen what the Liberal Party will do to the mums, dads and families of Western Australia if it ever wins government again.