

HEMP — BEES — RESEARCH

**69. Hon Dr BRIAN WALKER to the Minister for Agriculture and Food:**

I refer the minister to the recent welcome news that a new species of native bee, *Leioproctus zephyr*, has been discovered right here in Perth's Kings Park and named by Dr Kit Prendergast from Curtin University. Given the importance of pollinator-friendly crops to the maintenance of bee colonies across our state, I ask the following.

- (1) Is the minister aware that the bee's relationship to the hemp plant has been described as "nothing less than a beautiful love story", with recent research in the journal of the Entomological Society of America showing a solid correlation between high numbers of hemp plants and the abundance and diversity of bees visiting them?
- (2) Has any research been undertaken by the Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development to monitor bee populations in and around our own hemp-producing areas in Western Australia; and, if not, will the minister consider commissioning such research, given the pivotal role that a healthy bee population plays across our entire ecosystem?

**Hon JACKIE JARVIS replied:**

I thank the honourable member for some notice of the question.

- (1) No, but I thank the member for bringing that to my attention.
- (2) The Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development undertakes surveillance activities on bees for biosecurity purposes to monitor for exotic pest incursions and colony health. In Australia, hemp is predominantly a wind-pollinated crop. Insects are not required in the pollination process.