

LAND ADMINISTRATION ACT — REFORM

800. Ms L. DALTON to the Minister for Lands:

I refer to the McGowan Labor government's commitment to driving economic development in Western Australia and diversifying the state's economy.

- (1) Can the minister outline to the house how this government's reforms to the Land Administration Act will deliver greater opportunities for investment in renewable energy and carbon farming?
- (2) Can the minister advise the house what these reforms will mean for native title holders?

Dr A.D. BUTI replied:

- (1)–(2) I thank the member for Geraldton, a very positive member from the regions, unlike some of the members over the other side. I thank her for that question.

Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: Order, please, members! I know you are all very entertained with your own comments, but I would like to hear from the minister.

Dr A.D. BUTI: Members, I cannot overstate the significance of the proposed reforms to the Land Administration Act. These are reforms that multiple governments over many, many decades have sought to address, and it is only the McGowan government that has come up with a reform package that we believe is appropriate to go forward to try to reach our zero emissions date by 2050. I would like to thank the Minister for Environment; Climate Action for her support with regard to these reforms.

As we know, Western Australia is a very vast landscape and we have a vast expanse of unallocated crown land and pastoral lands, but unfortunately under the act, pastoral leases can only be used for pastoral activity. As the Leader of the Opposition would know, Terry Redman, Minister for Lands under the previous administration, tried to bring in reforms but was unsuccessful, but we believe we will be very successful because we have followed a very careful process and will continue with our consultation in this area. Some of the reforms that we seek to do with the changes to the Land Administration Act are to ensure there is a diversification lease in the act that will allow this vast array of land to be used for purposes other than livestock grazing. In other words, we can use it for renewable energy sources. It will be economically beneficial for pastoralists, and will also provide opportunities for traditional owners to engage in ecological tourism. It will also provide great opportunities for hydrogen, wind and carbon farming. These are initiatives that will also diversify our economy. It was either the member for Moore or the member for Cottesloe who brought a motion of public importance about a month ago to say that we need to diversify our economy. These amendments will go towards that, so when we introduce this legislation into this place, we of course will be expecting their full support. This is a government that takes seriously the challenges going forward, whether they are in regard to diversifying the economy or ensuring that pastoralists have a viable plan going forward.

Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: Order, please, members!

Dr A.D. BUTI: Other measures that we are looking at in regard to these amendments are not just a diversification lease but also changes to the rent methodology to ensure that we reduce the volatility in that process. Hopefully, if members have been listening to pastoralists, they will understand that they are very concerned about the volatility in the rent that they pay for their pastoral leases. We will be working on that and linking it to the consumer price index to be reviewed every 10 years. We will also be looking at the opportunity to extend leases up to 50 years, which is incredibly important, so that pastoralists will be able to apply for commonwealth funding in regard to renewable projects. These amendments have been long asked for and only this government will deliver them.