

LGBTQIA+ INCLUSION STRATEGY

222. Mr S.N. AUBREY to the Minister for Youth:

I refer to the Cook Labor government's recent announcement of a new whole-of-government LGBTQIA+ inclusion strategy.

- (1) Can the minister advise the house how a coordinated whole-of-government approach will promote equality and see better outcomes for LGBTQIA+ Western Australians?
- (2) Can the minister outline to the house how this strategy is being developed in consultation with the LGBTQIA+ community?

Ms H.M. BEAZLEY replied:

- (1)–(2) I thank the member for Scarborough for the question and acknowledge his continued advocacy in this space. It was a pleasure to join the members for Scarborough and Nedlands, as well as the member for the Mining and Pastoral Region in the other place, recently to celebrate the announcement alongside members of our LGBTQIA+ community. Our government believes that equality and freedom from discrimination are fundamental human rights that belong to all people, regardless of sexual orientation or gender identity. Unfortunately, we know that lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, intersex, asexual and plus people can often face discrimination, stigma and social exclusion because of their sexual orientation or gender identity, which can contribute to poorer health, social, economic and mental health outcomes. That is why the Cook Labor government has committed \$900 000 to develop our state's first whole-of-government strategy to drive inclusiveness for LGBTQIA+ Western Australians so they experience the full benefits of active social and economic participation throughout all stages of life.

With the development of a comprehensive whole-of-government strategy to support people who identify as LGBTQIA+, the Cook government proudly continues its commitment to equity and inclusion in WA, which underpins our government's commitment to valuing all people who live and work in our great state. Just today, the Premier and the Attorney General announced that trans and gender-diverse Western Australians will no longer be required to undergo medical or surgical reassignment to formally register a change of sex or gender under proposed reforms to be introduced in Parliament this week. That is because the Cook Labor government will always do what is right by WA and our LGBTQIA+ community. Our government's inclusion strategy will be led by the Department of Communities and complement existing state strategies that already support LGBTQIA+ inclusion in specific areas such as youth and health. To support the development and implementation of the strategy, funding will be provided to three not-for-profit community organisations over two years. They are Living Proud, which provides support to LGBTQIA+ people and communities in WA through peer support information and resources; TransFolk of WA, a peer support service for transgender people and their loved ones in WA that informs, empowers and advocates for trans and gender-diverse people to survive and thrive; and GLBTI Rights in Ageing, or GRAI, a voluntary group that works to enhance quality of life for GLBTI elders, focusing on promoting the voices, expertise and lived experience of older GLBTI people in the wider community. Rainbow Futures WA, a consortium of WA-based LGBTQIA+ organisations and individuals who have advocated tirelessly for this initiative and other related reforms, will also be an important contributor to the development and implementation of the strategy.

These organisations, along with other well connected and trusted community groups, prominent individuals and subject matter experts, will also form part of a reference group currently being established that will advise the Department of Communities how best to engage the LGBTQIA+ community, the associated community services sector and, more broadly, the public and how to encourage cross-organisational perspectives, and will provide organisational and personal expertise and experience from the LGBTQIA+ community to best inform the development of the strategy. The reference group will also drive consultation with the community to ensure that the lives and wellbeing of all LGBTQIA+ Western Australians remain at the core of the strategy's goals. In addition, a peak body will be established and supported to implement the strategy. Through this model, as well as targeted support and strong partnerships, our government's coordinated whole-of-government approach to developing the strategy will mean better integration between government agencies, including the Departments of Communities, Education and Health, and the Mental Health Commission, which will mean better outcomes for LGBTQIA+ Western Australians. Our strategy will complement the important reforms that are currently being led by the Attorney General, like the abolishment of the antiquated Gender Reassignment Board, which will bring WA into line with all other states and territories.

The SPEAKER: Just before I take the next question, Minister for Housing, if you walk into the chamber between the member on their feet and the Speaker, you need to pause and seek permission before taking your seat. The Leader of the Opposition with the last question.

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