

SOCIAL HOUSING — REGIONS

518. Ms L. DALTON to the Minister for Housing:

I refer to the McGowan Labor government's record investment in social housing across Western Australia. Can the minister update the house on how this record investment will help revitalise regional towns in Western Australia, including suburbs such as Spalding in my electorate, and can the minister outline to the house whether he is aware of anyone who does not support this investment in regional Western Australia?

Mr J.N. CAREY replied:

I thank the member for the question. As members are aware, this state government announced the single largest investment in the state's history—\$875 million in social housing, which will amount to \$2.1 billion over the next four years. I am particularly proud that there is also strong investment in the regions; in particular, the targeted regional renewal program. It was great to join the member for Geraldton last week when we announced a \$20 million program for regional renewal. That is about investing in suburbs with high concentrations of social housing to improve the liveability, safety and urban design of the suburbs. This is about good planning and making these places more attractive to live. I am pleased to say that we are investing \$9 million in Spalding, thanks to the advocacy of the local member; \$5 million in Withers, Bunbury; and \$4 million in Spencer Park. The Premier was there this week.

I am pleased to say that we have had a deeply positive response by those local communities and local governments. I note the gung-ho Mayor of the City of Greater Geraldton, who said a big thank you to the newly minted housing minister, John Carey, and MP, Lara Dalton, who have sat through some robust conversations about the need for action and have worked with the City of Greater Geraldton. He also said that this is an absolutely fantastic result for the folk in Spalding. He said that the *Spalding precinct plan* has been spoken about for years, but to have Minister Carey come out and announce a solid commitment of \$9 million, with another million for planning, is extremely exciting for the city.

It is brilliant that our great mate, our great friend, the Mayor of the City of Greater Geraldton, has come out in support. It is disappointing, therefore, that the member for Roe is the only critical voice and the only person to whinge. Last week in the Parliament, he attacked this investment in these regional communities. He complained that the investment is all about, and based around, Labor electorates. I can tell the member for Roe that we represent the majority of regional communities in Western Australia, and we are investing across regional Western Australia. He also attacked the "Collie slush fund", which is about assisting the transition for that community. Here we have the member for Roe, who claims to belong to a party that represents the regions, attacking investment in regional communities. It is extraordinary. The party that claims to represent the bush is attacking the communities of Geraldton, Albany, Bunbury and Collie. We are making serious investments in these communities. There is a clear commitment for social housing, and it is being delivered by a Labor government.