

ROYAL PERTH HOSPITAL PROTECTION BILL 2008

Introduction and First Reading

Bill introduced, on motion by **Dr K.D. Hames (Minister for Health)**, and read a first time.

Explanatory memorandum presented by the minister.

Second Reading

DR K.D. HAMES (Dawesville — Minister for Health) [3.17 pm]: I move —

That the bill be now read a second time.

This government is committed to the retention of Royal Perth Hospital as a tertiary hospital on its present site. The previous government planned to scale back the health and hospital services offered on the site in favour of Fiona Stanley Hospital despite the fact that each year Royal Perth Hospital treats some 73 000 inpatients, receives about 225 000 outpatient attendants and has one of the busiest emergency departments in Australasia, with more than 60 000 presentations a year.

Royal Perth Hospital, which is ideally located for eastern suburbs residents with a rail station at the hospital and easy freeway access from all directions, has been operating for 153 years. It is one of Australia's largest hospitals and has the second-largest trauma workload in the country. Royal Perth Hospital as an institution has a distinguished international record in patient care, teaching and research and hosting Nobel Prize winning research and world-leading experts in clinical care and medical research. This concentration of expertise and history must be retained. The Royal Perth Hospital Protection Bill will do just that.

As members of the house would be aware, Royal Perth Hospital is located on two sites. The first site is in Selby Street, Shenton Park, and is known as Royal Perth Hospital Shenton Park Campus. The second site is the more familiar central business district site, which is located on properties that are bounded by Murray Street, Victoria Square, Lord Street and Moore Street and on land that is subject to the certificate of title volume 1880, folio 491. This bill is designed to protect the functions of the hospital on the central business district site. The Royal Perth Hospital Protection Bill will require the approval of both houses of Parliament before the public hospital situated on that site can be closed. Such an action will put the fate of this major public hospital beyond the whim of a bureaucrat, instead requiring a comprehensive debate in both houses before any closure can occur.

The commitment to maintain the hospital on its present site will not impact upon the development of the Fiona Stanley Hospital nor upon the present heritage listing of various components of the Royal Perth Hospital site or future government plans for the construction of a 400-bed facility with a new wing on the site. Careful planning for the Royal Perth Hospital precinct will ensure that the site remains suitable for the present and future purposes of a public hospital. Similarly, the approval of both houses of Parliament will be required to change the name of this historic public hospital that has served this state for so much of its history.

I commend the bill to the house.

Debate adjourned, on motion by **Mr D.A. Templeman**.