

MAGNETIC RESONANCE IMAGING MACHINE, MEDICARE LICENCE

748. Ms RADISICH to the Minister for Health:

Will the minister please explain how the federal Government's refusal to issue a Medicare licence to operate a magnetic resonance imaging machine at Princess Margaret Hospital for Children is disadvantaging Western Australian children?

Mr KUCERA replied:

Obviously members on the other side of this House put their views above the interests of the children in this State. I thank the member for Swan Hills for her question. I also thank members on this side of the House for taking up the cudgels in a petition directed at the federal Government. I urge every member of this House, including members on the other side of this House, to support the petition, which highlights an inequity that has continued for a decade. For nine years members opposite ignored the children of our State. Like their federal counterparts, members opposite have put profit and footy injuries before the health of the kids of this State. A footy injury is more important to members opposite than a kid with cancer. Will the member for Murdoch support this petition?

Mr Board: I support the provision of an MRI machine for Princess Margaret Hospital. Where is the money we gave to you from AlintaGas? Why don't you spend it? You do not need that licence. You are playing politics.

Mr KUCERA: The member for Murdoch should listen and watch what is happening in Canberra at the moment. It is an absolute disgrace that the federal Government has taken \$5 million from the funding for an asthma program, which no doubt benefits kids, and yet again has put it into a private enterprise. It is putting the interests of private business before the interests of children in this State. The system of allocating the vital equipment that is needed to look after kids' health is being operated in a corrupt way. I have no doubt that this system has been corrupted. The federal Government has put four machines into private hands and has not considered the health of the children in our State. Members opposite are not prepared to stand up and be counted for the children of this State. It is an absolute scandal.