

TELETHON — STATE GOVERNMENT DONATION

**630. Mrs L.M. O'MALLEY to the Premier:**

On behalf of the member for Southern River, I acknowledge Mr Colombini and the students of Ursula Frayne Catholic College, which is the former school of the members for Southern River and Victoria Park.

I refer to the state government's commitment to making Western Australia a world leader in medical research and the record donation of \$11 million it pledged to Telethon this weekend. Can the Premier update the house on what important work this donation will fund and outline how the state government has been able to provide such a significant contribution?

**Mr M. McGOWAN replied:**

I thank the member for Bicton for the question.

I indicate to the house that we are very pleased to be able to make an \$11 million donation, on behalf of the people of the state, to Telethon, which is the biggest donation in the history of Western Australia by a long way. That is going to a very worthy organisation—Telethon—that delivers real health and research outcomes for children not only in Western Australia, but also around Australia and the world.

The donation itself will support 97 grassroots organisations. It will deliver critical services and equipment for children in hospital and will also support health and medical research in Western Australia. On top of that, certain things will be funded as part of this. Professor Fiona Wood is studying the lifelong impacts of paediatric burns on health and why some children cannot respond to vaccines after a burn. There is the preclinical assessment of age-appropriate immunotherapies for childhood cancers led by Telethon Kids Institute and the University of Western Australia, and, as I said, there is a range of organisations that provide equipment, therapy and the like to children suffering from medical conditions or disabilities.

In terms of medical research, as the member is aware, we have an unprecedented record. We established the future health research and innovation fund, which is providing grants of \$80 million for medical research over the first three years. We created the Western Australian office of medical research and the first Minister for Medical Research in Western Australia.

In closing, I acknowledge Telethon. It was a great weekend. I do not know how many people went. It is remarkable how it was done. I thought it was a terrific change to use RAC Arena. The donations, big and small, from people around the state were terrific. I was in the phone room talking to people who were donating \$20 and I was at a function at which people were donating \$1 million. There were lots of donations, big and small. The good thing is that everyone plays a part and puts something in. The event raised \$71.4 million, which is a record by a long, long way. It took 55 years to get to \$500 million; I suspect that it will probably take only another five or six years to get to \$1 billion, so that is a remarkable achievement. I acknowledge the people behind Telethon. There are many, but I especially acknowledge Richard Goyder and Kerry Stokes. As I said, we were very proud to provide \$11 million on behalf of the state and the people of WA.