

PUBLIC SECTOR — WAGES

**646. Ms M.J. DAVIES to the Premier:**

I have a supplementary question. If the offer that has been made is so good and reasonable, why have frontline workers rejected it and why are they planning industrial action, including coming to Parliament to share their anger and frustration?

**Mr M. McGOWAN replied:**

As I said, the Leader of the Opposition is asking a question even though she described the offer as reasonable a matter of a few weeks ago. That is what the Leader of the Opposition said. Sometimes she needs to know when not to ask about things, particularly when she is on the record as endorsing it.

The situation Western Australia is facing is that we are fortunate to be in such a strong position compared with other states and territories and the commonwealth in a world that is very uncertain. Every major indicator is now saying that there is going to be a worldwide recession. Indeed, the United States is already in recession. It is being said that economies all over the world are going to be significantly hit. We need to keep our financial firepower for when that occurs. The offer we have put is more than generous compared with what other states in Australia have made. It reflects the fact that we want to reward the workforce more, but we want to keep some capacity for what could lie ahead.

I understand that the Nationals WA and Liberal Party do not understand responsibility. They showed that last time they were in government. But we are reasonable, responsible, reliable and cautious because that is the world we are in at this time.