

HEALTH — INVESTMENT

754. Dr D.J. HONEY to the Minister for Health:

I refer to the incessant crisis in the health system and the minister's ongoing rhetoric about the Department of Health embarking on the biggest asset investment program in history.

- (1) Given the former coalition government spent \$4.3 billion in its first five years on health asset investment compared with this government's \$1.6 billion, how can the minister justify these claims?
- (2) Is the latest cash injection not just playing catch-up from the miserly investment of \$251 million in 2020–21 and \$379 million in 2021–22?

Ms A. SANDERSON replied:

I have to admit that I am struggling to understand the question —

Dr D.J. Honey interjected.

The SPEAKER: Order, please! You have asked the question.

Ms A. SANDERSON: I know who I would not trust with numbers, and that is the National and Liberal Parties. I would not trust them to count, that is for sure. The investment that the member outlined in the first five years of the Liberal–National government included Fiona Stanley Hospital, which the former Labor government paid for up-front. The Labor government put that money up-front, not the National–Liberal government. It is embarrassing that the member would get on his feet and talk about health spending under the former government when FTE under the former government went backwards by nearly 1 000. The number of health workers went backwards by nearly 1 000 people. We have increased FTE by up to 12 per cent across the board. Our record on investing in the health system is very, very clear. We have a \$3.2 billion asset investment program and the health budget has increased by 30 per cent since we came to government in 2017. That is boots on the ground, bodies in hospitals and people actually working in our healthcare sector. I would not trust the opposition's numbers, and the community certainly does not trust them.