

OLYMPIC AND PARALYMPIC GAMES 2020 — WESTERN AUSTRALIAN ATHLETES —
STATE GOVERNMENT SUPPORT

649. Dr A.D. BUTI to the Minister for Sport and Recreation:

- (1) Can the minister outline to the house how the McGowan Labor government is supporting those aiming to compete at the 2020 Olympic and Paralympic Games, in particular by ensuring that funding from Western Australia goes to Western Australian athletes?
- (2) Can the minister advise the house how this compares with the way Western Australian athletes have been previously supported?

The SPEAKER: Can you get it backdated?

Several members interjected.

Mr M.P. MURRAY replied:

Thank you, member. It is a very good question. It is very good to have a question in this house about sport that has not been written by Ron Alexander! Think that one out. I am sure the member for South Perth knows exactly what I am talking about.

- (1)–(2) With a year to go to Tokyo 2020, the Premier and I recently announced the details of a new direct funding program for Western Australian Olympic and Paralympic athletes—a first for Western Australia. This came about after a function I was at, when a little gentleman with a portly shape came across the room. I thought, “I’m nailed here”, and I was. I was nailed by a fundraiser for the Olympic committee, saying, “You haven’t done your share.” I said, “Hang on; what is our share for Western Australian athletes?” He could not answer me. He said that it goes on how we perform over the year. That meant that people in our community working so hard to achieve Olympic selection—not necessarily to win a medal—were being discriminated against. Along with the Premier, we decided to give direct funding of \$4 000 for each person selected for the Olympic team—directly to that person. That means that in the lead-in to the Olympics, those people can choose what they wish to do with that money—they could use it for airfares and competing at important events in the lead-up, on the way through. I think that will help those people to be able to compete at the highest level. It is not only the Western Australian government that has taken this on; Queensland has also done that. We do not want to see the money being wasted and utilised by groups for travelling around trying to get funding. It is important that the community of Western Australia also gets behind the Western Australian athletes and all the fundraisers. Let us give those athletes every possible chance to be out there competing at their best and not worrying too much about how they are going to pay for their next airfare. I call on all Western Australians to support our Olympic team, as the Western Australian government has done.

Mr J.E. McGrath interjected.

The SPEAKER: Member for South Perth, you should be behind this. Well done, minister. It is a shame that it is not backdated, but still.