

WOMEN'S AND BABIES' HOSPITAL — RELOCATION

Petition

HON DR STEVE THOMAS (South West — Leader of the Opposition) [1.03 pm]: I present an e-petition containing 4 792 signatures couched in the following terms —

To the President and Members of the Legislative Council of the Parliament of Western Australia in Parliament assembled. We the undersigned ...

in support of Miracle Babies Foundation and Helping Little Hands, request that the Legislative Council call on the Health Minister and the WA Government to urgently reverse the decision to build the new Women and Babies Hospital at Murdoch, a site 20km from Perth Children's Hospital and not co-located with a tertiary paediatric hospital. Miracle Babies Foundation is Australia's leading organisation supporting premature and sick babies, their families, and the hospitals that care for them and Helping Little Hands is a Western Australian based organisation providing services and advocacy for families of premature and sick babies. We believe it is best practice for a jurisdiction to co-locate at least one tertiary maternity and neonatal service with a tertiary paediatric service. This can only be implemented in Western Australia by co-locating the new Women and Babies Hospital and Perth Children's Hospital to ensure the best possible care, health outcomes and service delivery for premature and sick babies and their families. Co-location would allow for coordinated multi-disciplinary antenatal, birth, and neonatal care for families and their babies. There would be no unnecessary patient movement, separation of mothers from their babies would be minimised, improved safety derived from the continuity of care and reduced ongoing direct and opportunity costs both for the health system, care providers and families. For our sickest and smallest babies and their families, any travel to receive urgent lifesaving treatment is associated with increased mortality and morbidity. Without co-location of the two hospitals, there is likely to be increased death and life-long disability rates of our most vulnerable babies. A new Women and Babies Hospital, co-located with Perth Children's Hospital, is an opportunity to provide the current national and international standard for organising perinatal services but to also become a global leader in care and achieve the best health outcomes for WA's most vulnerable babies and their families. It is unacceptable that the opportunity to co-locate the services is not exploited. Therefore, we urge the Premier and Health Minister of the WA Government to reconsider this decision as a matter of urgency and co-locate the new Women and Babies Hospital and Perth Children's Hospital for better care and improved outcomes.

And your petitioners as in duty bound, will ever pray.

[See paper 2774.]