



Media Release

SHARON BIRD MP

FEDERAL MEMBER FOR CUNNINGHAM

Second chance, John! MRI Licence for Wollongong Hospital

The Prime Minister has a second chance to provide the people of Wollongong with an MRI licence at Wollongong Hospital when he visits the electorate of Gilmore tomorrow, Federal Member for Cunningham, Sharon Bird, said today.

“When Mr Howard last visited Wollongong last October, he came only to open Senator Connie Fierravanti-Wells’ office and eat at a fancy nosh-up of Liberal Party supports at \$250 a head.

“I hope when he visits with Joanna Gash tomorrow that Mr Howard will announce he is giving Wollongong Hospital a licence for its MRI machine.

“This is Mr Howard’s second chance to show some substance on his visit”, Ms Bird said.

She said that budget figures for February released last Friday show that the Howard Government has \$5 billion in the bank.

“The figures released indicate that there is an “underspend in a range of health related programmes”.

“Mr Howard’s Government is the highest taxing Australian Government in history.

“Nearly 17,000 people throughout the Illawarra signed a petition which I tabled in the Parliament requesting an MRI licence for Wollongong Hospital.

“Mr Howard is sitting on a \$5 billion budget surplus as of February.

“Mr Howard should announce the grant of an MRI licence to Wollongong Hospital – it’s his second chance”, Ms Bird said.

ATTACHMENT:

Australian Government Monthly Financial Statements for February 2006.

The Statements indicate a Budget surplus as at February 2006 (regardless of the accounting measures). The Statements indicate that the surplus is in part due to “underspends in a range of health related programmes” (page 2 of Minister’s media release).

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