

Legislative Assembly
of the Northern Territory

Draft Daily Hansard

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Madam Speaker Lambley took the Chair at 10 am.

VISITORS
Alawa Primary School

Madam SPEAKER: Honourable members, I advise of the presence in the gallery of Year 5 and 6 students from Alawa Primary School accompanied by their teachers. On behalf of honourable members, welcome. There is a special little girl up there called Jeannie—who may be in the next class this afternoon—who is the daughter of the former Member for Mulka's electorate officer.

Members: Hear, hear!

PRIVATE HOSPITALS AMENDMENT BILL
Serial 82

Mr EDGINGTON (Health): Madam Speaker, I present a Bill titled Private Hospitals Amendment Bill 2026, Serial 82 and table the explanatory statement.

I move that the Bill be now read a first time.

Motion agreed to; Bill read a first time.

The purpose of this Bill is to amend the *Private Hospitals Act 1981* to recast the regulatory and administrative framework to ensure Territorians have access to the full scope of private healthcare closer to home. It will also deliver on our government's commitment to bring back choice for Territory mothers and families through reinstating private maternity services at Darwin Private Hospital.

The *Private Hospitals Act* has been in place for 45 years and these amendments represent the first substantial changes since 2011.

The Bill expands the objects of the Act beyond protecting the health and welfare of people receiving treatment in private hospitals to including the planning and provision of healthcare services. The amendments create a dual mechanism for placing conditions on a private hospital licence issued under the Act to determine how medical, surgical or treatment services are to be provided.

The first mechanism is through an imposed condition. This creates the power for the Department of Health Chief Executive Officer to impose conditions on a private hospital licence without limiting the scope of what an imposed condition might cover. Imposed conditions might range from conditions relating to the provision of private obstetric maternity services or any other matter the Department of Health chief executive thinks fit.

The second mechanism is through a prescribed condition. This enables the Administrator of the Northern Territory to prescribe a private hospital as a designated private hospital. Once prescribed, additional or different conditions set out in the regulations may be applied to the designated private hospital's licence.

This government will utilise these provisions to ensure Territorians have access to private obstetric maternity services. This Bill provides certainty by making it clear that where there is an inconsistency between a condition imposed by the Chief Executive Officer and a prescribed condition, the prescribed condition prevails.

Furthermore this amendment preserves the ability for a licensee to seek a variation of an imposed condition while make clear that prescribed conditions remain enforceable and may only be amended by the Administrator of the Northern Territory.

Our government has been clear from the start that private maternity must be restored in the Territory to ensure health equity and the long-term sustainability of our health system. Our government will work with the new operator of the Darwin Private Hospital on a sustainable pathway for this to happen. The powers afforded to the Department of Health Chief Executive in this Bill modernise the Act to reflect interstate practices.

With this reform, there will now be explicit mechanisms to allow comprehensive, balanced and coordinated health services. It allows the Department of Health Chief Executive Officer to assess how delivery of holistic services across the Territory will occur and to ensure Territorians can access private services like maternity services here in the Territory.

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A number of amendments throughout the Bill replace references to the Chief Health Officer with the Department of Health Chief Executive Officer. While the Chief Health Officer's primary role is focused on public health, wellbeing, and disease prevention, responsibility for regulating commercial enterprises more appropriately sits with the Chief Executive Officer of the Department of Health.

These amendments are consistent with the principles of the *Health Service Act 2021*. They support safe, high quality and locally responsive health services, place the interests of patients at the centre of decision-making and recognise the important contribution of private community sector providers in delivering integrated healthcare across the Territory.

This reform recognises that private hospitals are an important part of the Territory broader health system. By broadening the objects of the Act, the Bill supports a more coordinated and strategic approach to healthcare planning, helping to ensure services are delivered in a way that is comprehensive, balanced and responsive to community needs. The amendments bring much needed certainty around the expectations placed on private hospitals operating in the Territory.

These amendments will help restore the Territory lifestyle and rebuild the economy by delivering a stronger regulatory framework and improving confidence and transparency within both the private and public health sector. It will also support private clinicians to live and work in the Northern Territory and enable regionally-based families to receive health services closer to home, reducing the need to travel interstate.

We want a sustainable private hospital sector that meets the needs of Territorians. Legislative changes and important first step. I am pleased to commend this Bill to honourable members and table a copy of the explanatory statement.

Motion agreed to; Bill read a first time.

SUSPENSION OF STANDING ORDERS
Condemnation of the Member for Gwoja's Comments About the Death of Kumanjayi Little Baby

Ms CAHILL (Children and Families): Madam Speaker, I move to suspend so much of standing and sessional orders that would otherwise prevent debate on the following motion without notice that the Assembly:

1. condemns the Member for Gwoja for his public comments on Tuesday 20 October 2026 about the death of Kumanjayi Little Baby, which were broadcast on the ABC, published in the Guardian and the *NT News* and posted on the member's own TikTok account

2. notes those comments were made while criminal proceedings over her death are before the courts

3. recognises the hurt those comments caused

4. calls on the Member for Gwoja to withdraw his comments and apologise.

Leave granted.

MOTION
Condemns the Member for Gwoja for Comments About the Death of Kumanjayi Little Baby

Ms CAHILL (Child Protection): Madam Speaker, I move that the Assembly:

- condemns the Member for Gwoja for his public comments on Tuesday 20 October 2026 about the death of Kumanjayi Little Baby, which was broadcast on the ABC, published in the Guardian and the *NT News* and posted on the member's own TikTok account

- notes those comments were made while criminal proceedings over her death are before the courts

- recognises the hurt those comments cause

- calls on the Member for Gwoja to withdraw his comments and apologise.

In April a five-year-old girl went missing in Alice Springs. For five days hundreds of people from across the Territory and around the country poured into Alice Springs to help find her. Police, volunteers, family and

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people who had never met her covered every inch of ground they could, desperate to bring that precious little girl home. Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people in Alice Springs, the communities the Member for Gwoja represents and across the country had their hearts in their throats for those five days. Then our worst fears came true.

The loss of Kumanjayi Little Baby is one of the most devastating things this Territory has ever lived through. It rocked the nation and we grieved together.

I commissioned the Independent Review into the Conduct of the Department of Children and Families because her family and every Territorian deserved to know how the system meant to protect her had failed her. On Tuesday I tabled that report in this place, and the government has accepted all 45 recommendations. That day should have been about her.

Instead, the Member for Gwoja went to the media. I will read his comments to the Assembly: 'This alleged violent perpetrator was released from prison with no house, no transport, no job, no supervision and no rehabilitation or integration plan. Shadow Child Protection Minister Chansey Paech said that is why we no longer have Kumanjayi Little Baby here; it is because the justice and Corrections systems under the CLP failed'. Those words were broadcast on the ABC, printed in the Guardian and the *NT News* and the member posted them on his TikTok. This was not a slip of the tongue at a doorstop; he chose to say it and then he chose to share it.

A man has been charged over the death of this little girl, and that matter is before the courts. Every member of this Assembly knows what that means. We choose our words carefully because what matters most now is that justice is done for her and seen to be done.

The Member for Gwoja knows it better than most; he was the Attorney-General of the Northern Territory. Yet he stood in front of the cameras and told Territorians that the alleged perpetrator was released from prison with no house, no transport and no job and that is why we no longer have Kumanjayi Little Baby here. That is reckless indifference to the delivery of justice and it is not something this Assembly can let pass.

He was just as reckless about the hurt he caused. Think about her family hearing those words. Think about the people of Alice Springs who searched for five days. On the day the report into how the system failed her was tabled, the Member for Gwoja chose to focus himself on the rights of offenders, not her, not what she went through and not her family. This is offender-focused commentary and it is condemnable. It is also nothing new from those opposite.

For eight years Labor's answer to crime in this Territory started with the offender and worked backwards. This government starts with the victim. That is why we passed the Every Child Matters Bill and why the safety of a child now comes first in law.

Labor has clearly learned nothing. The review the member was responding to was into the conduct of the Department of Children and Families, the department Labor ran for eight years. Its findings reach back across those years.

In the same week the member admitted Labor could have done more. Within hours he was pointing the finger everywhere but at the system his own government left behind. There is no justification the Member for Gwoja can offer for these comments—not grief, politics or frustration with the government.

Kumanjayi Little Baby's family deserve better and so does our community.

This motion draws a line in the sand. Territorians expect their leaders to put victims first, respect the courts and think before they speak about the death of a child. If the Leader of the Opposition does not agree with her member's comments, she has the opportunity to say so today by supporting this motion.

The Member for Gwoja should withdraw his comments and apologies to Kumanjayi Little Baby's family.

I commend the motion to the Assembly.

Mr MALEY (Agriculture and Fisheries): Madam Speaker, I give my voice to the voiceless and stand with Kumanjayi Little Baby and all those in the community who want to see their government calling out disgusting, indefensible, offending and cruel behaviour in our community. The community wants everyone in this Chamber standing up for victims and the community.

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For the Member for Gwoja to belittle and dismiss the tragic loss of Kumanjayi Little Baby and make excuses, once again, for the violent offender is deplorable. Has Labor learned nothing? It continues to put the offenders first and those violent offenders above the rights of those victims. That is what it did for eight years and why this system is in crisis. That is why it was booted out of office, because the community had spoken. The community had a gutful of the victims going to the bottom of the pile.

On this side of government we have put the victims' rights first. That is why we have invested in police, the court system and Community Corrections and Corrections—to make sure that those victims' voices are heard.

The member blaming the Corrections and justice systems is offensive and unbelievable. Territorians expect offenders to be held to account for their actions. People cannot blame the victim. Not only is he upsetting and putting those victims' voices to the bottom, when he blames the Corrections and justice systems, he is also making a direct attack on the public servants who, day-in and day-out do a hard, good job.

The Member for Gwoja's actions are completely unacceptable. He has put the rights of the offender over the victim's and belittled and made a front-on attack on the public servants who work day-in, day-out. It is time for the member to stop defending those offenders and making excuses for offending. It is time for him to stand up for victims and the community.

Losing a child would be terrible. How would the mother and the family feel? What about the friends and those hundreds of people who went looking for this little baby? The community of Alice Springs jumped in behind to support them. The community of Alice Springs, under the last eight years of Labor, turned into chaos. The crime was through the roof and people were leaving. Alice Springs was in the media for all the wrong reasons.

I have been to Alice Springs many times. It is a good place and a beautiful location, but under Labor it went through the floor. It is really lies at the Member for Gwoja's feet because he was the minister for eight years.

Linking the death Little Baby to a suggested political failure is absolutely disgusting. He needs to make sure that he focuses on the community and community safety.

Here is a reminder of what happened under watch, when he was the Corrections minister and Deputy Chief Minister. He oversaw a dangerously crowded system where prisoners ended up in watch houses. There was no rehabilitation, no education, no training and no chance to break that cycle of reoffending. He stopped the rehabilitation and training programs. He clogged up the police watch houses and stopped the police from going out and keeping the community safe. That is an important point: he not only failed the Corrections system but also stopped the police from doing the very job that the community expects, which is to keep the community safe. It is shameful.

He also oversaw a riot that caused $40m worth of damage to the Corrections system. That damage was done under his watch. There was not only the damage to public assets, but that riot was within the education system of Corrections, so it stopped the education and rehabilitation.

The Member for Gwoja came out and said that is the justice system—just thrown out with no training and no rehabilitation. We have spent two years in office. We have brought back the training and rehabilitation. In fact, one program we brought back is the Ready for Work program, which supports offenders when they leave—for the last 18 months or so—to make sure they reintegrate back into society.

This is what the Member for Gwoja could have done. He was the minister and the Deputy Chief Minister, but he failed to do that. He failed to put community safety above all else. He failed to listen to the voices of victims.

For the for the words he said, he commented not only on his own TikTok, Facebook—which I must admit, he has now deleted, so he knows what he has done is wrong. He has gone away. His actions again speak louder than his words. He has deleted that. He knows that he has done something wrong, otherwise he would not have done that.

The quote was, 'Kumanjayi Little Baby has lost her life tragically because under the CLP, an alleged violent perpetrator released from prison within days had taken the life of Kumanjayi Little Baby. The violent perpetrator was released from prison with no house, no transport, no job, no supervision and no rehabilitation reintegration plan. That is why we no longer have Kumanjayi Little Baby here.'

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I will read that line again, because this is important, ‘That is why we no longer have Kumanjayi Little Baby here. It is because the justice and Corrections systems failed under the CLP.’

He was a minister in the previous government. He let the Corrections system go downhill. He stopped the police from doing their job. He filled up the watch houses, not just in Darwin but also across the Northern Territory. There were prisoners in watch houses in Alice Springs, Katherine, Palmerston and the Peter McAulay Centre—the main centre—and in Darwin. He failed to keep the community safe, and now he is trying to blame other people.

We on this side want to put the rights of the victim first. That is what this is all about. For him to come in here and talk about what he said, and not only in here but also to go out into the public and make comments—we know that there are court orders in place, but that is another matter. I am sure the court will be looking closely at what he has done

Today I do not want to talk about that; I want to talk about the absolutely indefensible behaviour and those words that the Member for Gwoja has done out there in the community, putting those victims last and trying to blame the death of Little Baby on the justice system or the Corrections system. It is shameful; it is a disgrace.

Do Territorians deserve to live in a safe community? Clearly, the Member for Gwoja does not think that is a good proposition. He does not think that people should be safe. He wants to blame people for other people. It is time for people to have personal responsibility. You look after yourself, look after your family, look after your friends. It is time to make yourself personally responsible for your actions.

The Member for Gwoja needs to resign. I am calling on him to resign. The constituents of the Gwoja electorate deserve better. They deserve someone who cares about community safety and Territorians and does not want to just put the victim’s rights at the bottom. The victim needs to come first; the community needs to come first; Territorians need to come first. Those words he used are absolutely shameful. I call for him to resign.

Ms UIBO (Opposition Leader): Madam Speaker, I did not think the CLP could get any lower than what we have seen over the last two years, but today is a prime example. Instead of standing up in parliament and speaking about what the CLP will do as a responsible government and what plans and resources it will boost when it comes to child protection and getting better justice and Corrections pathways, today we see this cobbled-together motion by the Minister for Children and Families, Minister Cahill, who is again showing the core of what the CLP government does when times get tough. It buckles down and deflects onto every other person.

What we are seeing today is the height of disgusting political use of a tragedy to talk about comments of a member of parliament, rather than what the government will do better to serve the community in the best interests of everyone. Not once has the CLP government acknowledged the horrific death of Kumanjayi Little Baby and the alleged perpetrator. Government members have spoken about everything else. For government that says it is all about consequences, they are pretty silent on that element, aren’t they? This is the lowest of the low, deflecting responsibility and blaming the Member for Gwoja for comments rather than actually doing their job.

It is obvious that the Minister for Children and Families is not used to getting so much negative attention, so instead she turns it on someone else in the parliament.

We are not in government. We get reminded about that every day; we are the Labor opposition. Anyone over there on that side would think we are in government and can make those decisions. Yes, we are planning on doing that in two years, I can tell you that right now. The way that the CLP talks in this place, particularly in the last two weeks of sittings—every word uttered by the CLP members is about being in opposition. They are talking like they are in opposition. Today’s motion is something that an opposition would do, not a government of the Northern Territory, talking about protecting our children better, who should be talking about more resources for domestic, family and sexual violence victims and survivors.

We should be hearing from the government about a ministerial statement, a ministerial report—I do not care. Waste more time if you want, talking about the things that you think you will do better. That is your job. That is what Territorians have voted for and expect from a government, and you do not do it.

Instead, you bring a cobbled-together ridiculous motion talking about the Member for Gwoja. That is pathetic. It is like some people in the government never grew out of high school. Actually, I take that back because

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I know high school students who act better than some of the CLP members—the name-calling, the maliciousness. How disgusting our leaders of the Northern Territory are, with the CLP members acting like they are in high school. They act like they are in a primary school playground, calling names, acting like a shemozzle of a little government because all they can do is blame, rather than stand up and say, 'How will the Northern Territory Government fight better for domestic violence survivors?' We do not hear that or see that at all.

Members interjecting.

Ms UIBO: What about the resources? 'Oh, yes, we put this ongoing funding', but that is it. 'We will not meet with the DV sector or the child protection sector'. What they say is completely different to their actions. They do not meet with the experts, listen to data and research years of advocacy from people with lived experience.

No, they do not want to hear from Territorians who have a brain or who challenge their existence. They do not want to hear from people who have moral values about protecting and safeguarding vulnerable Territorians. No, because they all know better just because they are sitting in an elected position. That is the height of arrogance that is showing more and more every day, scratching at the surface. That arrogance is actually incompetence. We are seeing that more and more.

This is a primary example. The Member for Port Darwin has been called a failure by the DV sector and the child protection sector, and this is her response …

Members interjecting.

Madam SPEAKER: Cease the interjections, please.

Ms UIBO: This pathetic motion before the House is not even worth everybody's time. They should be spending their time talking about, 'Let us do DV prevention better in the Territory and resource the sector. Let us get the experts in. Let us meet with the tripartite forum. Let us listen to the Aboriginal experts. Let us listen to the DV and lived experience experts.'

What they do not do is get out across the Northern Territory to hear that advice themselves. They think it is just the Labor opposition. When we do make those points that people have asked us to, all they do is nark, laugh, giggle, shrine and name call. That is the response and the leadership under the Chief Minister—to ark up and shut down debate, as we saw yesterday, on important topics that matter to all Territorians, not just some. Guess what? We are a diverse Northern Territory and all we see is the divisiveness of the CLP, which only wants to hear from people who puff up their tyres and give them a pat on the back rather than give them instructions about how to do things better—fearless and frank advice.

What you do in the public service when fearless and frank advice is passed from your chief executive? You are sacked by the CLP government …

Mr EDGINGTON: A point of order, Madam Speaker!

Ms UIBO: What you get when you give frank and fearless professional advice in the public service to your minister, you are sacked by the CLP. That is how much they care about the years of experience …

Madam SPEAKER: Please pause, Leader of the Opposition. Please take your seat.

Mr EDGINGTON: Madam Speaker, this is way off topic. This is a narrow motion. If the Leader of the Opposition wants to speak to this, she needs to speak to the motion, not drag in public servants. She needs to take a stand. Does she support the Member for Gwoja or not?

Madam SPEAKER: The top has been taken off the can. The Opposition Leader can put her arguments into a format that remains relevant but I would advise you to focus on the exact motion that is being debated this morning, please.

Ms UIBO: Again, it is scraping the dodgy, dirty bottom of the barrel. I have not seen it for a long time. There I was thinking that the CLP might actually be interested in showing Territorians, two years and two budget cycles in, with two left, that they would be showing Territorians today, or any other day for that matter, how they will resource and support the child protection sector and domestic, family and sexual violence prevention in the Northern Territory?

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What we see across the Northern Territory in all of our electorates and the political divide is devastating. We do not see the CLP members speak up and talk about domestic violence victims. They talk and spruik when things matter in terms of getting media attention. What they do not like is when they have negative attention on themselves. They deflect and blame everybody except themselves, as if there is not 17 CLP government members sitting there who are responsible for the way that they govern the Northern Territory. It does not stop in the 17 CLP electorates; it is the whole of the Northern Territory. It is every person; it is the 60% plus of violent crimes in the Northern Territory caused by domestic, family and sexual violence that they do not speak about.

Ms Boothby: There was an 80% increase on your watch.

Ms UIBO: I can hear the Attorney-General spurring, 'Under you watch'. The Opposition Leader is now a default government Chief Minister. That is great, Attorney-General, acting like you are in opposition again to my very point. The Attorney-General has not bothered once to invest in our Aboriginal Justice Agreement to increase the community law and justice groups across the 73 Aboriginal communities. There were only six when we started when Labor was back in, and two years into the CLP government—which says it cares about reforming justice and Corrections—there are still six. We asked the Attorney-General multiple times, 'How many groups have you visited?' Two. The one that succeeded the best is my electorate of Arnhem …

Mr EDGINGTON: A point of order, Madam Speaker! Standing Order 35; the Leader of the Opposition is continually drifting away from the motion. The motion is very narrow; the Leader of the Opposition needs to get back to the motion and speak to it.

Madam SPEAKER: Leader of Government Business, the Deputy Chief Minister gave a fairly broad speech, and I will give the same opportunity to the Opposition Leader. I advise you to make it relevant; this is a very specific motion.

Ms UIBO: There were many references made regarding justice prior to the two years under the CLP government. I thought the Member for Barkly, who was the shadow Attorney-General signed the Aboriginal Justice Agreement—maybe he does not want Territorians to remember that because he did not become the Attorney-General; they gave it to the Member for Brennan for some reason. I have no idea.

The Member for Brennan, as the Attorney-General, fails Territorians. She does not go out bush to meet with Territorians who want to see better justice and law outcomes and who want to prevent the high incarceration rate and who want to see things done better in the Northern Territory when it comes to justice and Corrections, going to the point of the Deputy Chief Minister, who is the Minister for Corrections. He spoke about that; he spoke about failings.

It is a broad spectrum because that is what they have spoken about in the motion, and I am reflecting on the government and they do not like it because this motion …

Mr Mackay: Why won't you put victims first?

Madam SPEAKER: Cease the interjections, Member for Goyder.

Ms UIBO: I hope the Member for Goyder gets up and stands rather than sitting like a little pipeline squeaking.

If we look at why this motion is being brought forward it is clear that the failures of the Member for Port Darwin, as the Minister for Children and Families, is being seen near and far. We have heard, brutally, the observations of the Chief Executive Officer of the North Australian Aboriginal Justice Agency, Ben Grimes, yesterday on ABC radio. I quoted from that last night in one of my contributions to the debate. He said that this is a minister who has done nothing in two years to improve child protection. Instead of standing up today with a ministerial report or statement about, 'This is what I will do, and I have accepted the 45 recommendations from the Webb–Shanahan review.' or, 'Our Cabinet has met, and we will resource every one of these 45 recommendations', this motion comes in as opposed to showing Territorians that the CLP is genuine about child protection reform, will resource the 45 recommendations of the independent Webb-Shanahan Review, we do not see that today.

The last opportunity to spruik what they will do for the Territory to improve child protection …

Mrs Hersey: Will you condemn the Member for Gwoja?

Members interjecting.

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Madam SPEAKER: Cease the interjections. Allow the Opposition Leader to continue, please.

Ms UIBO: They are failing Territorians, and when Territorians start telling them that, they start to get shaky and go to pathetic, political process rather than talk about what they should and will do. There is something wrong with this picture, because it seems like the CLP members are the only ones living in their little bubble of crime, and it suddenly popped two years into this term of government, and they are feeling it.

Each and every one of them are starting to realise that their own constituents are asking questions: 'Why are you not doing this, why have you not done that?' Surely, they cannot be blaming Labor, two budget cycles in and what is their response? 'Labor, Labor'. They do not give a straight answer in the two weeks of parliament. They have one more Question Time left today, and I wonder if they will have the ability to answer a single question without mentioning Labor. I do not think so, because even their questions from their own members are obsessed with the past.

If the Chief Minister, the ministers and all the members keep looking behind, who is leading the Territory, looking forward and driving this car to the future? It does not seem to be the Chief Minister; it is not the Deputy Chief Minister, he is too busy sitting by the Chief Minister and repeating everything that she says.

It is becoming quite embarrassing to see the CLP try to defend the arrogance which, as I said, is starting to show every day, particularly in the last couple of weeks, with the failures starting to show more and more that the arrogance is simply shrouding the absolute incompetence of experience of care, planning, action, and resourcing the Territory in the way that we need to see. Talk a big game we want to see the Territory improve and at the same time step on every person who has knocked on the door—some people cannot find the door, they cannot get meetings let alone walk through the door to have a meeting with the CLP.

They like to say that they are listening to Territorians. They might listen maybe, but are they taking it in, absorbing, changing the core of what they are doing because it is reflecting what the community actually wants to know? That was clear when we saw the fiasco with YiSSA short-stay. That was linked to the Member for Port Darwin who brought the motion in today, the Minister for Children and Families; she sacked the CEO because of it.

If someone stands up for Territorians in the public service, they get vilified, lose their job, get moved aside, or they disappear into the ether without even the respect to tell Territorians where that Chief Executive Officer went, as if they did not exist. That is how much the CLP respect hardworking public servants, particularly in the last couple of weeks or months.

The people who were out in the field day-to-day, facing some of the horrific circumstances that Territorians experience, without a care or acknowledgement of listening to what these hardworking public servants would like to see done better for the Territory and for those specific areas such as child protection and domestic, family and sexual violence prevention and ensuring that we have a justice system that is fit for purpose, is relevant and contextual for the Northern Territory and is seeing more restorative justice. We do not have that word in the CLP government's vocabulary, it would be great if they looked it up. I am sure the Member for Barkly could let the Member for Brennan know, since he was a shadow Attorney-General for four years.

Madam SPEAKER: Opposition Leader, can you make your comments relevant to the motion that has been put forward this morning?

Ms UIBO: It is clear that the motion before the House is a desperate, pathetic attempt by the CLP to deflect and blame, rather than speak about what they are doing as a responsible government for the Northern Territory; that they will be focused on how the CLP is going to resource child protection. Instead they are obsessed with Labor. It is like when you talk to a child and they are looking down at their hands or feet. They are not looking up at the horizon or at the future. They are not looking up and seeing what is happening around them.

Today is a crystal-clear example of how low the CLP will sink to, using a false sense of care, politicising a horrific event in the Northern Territory for its own political purpose in this place. I sincerely hope that Territorians see for themselves, read, understand and speak openly about how much of a failure the leadership of the CLP is, particularly under the Member for Port Darwin.

Mr EDGINGTON (Health): Madam Speaker, I support the motion. After 20 minutes of listening to the Opposition Leader, it is concerning that not once did she speak in support of or defend against the motion. This was an opportunity for the Leader of the Opposition to stand up and draw a line as to whether she

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supports victims or offenders. There was an opportunity to draw a line: does she support the comments made by the Member for Gwoja or does she not support the Member for Gwoja? These were simple questions in the motion, and she took 20 minutes to talk about every other issue except what is in the motion.

This motion brought to the House by the Member for Port Darwin is to condemn the Member for Gwoja for his public comments. Now the public comments that he made were reported by the *NT News* and the Guardian and published on the member's own TikTok page, 'KLB has lost her life tragically because, under the CLP, an alleged violent perpetrator released from prison within days had taken the life of Kumanjayi Little Baby. This violent perpetrator was released from prison with no house, no transport, no job, no supervision and no rehabilitation or reintegration plan. That is why we no longer have Kumanjayi Little Baby here. It is because the justice and Corrections systems under the CLP failed.'

This motion is simple. It notes that the comments were made while criminal proceedings over the death are before the court. The Member for Gwoja calls himself the former Deputy Chief Minister and the former Attorney-General. To come out publicly and make those sorts of comments in the media just goes to show that he is putting offenders' rights before those of victims. That is what he is put forward on his page and had portrayed in the media.

This motion calls on the Assembly to recognise the hurt that these comments have caused to all victims, the victim's family and the Territory in general. It is a blame game. Quite simply, the Member for Gwoja is out there blaming everybody except for the perpetrator.

It calls on the Member for Gwoja to withdraw his comments. I also call on the Member for Gwoja to withdraw those comments and apologise not only to the Assembly but to all victims in the Northern Territory.

The Leader of the Opposition did not turn her mind to the motion. She was trying to have another crack at a policy debate, when she had the opportunity to do that yesterday. This is a narrow motion. It specifically focuses on the words that were used by the Member for Gwoja—it is simple—and we should recognise the hurt that these comments cause. It is not a policy debate; it is a narrow motion.

That is why the motion is before the Assembly: to condemn the Member for Gwoja for his public comments and call on him to withdraw and apologise. The Leader of the Opposition had an opportunity to also condemn those comments, support the motion and ask the member to apologise, just like this motion calls for. She took 20 minutes to talk about everything else but the issue before this Assembly of the comments that were made publicly by the Member for Gwoja.

Where does the Leader of the Opposition stand today? This is the question the Assembly needs to ask. Where do all of the Member for Gwoja's colleagues stand when it comes to the comments that he made publicly in the media about this case? No-one forced the Member for Gwoja to say these comments. The Member for Gwoja came out voluntarily, made these comments and put them on the public record.

Everybody in this Chamber should be condemning those types of comments. The effect that the death has had on many people throughout the Territory—the family and everybody would condemn these comments. They focused on an offender rather than recognising the hurt that all of this has caused the victim's family. I stand in support of all victims, not offenders. What we have seen for so long under the previous Labor government was support for putting offenders first over the rights of victims.

Even today, the Leader of the Opposition tried to have a bet both ways. She would not defend the Member for Gwoja, nor would she support him. Where does the Opposition Leader stand when it comes to serious comments like this being published in the media? The question is: will anyone else stand up over there? Who will defend those comments that were made by the Member for Gwoja? If there is anyone on the other side who wants to defend the comments made by the Member for Gwoja and speak to the motion, I encourage them to do so. I do not know whether he will even defend himself. This is the real question. He needs to take note of this motion and withdraw those comments. He needs to apologise to the Assembly and to everybody who been affected by those comments.

Every member in the Chamber has the opportunity to vote on this motion, which is simple, straightforward and specific about the comments that the Member for Gwoja made in the media. This is not a policy debate. The motion is specifically confined to the abhorrent comments made by the Member for Gwoja in the media. The time for debate about policy was yesterday, not today. It is a narrow motion.

I call on all members of the Assembly to condemn the comments made by the Member for Gwoja. I know that the Leader of the Opposition wants to have a bet each way. She should also support the motion. She

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should step up as a leader and show some leadership when it comes to these types of comments being made in the media. I will not say too much, but I call on all Assembly members to support the motion and recognise the hurt that these comments have caused for all Territorians.

Mr YOUNG (Daly): Madam Speaker, this is another example of the CLP government playing politics with a young little girl's life. It is a sad day today, when there are sensitivities around this, when the family has had to come through this week—we need to remember, as members of parliament, that there is a family behind this. There is a family and a community that is still grieving …

Mrs Zio: Talk to the Member for Gwoja.

Mr YOUNG: Member for Fannie Bay, I pick up on your interjection. If you would like to speak on this, I suggest you speak and be respectful about it. I ask that you do not call out …

Madam SPEAKER: Could you direct your comments through me, please, Member for Daly, and cease any interjections on the floor, please.

Mr YOUNG: As I was saying, there is a family and community that is behind this.

I was in Alice Springs when this tragedy happened. Do you know what? I saw the best of Centralians at that time when they came together. What is disgraceful here is that the CLP government has only come here to play politics with this issue. It is raising the temperature on what has occurred in Alice Springs. What is disgraceful and disgusting …

Mr Maley: Comments made by the Member for Gwoja; you are right.

Mr YOUNG: … is that there is a little girl behind this and it is politicising an issue.

If you had an issue, Deputy Chief Minister, you could have worked through this in a bipartisan way. Instead, you are bringing a motion, trying to heighten the temperature in here …

Mr Maley: The Member for Gwoja made the comment yesterday.

Members interjecting.

Madam SPEAKER: Silence. Everyone be quiet, please. No more interjections; let the Member for Daly speak.

Mr YOUNG: I am sure everyone in this House is aware that through of the time the Member for Gwoja has been a member of parliament, he has always advocated for child safety and the best for children to ensure they get the supports they need. All of us in here want that for our children across the Northern Territory.

This motion today does not address the issues we are speaking about or speak about the report that was handed down. It is a complete politicisation by the CLP government to try to heighten that temperature, when what we saw in Alice Springs was the best of the community coming together and helping each other out.

We should be reflecting that in parliament. That is what our role is, as parliamentarians—reflect the community. We saw that in Alice Springs. You have completely gone against that now by bringing this motion forward.

As I said, if there were concerns about the proposed motion, what could you have done? You could have sat down with the Member for Gwoja and worked in a bipartisan way if there were genuine and real concerns. Instead, you are politicising it without any thought, sensitivities or empathy for Kumanjyi Little Baby's family.

That is what underneath all this, and it is causing further trauma for the family. You also need to remember that the Member for Gwoja is family to that young little girl, as is Senator Price. We know …

Mr Kerle: Here we go.

Mr YOUNG: Excuse me?

Madam SPEAKER: No, cease the interjections. There will be no interaction with members on the floor, please.

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Mr YOUNG: We have been respectful of both members of parliament when it comes to this, because it is their family, Member for Blain.

Unfortunately, the CLP cannot show that same dignity when it comes to that family. You all should reflect on your behaviour today.

Mrs FINOCCHIARO (Chief Minister): Madam Speaker, I support the motion brought by the Member for Port Darwin. This motion is significant because the gravity of the comments made by the Member for Gwoja on 20 October carry serious consequence and weight.

We had the Opposition Leader effectively yell across the Chamber for 20 minutes in which she did not address the comments; she did not bring a measured contribution to what is a narrow and significant point where we draw a line in the sand and hold people accountable for what they say.

If the Opposition Leader does not believe that her team should be held accountable for what they say, she is in the wrong job because as public-facing people and members of parliament we are accountable for our actions and words. To be able to speak in the parliament freely as we are of course carries parliamentary privilege, and for good reason because we have jobs to do. To speak in the media is also important. We have a role in communicating with our constituencies. However, all of that is not without responsibility.

For the Opposition Leader to spend 20 minutes avoiding the topic shows exactly the way in which she obfuscates her obligations and completely fails in her obligations as a leader. She did not in her contribution come in here and support the Member for Gwoja, defend his comments or go into any detail about the comments; nor did she condemn them. Instead she tried to presumably buy time for her team to work out what they would say in response to the motion. That is the only tangible thing I can think of, that the only contribution that the Opposition Leader made this morning was to buy her team time to work out what they would say.

We then had the Member for Daly stand up and, again, not support the Member for Gwoja or the comments, but not condemn them either. The Member for Daly talked about having empathy—which is exactly what this motion is calling out the Member for Gwoja for not having, but it is okay because it has come from him so it must mean more because he said, and if it comes from us somehow it is not as meaningful. We had calls for empathy.

We had several calls about the temperature. I note the Member for Daly picked up on the Prime Minister's words about turning down the temperature, yet the very nature of the motion condemns the Member for Gwoja for his comments—to use the Member for Daly's phrase—that turned the temperature up. The hypocrisy of those opposite knows no bounds.

The Member for Daly talked about politicising the death of Kumanjayi Little Baby, yet the very motion we are in here talking about this morning condemns the Member for Gwoja for doing the same thing in the media and in his own communication channels.

It is important as a government that we hold the Member for Gwoja to account for his comments at a very difficult time. Let us not forget that justice must be served, and each of us has a responsibility to not impact that or deprive that opportunity for justice to be served.

I remind those opposite of the comments we are talking about today because this motion condemns the Member for Gwoja for his public comments on Tuesday 20 October which were, and I quote, 'KLB has lost her life tragically because under the CLP, an alleged violent perpetrator was released from prison and within days had taken the life of Kumanjayi Little Baby. This violent perpetrator was released from prison with no house, no transport, no job, no supervision and no rehabilitation or reintegration plan. That is why we no longer have Kumanjayi Little Baby here. It is because the justice and Corrections systems under the CLP failed.'

That is why this motion notes that those comments were made while criminal proceedings over her death are before the court. It is why this motion recognises the hurt that these comments cause our community. It is why, reasonably and fairly, this motion calls on the Member for Gwoja to withdraw his comments and apologise.

It is not too much to ask that we hold each other accountable when the line is crossed, but it seems clear, by the contributions made by the Opposition Leader and the Member for Daly, that the Member for Gwoja neither

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enjoys support nor condemnation from his colleagues, that they do not have a position and are unwilling to take a stand when it comes to crossing the line.

The Assembly will vote on this today. It is clear that we will not see leadership on this issue. Not notwithstanding how Labor chose to respond to this, it remains an important motion for debate. I thank the Member for Port Darwin for having the courage, just as she has shown through the passage of the Care and Protection of Children Legislation Amendment (Every Child Matters) Bill. She has shown the courage to have this report done, to accept all 45 recommendations and to commit, as weightily as raising her own children, as the next most important thing she will ever do in her life is see through this reform. I commend her for her courage in the face of great pushback. She knows why she is here and understands what she stands for. This motion reflects that courage and tenacity, which is all too absent from across the Chamber.

Mr PAECH (Gwoja): Madam Speaker, I want to make it clear that I will never stop standing up for children, the safety of women or the fundamental right for Aboriginal people to have their voice and decisions led and heard by Aboriginal people about the impacts of their lives, families, communities and safety.

No-one in this parliament has the right to question Aboriginal families that they have no love for their children or to suggest that Aboriginal people do not care about the safety and wellbeing of their families. Our people love our children and want them to grow up safe, strong, healthy, surrounded by love, culture and connection to country. When families are struggling, women are experiencing violence and children are at risk, our responsibility as parliamentarians is not to point the finger, lay blame or play politics with people's lives, but to stand up for the people who we represent.

Everyone in my community knows the situations about the tragic loss of life of Kumanjayi Little Baby. To pretend or suggest that I have said something that is not already in the public domain that my communities are not already talking about is disrespectful to them.

I will never accept a system that punishes women for experiencing violence while failing to properly address the behaviour of men who perpetrate violence. I will never accept that removing a child is substitute for investing in early intervention, family support, culturally appropriate services and genuinely community-led solutions.

I will never accept that Aboriginal voices and people, our organisations, elders and communities should be ignored when decisions are being made about them and our families. The safety of children must always come first. Protecting children and supporting families is not a competing priority; they must go hand in hand. These are not just policy debates for me; they are my family, children and my community.

I will stand up and speak out for them because every child deserves to be safe, every woman deserves to live free from violence and every Aboriginal family member deserves to be treated with dignity and respect. That is something that I will stand by for eternity.

I want to make it incredibly clear and read out a response from the Central Australian Family Violence and Sexual Assault Network:

> *The release yesterday of the Kumanjayi Little Baby report fails to recognise that the reason behind the child's death was ultimately the choice of a man who used violence.*
>
> *We are concerned that the actions of the alleged perpetrator were not subject of the review and therefore he, and others that similarly use violence, have not been held accountable for their actions and choices.*
>
> *We acknowledge that the child protection system is in crisis, this stance is supported by the numerous submissions made to the recent review of the* Care and Protection of Children Act, *which were largely ignored by the NT Government. This review fails to examine Corrections, Parole conditions, Policing and Housing to name a few as the alleged perpetrator was never the subject.*
>
> *Rather, the framing of the report is …*

Mr Maley: That is not what you said on the 20th.

Madam SPEAKER: Silence. No interjections.

Mr PAECH: I continue:

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Rather, the framing of the report is …

Mr Maley: Read out your words again.

Mr PAECH: Member for Nelson, you have had your opportunity to spin. I would appreciate the opportunity …

Mr Maley: That is not what you said, though. Now you are making things up. You live in fairyland.

Madam SPEAKER: Cease this right now.

Ms Uibo interjecting.

Madam SPEAKER: Opposition Leader, the member will continue in silence.

Mr PAECH: I continue:

Rather, the framing of the report is victim-blaming of a woman who experienced prolonged domestic and family violence, however was not offered assistance, despite many notifications to escape this.

A mum experiencing domestic violence is being held more accountable for Kumanjayi Little Baby's death than the alleged person who chose to use violence.

Framing responsibility in this way places an unjust burden on the mother and sends a dangerous message to women experiencing domestic violence. It risks reinforcing the belief that seeking help could lead to their children being removed because of the actions of a perpetrator, further discouraging women from accessing the protection and support they need to keep themselves safe.

Although the Department of Children and Families requires significant reform, domestic and family violence was not the cause of Kumanjayi Little Baby's death.

Conflating domestic and family violence with the causes of this tragedy risks misdirecting accountability and undermining the efforts to support and protect victim survivors and their children.

That is the media release that was put out this week as well from the Central Australian Family Violence and Sexual Assault Network. I seek leave to table that release.

Leave granted.

Mr PAECH: People in this parliament come from many backgrounds but there are few people in this parliament who are Aboriginal and know the lived experience of Aboriginal people. I will not be lectured in parliament about how to be an Aboriginal person, how to understand kinship structures and how to stand up for my family who lost a child.

You talk about politicising. You have brought a motion in here to politicise …

Members interjecting.

Mr PAECH: The Deputy Chief Minister is laughing and smirking.

Members interjecting.

Mrs FINOCCHIARO: A point of order, Madam Speaker! Standing Order 35; I was not doing that, and he can withdraw.

Ms Uibo: He said 'Deputy Chief Minister'. Open your ears.

Madam SPEAKER: Opposition Leader, no-one asked for your input. How do you withdraw a smile? I am a bit …

Mrs FINOCCHIARO: He can withdraw what he said.

Madam SPEAKER: That you were smiling? I do not see that as offensive, Chief Minister.

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Mrs FINOCCHIARO: Madam Speaker, it is the imputation. The imputation is that I am not taking this seriously, but also it is misleading. It never happened.

Ms Uibo: It did. Did you look at him?

Madam SPEAKER: Opposition Leader, be quiet. You are on a warning, Opposition Leader.

Mr YOUNG: A point of order, Madam Speaker! Speaking to the point of order from the Chief Minister, the one she is talking about is relevance to the subject. She has got the standing order wrong.

Madam SPEAKER: There is no point of order that you are making. If the imputation is offensive …

Mr Young: You said, 'Deputy Chief Minister'.

Madam SPEAKER: Member for Daly, do not speak to me while I am speaking.

Mr Young: I was talking to Chansey.

Madam SPEAKER: The Chief Minister is offended by the imputation you made. It is probably easier for the progress of this debate for you to withdraw it and get on with the points you are trying to make. Member for Gwoja, could you withdraw that, please?

Mr PAECH: If the Chief Minister is offended, I will withdraw that.

I make it abundantly clear that I am elected to represent the people of Gwoja, many of whom are my family and who have reached out to me during this difficult time. I will continue to make sure that their voices are heard and that they are not lost in this place.

Madam Speaker, I take a moment to acknowledge you and the Members for Braitling and Barkly for your support during the difficult time in the Central Australian community with the abduction of Kumanjayi Little Baby and the tragic events that unfolded and for your support after that. I am big enough to do that.

I make it abundantly clear that I will not be silenced in this place for standing up for remote Aboriginal people, children and domestic, family and sexual violence survivors. I will stand up when a government tries to victim-blame a DV survivor and make it their problem without addressing the cause. I will continue to do that for as long as I am in this place …

Mr Maley: That is not what you said on the 20th. You should resign.

Mr PAECH: … because that is what I am elected to do.

If people want to talk about apologising, I ask the Member for Port Darwin: will you apologise to the hundreds of children who you rip away from their families with the laws that you have changed?

Mr Maley: You should resign. You are an embarrassment.

Mr PAECH: Member for Barkly, the minister for Housing, will you apologise to the hundreds of …

Mr EDGINGTON: A point of order, Madam Speaker! All commentary should be directed through the Speaker. He is asking questions across the Chamber. He needs to get on with the debate and direct it through the Speaker.

Madam SPEAKER: Yes, it is a reasonable request to direct all comments through me. Talk to me, Member for Gwoja.

Mr PAECH: I ask whether this government will apologise to the hundreds of Territorians whom it continually displaces? Will it apologise to the hundreds of people it has made homeless with the closure of YiSSA? Will the Housing minister apologise to Territorians for the lack of housing that he is not building in the bush? Will government members apologise to the hundreds of Territorians living in remote communities who cry out for community safety and this government does nothing to help them address crime and antisocial behaviour in the community …

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Members interjecting.

Mr PAECH: Will they apologise for letting an alleged sexual predator out on the streets in Alice Springs, who is walking around now under their bail conditions? Will they apologise to people in Central Australia? You talk big. You talk tough on your bail laws …

Mr EDGINGTON: A point of order, Madam Speaker!

Mr PAECH: There is an alleged sex offender out on the streets of Alice Springs under the CLP government's bail laws …

Madam SPEAKER: Pause, please. Take your seat, Member for Gwoja.

What is your point of order, Leader of Government Business?

Mr EDGINGTON: Standing Order 35; this has no relevance to the motion that is before the Chamber …

Madam SPEAKER: No, there is no point of order. This issue has been raised, and the member is responding within the relevance of the issue.

Mr PAECH: If we are going to talk in this Chamber today and you are going to condemn me, will you condemn yourselves? Under your bail laws, an alleged sex offender walks the streets of Alice Springs amongst children and families. You can play politics …

Members interjecting.

Madam SPEAKER: Cease the interjections, please. Member for Gwoja, continue …

Ms Uibo: You are in government; take responsibility.

Madam SPEAKER: The next person who interjects will leave the Chamber for an hour.

Mr PAECH: These laws and decisions being made are yours. Under your time as a CLP government, alleged sex offenders are getting bail and are out on the streets. If you want to talk to me about community safety and the community, look at yourselves and the stuff you are doing.

I am the Member for Gwoja. I am proud to be the Member for Gwoja. I stand up for my communities and my families. I was there when Kumanjayi Little Baby's family needed someone. I helped out with the sorry camps. I helped out with the family. I continue to help out with the family. I will not apologise for standing up and calling out the injustices and the two sides that you want. You need to stand by your own convictions. You did not even …

Mr Maley: That is not what you said on the 20th.

Ms UIBO: A point of order, Madam Speaker!

Madam SPEAKER: Please pause.

EXCLUSION OF MEMBERS
Members for Nelson and Arnhem

Madam SPEAKER: Member for Nelson, please leave the Chamber for one hour.

Ms Uibo: Shame job.

Madam SPEAKER: You can leave too, Opposition Leader.

I said that there would be no commentary, and I will not accept it from anyone. This is a very emotional motion that has been put to the Chamber, and I have had enough of the interjections.

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Mr PAECH: I want to make it clear. First, it was not on the ABC; the government has its facts wrong. Second, maybe the Minister for Child Protection needs to stop leaking to the media because that is where the stories are coming from.

I encourage members of the government to get out into remote communities and speak to remote people. I have come here to ask those questions on behalf of my constituents. I have come here to stand up for communities when it comes to these matters.

There is a motion before parliament; if the government wanted to work together, it could have come to me and had a conversation, but instead it looked at where it was not getting the political points it needs to get today. That is why we are debating this motion. I reject the motion before the Assembly.

I reject any assertion that Aboriginal people do not love their families. I reject the assertion that Kumanjayi Little Baby's family did not love her; her mother, her father, her grandmother, her grandfather and her extended family all loved her. They are not the reason why she is not here. There is another reason why she is not here, and this CLP government keeps avoiding talking about it.

Ms CAHILL (Minister for Child Protection)(in reply): Madam Speaker, I thank members for their contributions on what is clearly a really sensitive issue, but it was one that was important to bring today because this is a really difficult situation.

I refute—nowhere at any time have I or any member of this team said that Kumanjayi Little Baby's family did not love her, not once; in actual fact, the exact opposite.

What we have recognised is that systemic failures within the system that have been identified through the review that was undertaken—identified that there was a disconnect between what legislation enabled child protection workers to do and the frameworks that had been established for them to work within, which made it difficult for them to navigate what could have been done much earlier to support Kumanjayi Little Baby at a time when she was made known to the department.

I reject that I am not prepared to admit when things are difficult and that I am not prepared to meet with people who do not agree with me; I meet with them every day. Those people are the people who have helped me frame what needed to be done.

I reject the assertions from those on the other side that we do not care and that we have not taken any action because we have done the exact opposite. I have spent the last almost two years going through many case histories of many children who have been let down by a system that was broken. Lives have been shattered because we had a system that was not enabling to assist people to step in early to do the work that needed to be done to keep families together and help them deal with difficult situations, that gave clear pathways.

Ee brought in the Every Child Matters legislation because it meant that for the first time, we told our workers on the front line that they could look at a situation and say, 'This is not safe and we need to step in'. It was clear, articulated well, and we have given them the tools to be able to do that work. We have given them a framework of proactive efforts so that they know the work that has to be done up-front to try to keep that family together, and when that family cannot be kept together, to do everything in their power to keep children with the family network that loves and cares for them.

I reject the assertion that since bringing that legislation into place, apparently hundreds of children have been brought into care. I challenge the Member for Gwoja to identify one extra child who has been brought into care. In actual fact, the foundation of the work that we do to start with those families is our family responsibility agreements. We have had them in place for 18 months with the Circuit Breaker team. Of more than 700 cases, only five children have been brought into care. That is hardly hundreds because it shows that the framework of family responsibility agreements working with these children's families, works. It shows that we can repair damaged relationships and make people safe.

I remind those on the other side that one of the things the review found was that the system expected Kumanjayi Little Baby's mother, who was herself a victim of violence, to somehow protect her children. That is not blaming Kumanjayi Little Baby's mother or her family; that is saying, 'We let you down. We are sorry that we did and we will not let that keep happening.'

The Leader of the Opposition spoke at great length about budget, policy and this government's record. She spoke about pretty much everything except the motion in front of the House. She did not support the Member for Gwoja. She did not condemn the Member for Gwoja. In fact, nobody on the other side spoke to the motion,

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not even the Member for Gwoja. He took the opportunity once again to do some political grandstanding and make accusations that those on this side of the House do not care. Nothing could be further from the truth.

I will not apologise for calling out what happened over Labor's time in office because that is the work that we are rectifying and have to fix. It is a lot of work. There is a lot to undo and a lot of effort to be made. The review that we tabled on Tuesday shows exactly what the previous eight years left behind in the child protection space. Territorians need to know how we got to this point and that it just did not come out of nowhere; things were happening that were not okay and nobody called it out.

I am not afraid to call it out. I am not afraid to face those people who oppose what we are doing. That is okay; everybody has an opinion. However, I will never apologise for listening to the grandmas, parents and children or for giving a voice to Aboriginal women across the country who are now coming forward saying, 'Enough is enough. Do something when we tell you our children and grandchildren are at risk. If we tell you that they are not in a safe place, take action. Help us protect them.' I will not apologise for that; I will continue to do that hard work.

As to the record of this government, we passed Declan's law and toughened bail laws. There is still a separation between government and the courts; the courts make their decisions and they will be the ones ultimately that have to stand up and tell Territorians why those decisions are made. All we can do is provide the legislative framework as best we can to make sure that Territorians are kept safe. We will continue to do that.

We set about fixing the health system because we all know if we are not healthy and not educated, things get difficult. An extra $1bn boost from the Commonwealth went into our health system. That action should have been taken 10 or 20 years ago, but we have done it now. As I said, we passed the Every Child Matters Bill, putting the safety of children first in law.

When it comes to the Department of Children and Families, we have worked hard to bring people on board who can work to keep our children safe. In the child protection space and for our frontline practitioners, we have reduced the vacancy rate from 40% to 22%. That is extraordinary.

We accepted the entire 45 recommendations made in the review. We have made the commitment to implement them as quickly as possible. In fact, we have already started implementing them.

We are reviewing and auditing all safety plans. We are saying that going forward, for any signs of safety plan that is developed, as a bare minimum, anybody named on that plan must have a working with children clearance which includes a national police history check so that we can be certain that the people who are working to keep children safe in those family networks, are people you would want to be working to keep children safe.

The Member for Gwoja told this Assembly that he will stand up for the people he represents, and so he should. He defended his comments by saying that what he said was already in the public domain, but he missed the point entirely. Nobody in the House is arguing about what is in the newspaper. The question is what a former Attorney-General chose to say on the day the report into how the system failed this little girl was tabled.

He chose to talk about the alleged perpetrator of the crime against that little girl. He chose to talk about housing and transport and a job for the alleged perpetrator. He chose to tell Territorians as fact that Kumanjayi Little Baby is no longer here while the man accused of her death is yet to face trial, because he did not have a house, job or a car. That was the tack he chose to take on the day the report was tabled into how the system let down Kumanjayi Little Baby, how we failed to see the signs that were there in front of us and were unable to act on them—signs that happened over the entirety of her life.

Standing up for the people you represent should mean standing up for the victims. There are women and children in the Member for Gwoja's electorate living with violence now. We are working hard across the Territory to reduce that. It is interesting that in all the discussions where we are being told we are not doing anything or we have not changed anything or we have made no difference, nobody on the other side is willing to acknowledge that we have reduced domestic, family and sexual violence assaults by 12% across the Territory. There is nowhere else in the country that has happened. This is on the back of an escalation of domestic, family and sexual violence under the previous government that was truly unforgivable.

Territorians watching today did not hear an answer from the Leader of the Opposition or any other member on the other side in relation to this motion. None of them could bring themselves to say that he did the wrong

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thing or he did the right thing. They all went down the political middle and decided to talk about anything but the matter that was on the table before us. A leader who cannot commit to a position on something this clear surely is showing that she does not have what it takes to lead the party, let alone the Territory.

Kumanjayi Little Baby's family deserve better from those on the other side. They deserved an opposition that put her first; it did not do that.

I commend this motion to the Assembly.

The Assembly divided:

Ayes 17	Noes 7
Ms Boothby	Mr Brown
Mr Burgoyne	J Davis
Ms Cahill	Mr McGrath
Mrs Carlson	Mr Paech
Mr Charls	Mr Smelt
Mr Edgington	Ms Uibo
Mrs Finocchiaro	Mr Young
Mrs Hersey	
Mr Howe	
Mr Kerle	
Mr Mackay	
Mr Maley	
Mr O'Gallagher	
Mr Patel	
Dr Rahman	
Mr Yan	
Mrs Zio	

Motion agreed to.

MARINE FACILITIES (ACCESS AND PRICING) BILL
Serial 78

Continued from 26 August 2026.

Mr YAN (Logistics and Infrastructure): Madam Speaker, I move that the Bill be now read a second time.

Mr SMELT (Nightcliff): Madam Speaker, like the Treasurer in his introductory remarks, I will keep my speech brief.

At its heart, this Bill relates to a straightforward economic problem: how do we make sure that major marine infrastructure can operate commercially, attract investment and recover efficient costs, while also ensuring that businesses that need to use the infrastructure can access it on a fair and reasonable basis?

That balance is important because marine facilities are not ordinary markets. Major facilities like ship lifts, berths and associated marine infrastructure are expensive to build and have significant fixed costs. In many cases there will simply not be multiple competing facilities sitting side by side. That can create what economists describe as a natural monopoly or, at the very least, a significant infrastructure bottleneck.

When access to one piece of infrastructure determines whether another business can compete in an upstream or downstream market, the way access is allocated and priced needs to be carefully considered. That is recognised expressly in this Bill. Its object is to promote the economically efficient operation and use of and investment in major marine facilities while promoting effective competition in upstream and downstream markets.

There is a reasonable body of Australian research dealing with these issues. Taylor and McDonald, in their recent study of Australian container port reform, identify the natural monopoly characteristics that can exist at the port authority level and the potential for market power to flow through into rents and infrastructure access charges. Their broader point is that introducing private investment or commercial discipline does not by itself create a competitive market where the underlying infrastructure remains difficult or impossible to duplicate.

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The purpose of economic regulation should not be to prevent an operator from making a commercial return—quite the opposite. If we want investment in marine infrastructure, the framework has to recognise the efficient cost of providing the service and the commercial risks involved.

Equally, if a business has no realistic alternative to a piece of infrastructure, simply telling the parties to negotiate is not always enough. Research by John Black from the University of New South Wales and Violeta Roso looking at Port Botany after privatisation, makes a related point. Their analysis describes a model where private operators continue to play a major commercial role, but government retains important regulatory, planning and infrastructure responsibilities. They found that a robust and enforceable regulatory framework can co-exist with private investment and operation. That is broadly the balance this Bill is seeking to establish.

The opposition supports the appointment of the Utilities Commission as the independent regulator. We also support the basic access architecture in the Bill.

There is a presumption of access on a first-come first-served basis, subject to sensible exemptions for existing commercial contractual rights, queuing arrangements and flexible booking principles. These are defined processes for both standard and non-standard applications, including when modifications to a facility may be required. Importantly, operators are required to negotiate in good faith and access agreements must deal with matters including price, timing, capacity, maintenance responsibilities, performance criteria and dispute resolution. The protections against discriminatory conduct are also incredibly important.

The Bill prevents an operator from hindering access and addresses circumstances where an operator, particularly one that is vertically integrated, may have an incentive to provide more favourable terms to itself or a related business. That goes directly to one of the central issues in infrastructure access regulation. It is not enough for access to exist on paper if the terms of that access can materially disadvantage a competitor.

The pricing provisions are worth noting. The Bill does not just say that prices should be cheap; it adopts orthodox economic regulation principles. Prices should allow the operator to recover the efficient costs of providing access and receive a return consummate with the regulatory and commercial risks involved. At the same time, the framework provides for productivity incentives and seeks to prevent a vertically integrated operator using its terms and conditions to favour its own downstream operations.

The Bill also gives the regulatory framework some flexibility. Depending on circumstances, regulation can range from monitoring prices and applying pricing principles through to maximum prices, revenue controls or other forms of economic regulation. That is sensible because not every facility will necessarily require the same degree of intervention.

The ring-fencing provisions are another important safeguard. Requiring separate accounts for regulated services makes it easier for the regulator to understand the actual costs of providing those services, while protections around commercially sensitive information reduce the risk that information supplied by a customer could be used to disadvantage that customer elsewhere in the market.

Finally, the statutory review mechanism is also an important part of this Bill. After the initial four-year period, and subsequently every five years, the regulator must examine whether access and price regulation remains necessary; whether the form of regulation remains appropriate; and whether the pricing principles themselves remain suitable.

The real test of this legislation will ultimately be in its implementation, the regulations, the quality of the price determinations, the information available to the Utilities Commission and the capacity of the regulator to respond where problems arise.

The framework established by this Bill recognises the right issues: investment; efficient pricing; open access; transparency; competitive neutrality; and protection against the exercise of infrastructure market power. For those reasons, the Territory Labor opposition supports the Bill.

Mrs ZIO (Fannie Bay): Madam Speaker, I support the Marine Facilities (Access and Pricing) Bill 2026. This legislation relates to much more than access to a ship lift. It relates to accountability, fair competition, protecting the interests of Territory taxpayers and, importantly, ensuring that one of the largest public infrastructure investments in the Northern Territory delivers genuine economic opportunities for Territorians.

Before I speak about the opportunities ahead, I want to address the extraordinary financial legacy left behind by the former Labor government because the Darwin ship lift project demonstrates what happens when

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political ambition is not matched by sound financial management, commercial discipline and proper accountability. Unfortunately, it is Territory taxpayers who are left carrying the consequences.

Let me make one thing clear: I support the development of a ship lift in Darwin, growing our marine industry, creating opportunities for Territory businesses and Darwin becoming a major marine servicing and maintenance hub for northern Australia.

The problem was never the concept. The problem was Labor's management and delivery of the project. The Darwin ship lift was originally proposed in 2015 by the former CLP government, with a commitment of up to $100m from the proceeds of the Darwin Port lease. That was a commitment to help establish a marine servicing industry in Darwin. I make no apology for supporting that vision but there is an enormous difference between supporting the development of strategic infrastructure and signing contractual arrangements that expose Territory taxpayers to extraordinary long-term financial obligations.

The original proposal envisaged a contribution towards a privately developed facility but what followed under Labor was a substantially different project, with a government-owned facility, expanded scope and escalating financial commitments.

The question is not whether Darwin needed a ship lift. The question is whether Labor delivered a commercially responsible arrangement for Territorians who are paying for it. Labor came into government in 2016, and by the time they left office in 2024, eight years later, the still-unfinished project cost had reached approximately $515m.

By the time the CLP government took office in 2024, Labor had already locked the Territory into contractual arrangements that made walking away from the ship lift project an extraordinarily costly proposition. That is an extraordinary escalation.

I want members opposite to remember something. We are not talking about Monopoly money. We are talking about real public money, money that ultimately affects the Territory's capacity to invest in roads, schools, hospitals, policing and essential services.

The financial consequences of terminating the ship lift agreements meant that simply pulling the plug was not a realistic or responsible option. Labor left us with the contracts, the financial obligations and the escalating costs. Our job now is to make sure Territory taxpayers get the greatest possible economic return from a project we could not simply afford to abandon.

Now, with the estimated project cost reaching approximately $850m, this government has been left with the responsibility of turning Labor's costly legacy into a productive investment for Territorians. Every dollar committed to a major infrastructure project comes with a responsibility to manage that investment properly. That responsibility does not disappear simply because a project looks impressive in a government announcement.

Announcing a project is easy. Delivering it responsibly is considerably harder. That is where Labor's record deserves serious scrutiny. The Public Accounts Committee's inquiry into the Darwin ship lift should be compulsory reading for anyone interested in responsible government because its assessment of the contractual arrangements was extraordinary.

The committee described the decisions surrounding the project as constituting what it considered the greatest transfer of public to private wealth in the Northern Territory's history. Let that sink in.

That is not simply a political slogan. It is the assessment made by a parliamentary committee following its examination of the project. The committee identified more than $1.8bn in lifetime cost exposure for the Territory. Perhaps the most extraordinary feature of the arrangements is this—Territory taxpayers own the infrastructure. Territory taxpayers carried a substantial financial obligation when it comes to the ongoing maintenance of that infrastructure. Yet the Territory has no contractual entitlement to the operating revenue generated by the ship lift.

I do not think Territorians need a degree in economics to recognise why that arrangement deserves scrutiny because when the public carries the financial burden, the public should reasonably expect commercial arrangements that protect its interests and when those arrangements expose taxpayers to enormous financial obligations, the government responsible must be held accountable. These were not minor administrative decisions; they were significant contractual commitments entered into under the former Labor government, and the consequences will extend well beyond a single parliamentary term.

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You cannot take credit for the ambition and then walk away from the responsibility of the bill. Labor left the Territory with limited options. The Public Accounts Committee also highlighted the significant financial consequences of attempting to terminate the project. That is an important point because some people might reasonably ask, why doesn't the government simply walk away? Why not cancel the project and start again? It is because Labor's contractual arrangements meant walking away is not necessarily a financial responsible option either, the Territory would still face substantial financial consequences.

This government inherited this position, an expensive project, significant contractual obligations and limited options for avoiding further financial exposure. Labor did not simply leave us with a construction project; they left us with a long-term financial challenge.

I am sure the members opposite would love to talk about the opportunities that the ship lift presents. Well, on that point we agree the opportunities are significant.

Here is the approach of the Finocchiaro CLP: we approach this differently. We understand that the position that we inherited has a substantial public investment already committed and rather than allowing the project to become an expensive monument to poor financial management, we are focused on making it work for the Northern Territory.

That is why the development of the Northern Marine Complex at East Arm is important. The ship lift is strategically located within the broader marine precinct and the opportunity is not simply about operating a ship lift. It is about developing an entire marine industry around it. It is a purpose-built marine precinct supporting vessel maintenance, marine engineering, fabrication, logistics and specialist maritime services. It is about attracting businesses that might otherwise send their vessels Interstate or overseas for maintenance and repairs.

It is about strengthening Darwin's position as a maritime service centre and, importantly, it is about keeping jobs, skills and economic activity right here in the Northern Territory. A ship lift on his own does not necessarily create a successful marine industry. The real opportunities come from the businesses operating around it, the boilermakers, the welders, the electricians, the marine mechanics, the engineers, the logistics operators and the apprentices who will become the next generation of skilled territory workers. That is where the real economic return lies, not simply in the concrete and the steel but in the businesses, the employment, the investment and the infrastructure that can support it.

There is another important point that members opposite should not overlook. The legislation responds directly to the recommendations of the Public Accounts Committee's inquiry into the ship lift. The very committee that examined the extraordinary financial and contractual arrangements entered into under the former Labor government also recommended that an access and pricing regime be legislated, and that is precisely what this government is delivering. We are not simply talking about accountability; we are putting in a framework for accountability into legislation.

The Marine Facilities (Access and Pricing) Bill establishes a framework for regulating access to and pricing of services at designated marine facilities. It starts with the Darwin ship lift facility but also provides a framework that can apply to other designated marine facilities in the future.

The purpose is to support a long-term common-user model underpinned by fairness, transparency and independent oversight. After the financial legacy Labor left behind, I would suggest that that is exactly what Territorians want and expect.

It is important to understand what this Bill does, and equally important to understand what it does not do. The legislation does not set the prices businesses will pay to use the Darwin ship lift. Instead, it establishes the legislative framework and pricing principles that will guide the independent regulatory oversight. That responsibility will sit with the Utilities Commission of the Northern Territory.

The commission will have an important role in overseeing access and pricing arrangements, making pricing determinations and monitoring compliance within that regulatory framework. That matters because businesses considering significant investment in Darwin need confidence that they will have the fair opportunity to access essential infrastructure. They need to understand how access is allocated. They need certainty about the terms under which they can operate and confidence that pricing will be subject to appropriate independent regulation. There is little point of building an expensive ship lift if the businesses that need it cannot access it on fair and commercially sensible terms.

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The Bill establishes a general, first-come, first-served access principle, subject to specific exceptions. Those exceptions recognise existing protected contractual rights, applicable queuing policies and agreeable flexible booking arrangements. This is important because this legislation does not simply tear up existing contracts; it establishes a regulatory framework while recognising the contractual position already in place. That is the difference between responsible reform and making promises that cannot realistically be delivered.

One of the most important features of this Bill is the protection it provides against unfair treatment. The legislation prohibits conduct that prevents or hinders access to regulated services. It also prohibits unfair variation between users where that treatment materially disadvantages their ability to compete. That is a significant safeguard because a local marine operator should not find themselves commercially disadvantaged simply because another company has a closer relationship with the facility operator. Access to major publicly owned infrastructure should be governed by fair and transparent arrangements, not favouritism.

Importantly, the legislation provides processes for businesses to apply for access. There are time frames for responding to applications, requirements to negotiate in good faith and structured mechanisms for resolving disputes.

This Bill also establishes a formal complaints process through the independent regulator. If a business believes it has been unfairly prevented from accessing the facility or materially disadvantaged by discriminatory conduct, there is a mechanism for those concerns to be examined. This is not red tape for the sake of red tape; this is commercial certainty, and commercial certainty encourages investment.

I bring this debate a little closer to home because in the electorate of Fannie Bay I have constituents who have been waiting for this legislation. There are Territorians who understand the marine industry, people who recognise the opportunities of the ship lift and what it presents, but also understand that the infrastructure alone is not enough. They want certainty, fair access, and confidence they will have a genuine opportunity to compete. They are not asking for special treatment, they are asking for a fair go. That is a perfectly reasonable expectation.

When I speak with constituents about this project, their interest is not simply in political announcements or how impressive the ship lift might look once completed. They want to know how it will work; who will be able to access it; how will the pricing be determined; what happens if an application is refused; what protections exist if a business believes it has been unfairly treated; and will local businesses have a fair opportunity to benefit?

These are precisely the issues that this legislation seeks to address. For my constituents, this Bill is not simply another piece of legislation passing through this Chamber. It is about providing certainty they have been waiting for. It is about giving Territorian businesses confidence to plan for the future, because business cannot confidently invest in equipment, staff or future operations if they do not understand the conditions under which they can access essential infrastructure.

Whether someone operates a marine business, supplies equipment, employs tradespeople or provides specialist service, the success of the Northern Marine Complex should create opportunities that reach across Darwin and the Territory, including the electorate of Fannie Bay. That is why I am pleased to support this legislation. My constituents have waited long enough for clarity, and now we give them the confidence to invest, compete and grow.

While Labor was signing contracts that left taxpayers carrying extraordinary financial obligations, Territory businesses were still waiting for clarity about how they would access the infrastructure their taxes were helping to fund. My constituents are not interested in being spectators to another expensive government project; they want the opportunity to participate in it. That is what this legislation is designed to support.

A matter I consider particularly important is ensuring that Territory local businesses have the opportunity to participate and grow in the growth of this project. We have already experienced marine operators in Darwin; businesses that have invested their own money and employ local people and train our apprentices. They have supported our economies through some difficult years, and we should be able to create opportunities for them to grow, not establishing an environment where they are disadvantaged by unfair access arrangements or the inability to compete.

The Northern Marine Complex must be an opportunity for Territory businesses, not simply a destination for large interstate competitors. We want major companies to invest here and national and international marine operators to see Darwin as an attractive location. That investment should also create opportunities for local

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business through subcontracting, local procurement, training and ongoing maintenance and servicing work of the precinct.

This Bill provides a framework for independent price regulation, including pricing principles designed to reflect the efficient costs of providing regulated services. We should not be allowing publicly funded investments to be treated as though it were privately funded expenditure for the purpose of justifying the commercial return. Territorians have already paid an enormous price for this infrastructure. A lot of work is happening in that space.

The contrast is clear. Labor left us with a project which costs escalated dramatically and we are working to maximise the economic value of that investment. This legislation does not magically erase the contractual commitments made by the former government or recover every dollar of public money, but we are working hard to make sure that this project benefits Territorians.

I finish by returning to the most important issue. The people of the Northern Territory deserve value for public money and they have invested in major infra and we are delivering that. We cannot change the past, but we can support the future and I support this legislation today.

Debate suspended.

The Assembly suspended.

VISITORS
Milyakburra School

Madam SPEAKER: Honourable members, I advise of the presence in the gallery of students from Milyakburra School, Bickerton Island, accompanied by their teachers. Welcome to Parliament House.

Members: Hear, hear!

PETITION
Repeal of Termination of Pregnancy Laws

Mr O'GALLAGHER (Karama)(by leave): Madam Speaker, I present a petition not conforming with standing orders from 1,966 petitioners praying for the repeal of amendments to the termination of pregnancy laws.

I move that the petition be read.

Motion agreed to; petition read:

A petition calling for the repeal of amendments to the termination of pregnancy laws.

Mr O'GALLAGHER (Karama): Madam Speaker, I move that the petition be referred to the Public Accounts Committee to consider whether the petition should be debated.

Motion agreed to.

QUESTION TIME

Policing in Remote Communities

Ms UIBO to CHIEF MINISTER

Every Territorian deserves to feel safe in their own community. With communities in remote areas lacking police resources, as in my electorate of Arnhem in communities of Bulman and Minyerri in particular, what is your CLP government doing to ensure that our remote communities are also feeling safe and are staffed with police resources? At what stage is the Kelly review at the moment, particularly when it comes to ensuring police have all the resources they need? Have you been to the communities of Minyerri and Bulman? If not, will you meet with the people to hear their concerns about greater police presence in those communities?

ANSWER

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Madam Speaker, I am happy to get a question about policing in the Northern Territory because there is no other government in its history that has supported our police more than our government. Let us not forget we won the election with 17 members of parliament because Labor presided over a law-and-order crisis that crippled the Northern Territory.

Unlike those opposite who like to divide everything by race, we believe in every Territorian having a right to be safe. We do not treat the bush differently to how we treat Alice Springs, Darwin, Katherine or anywhere else. It is only those opposite who seek to divide.

I am happy to get this question because it is an important one. What has the CLP done to support our police in the bush since coming to government? Come in, spinner. We have delivered three consecutive largest ever police budgets in the Territory's history. On top of that, we delivered the largest ever law-and-order budgets between courts, Corrections and police.

We have invested a $130m this year in police infrastructure for the bush. That means police houses that currently do not exist or are dilapidated after 19 of the last 23 years of Labor. We are currently building a brand new police station and police houses in Maningrida right now.

We are working through systematically the decades of neglect under previous Labor governments—federal and Territory—to make sure that our police have the best resources they can. It is not just about the station and the housing, it is about their equipment. We have just invested in next generation Tasers for our police, with the first lot going into hot spot areas like Katherine, for example.

We have recruited, trained, and graduated 300 police since coming to government. Our attrition rate has plummeted, which means fewer police are leaving. We are recruiting more police than ever before, so we have more police than we have ever had.

We have our new stream of police public safety officers which allows …

Ms UIBO: A point of order, Madam Speaker! Standing Order 110; I specifically asked about the communities of Bulman and Minyerri and the resourcing there. Will the Chief Minister visit, or has she visited, to ensure that they have the proper resources?

Madam SPEAKER: There are a lot of questions in there.

Mrs FINOCCHIARO: I am confused. For someone who was a minister for eight years, she has never quite understood how it works. I do not fly around the Territory and decide what happens in a police station. I want to be clear about that. That is why we have a police commissioner.

I have the privileged opportunity to visit many bush stations. I do not march in there and then decide what happens and how we resource them. Let me be explicitly clear about that.

Opposition Leader, your communities are just like every other community in the Northern Territory. They are tasked and resourced by police through the triple-zero centre. We have more police than ever before.

CLP Government – Two-year Progress Report

Mrs ZIO to CHIEF MINISTER

This month marks two years since the Finocchiaro CLP government's first fortnight of parliamentary sittings when our government immediately commenced delivering on its commitment to reduce crime, rebuild the economy and restore the Territory lifestyle.

During our first fortnight, eight Bills were introduced setting legislative foundation for the government's reform agenda. When I speak to constituents in my electorate, they are overwhelmingly supportive of the changes we have made.

Can you please update the House, Territorians and the amazing constituents of the electorate of Fannie Bay on the progress made over the past two years and how the government is continuing to deliver on our commitments?

ANSWER

DRAFT

Madam Speaker, the Member for Fannie Bay is passionate about safe communities. The people of Fannie Bay sent you to this parliament because they had had a gutful of a Labor government that eroded their lifestyle and our economy where law and order reigned free. There were no consequences for offending. People were leaving in droves.

The people of Fannie Bay—just like every Territorian—wanted better; they got better. I am proud to say that in two years we have delivered significant reform. Eighty Bills have come through this parliament in two years. Eight of them were on urgency in our first two weeks. Like the Member for Fannie Bay, who is a woman of conviction, we promised Territorians we would deliver that reducing crime package, and we did.

How does that compare to Labor's record? Let us play a guessing game. How did Labor vote on the Criminal Code Amendment Bill for lowering the age of criminal responsibility? Against. How did Labor vote on our liquor legislation when we had stricter offences for public drinking? Against. How did Labor vote on Declan's law? On our bail reform? On wanding powers? Against. On our Correctional services legislation, which would allow the Corrections Commissioner to draw on externals to be able to support the Corrections crisis that Labor created. How did it vote? Against. How did Labor vote on the Youth Justice Legislation Amendment Bill, which removes the principle that you have to make sure that we can have people in custody, reintroducing spit hoods, keeping prison guards safe? Labor voted against it.

The Police Administration Amendment Bill with PPSOs? Labor voted against. The Sentencing Amendment Bill for minimum mandatory sentencing for domestic violence murders? Against. Even the Every Child Matters Bill, how did those opposite vote? Against.

It is very clear what the status is of the Territory today compared to how it was. We have the toughest bail laws in the country and landmark child protection reforms. Total offences Territory-wide are down by 26%. We have four nation-building projects in the Territory right now—in the Northern Marine Complex, the Territory Energy Link and Arafura Rare Earth Nolans Project. The Beetaloo Basin is pumping gas into Darwin. We now have the highest payroll tax-free threshold in the country. Residential building approvals are up 45.8%. Our population is growing at 1.6%, leading the nation. The *New York Times* said we are the 14th best place in the world to visit this year

We have seen the return of Test cricket, bought Silkwood, the list goes on and on. The choice is very clear. You cannot trust Labor.

Alternative Long-term Living and Services Delivery Models

Mr YOUNG to MINISTER for ABORIGINAL AFFAIRS

In 2023 the Labor government invited Murin Association to lead consultations with traditional owners regarding their homelands of the Thamarrurr region to explore future living arrangements that would enhance safety and harmony for all residents. In November 2024, your CLP government was handed the alternative long-term living and services delivery models for the Thamarrurr region report. During a recent visit to Wadeye, residents raised this report with you and you told them you would get back to them as soon as possible yet residents are still waiting to hear a response.

Madam Speaker, I seek leave to table the report.

Leave not granted.

Mr YOUNG: Minister, why have you failed to provide an update on this report and will you commit to implementing its recommendations?

ANSWER

Madam Speaker, yes, I have spoken to Thamarrurr about some of the issues at Wadeye.

Mr Young interjecting.

Mr EDGINGTON: I have been there, Member for Daly. I have not seen you there. I have been out there to find out what the issues are by speaking, looking, listening and learning. Apart from the Member for Daly, who spends all his time at Casuarina and pizza in the park, I have actually been there, Member for Daly

DRAFT

Some of the issues you are talking about are homelands, and this has been a long-standing issue, with Labor and people wanting to get back to their homelands. I spoke about this yesterday, because this is important. Every community I go to wants to see new housing in homelands. When it comes to housing, we only have to go back to 8 July 2024. On that date, Member for Daly, you were not in the photo that I tabled yesterday, but the Member for Arafura was. What your former Labor government did was signed a 10-year agreement, $4bn: $2bn from the federal government; and $2bn from the Northern Territory Government, to build houses in remote communities.

As I explained yesterday every Labor person you could think of was standing around the table. The Leader of the Opposition—who was the Minister for Housing and Homelands at the time—signed that agreement.

Mr YOUNG: A point of order, Madam Speaker! Standing Order 110; relevance. The question was specific in regards to the actual report. Why have you failed to provide an update on this report, and will you commit to implementing its recommendations?

Mr EDGINGTON: There are important questions about homelands that the former Labor government should be answering. On the eve of the election, Labor signed a 10-year agreement, which did not include any development on homelands. This is absolutely disgraceful. The Member for Gwoja was a part of that Cabinet, as was the Leader of the Opposition; you were not Member for Daly. The Member for Arafura was in the photo, and the Member for Mulka did not know what happened.

Mr YOUNG: A point of order, Madam Speaker! Standing Order 110; relevance. The member is not answering the question to the report.

Madam SPEAKER: Take your seat, the member still has 40 seconds.

Mr EDGINGTON: I still have time to explain to the member about homelands because he was not in the photo and I am doubtful whether he was even told that the 10-year agreement did not include homelands in the report. No new housing is being built on homelands, because your colleagues sitting there in front of you around the Cabinet table failed to turn their minds to what needed to be done in homelands, such as places like Wadeye, Maningrida and all your electorates. You were let down by the people sitting in front of you.

Gas and Energy Security

Mr KERLE to MINISTER for MINING and ENERGY

This week, Labor's internal and repeated divide on energy security has been on display for all to see. On Tuesday, during the ministerial address, this government handed every member opposite the chance to tell Territorians where they stand on gas and energy security. They had the floor and the time and not one of them would say where Labor stands. Either they have lost their voice or the Leader of the Opposition has taken it off them. Can the minister tell the House what a divided, gagged and confused opposition means for Territorians who need power that is secure, reliable and affordable?

ANSWER

Madam Speaker, I know how the Member for Blain supports gas industries because he knows that reliable energy is crucial to Northern Territory.

Before I start I will read out a quote:

> *… there are a lot of people who are set-minded about gas and believe there should be no new gas development—full stop. Apparently that means you can still keep the lights on, prices will not go through the roof and your energy supply will be reliable. To those people I say: you have your head in the sand and are off the planet; you are ridiculous.*

Mr Burgoyne: Who said that?

Mr MALEY: Who do you think would say that? Would it be a gas industry person? Would it be the CEO of a gas company? No; it was Labor's own Deputy Chief Minister Nicole Manison in May 2023. Do you know what is ironic about that? The people she was calling ridiculous are now sitting over there.

We know that Labor does not have an energy policy. We know that Labor has a different story from each side of the room. It depends on who you are talking to because they flipflop like Flipper from the TV.

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To win his seat, the Member for Nightcliff signed a pledge backing fracking, and a 100% transition to renewables with no fracking. That is his view. It just goes on and on. I will go through what these people have said. He signed the pledge. He met with Santos and Tamboran in September I wonder what he said to them. Do you think he showed them that petition saying 100% renewables? He speaks two tongues; I would be interested to hear what he told them. Maybe he can jump up and give us a personal explanation and say what he told those gas companies. I have news for 'Old Flipflop' over there, you cannot have it both ways.

On Tuesday every member was given an opportunity to talk about their view and how they support gas or do not support gas. Guess what? We did not hear anything; they were gagged. Those opposite are not happy to tell us in this House, but they are happy to go to the ABC.

I table the ABC story with the headline, 'Majority of Territory Labor caucus opposes fracking, contradicting opposition's official position'.

Those opposite were happy to talk to the ABC, but they are not happy to talk to the people. The Member for Gwoja—10 years with no straight answer. We do not have an answer from him. Do you know what is the funniest thing? Labor members cancelled their own conference because they did not want to face the party about what their views are.

When we came to power, gas was not certain; however, gas is now keeping the lights on in this Chamber.

Road Maintenance – Maningrida

Mr BROWN to MINISTER for LOGISTICS and INFRASTRUCTURE

Transport operators travelling along the top road to Maningrida have raised serious concerns about deteriorating road conditions, including dangerous creek crossings, deep sand, bulldust holes and heavy vehicles becoming bogged. Graders report that road conditions are worse each year and some sections now becoming accessible much later in the Dry Season. What regular inspections and maintenance are undertaken to ensure creek crossings and other dangerous sections of the road remain safe for heavy vehicles?

ANSWER

Madam Speaker, as I have said on regular occasions, our roads are more than just roads; they connect our communities, drive our business and keep the Territory moving.

Look at what has happened in the last 12 months: we had two cyclones, significant flooding events across the Top End through Maningrida and the top end of Arnhem Land, Katherine and Central Australia. We saw what happened in Alice Springs recently. We have had unprecedented weather events that have affected our road network considerably.

I put on the record my thanks to the department staff for the work they did throughout this period because this was not just one small event; this was a significant, sustained weather event which took every resource that we had and some extra.

I also thank all the contractors and the people in the bush who pitched in to help to get roads open and keep people moving and our communities connected.

Regular inspections are done on all our roads, particularly our bush roads. Some of these inspections and the repair work were hampered by these weather events. We could not get to certain areas. Even in Central Australia where you think we would not have that many problems, we could not get to a number of roads because of the amount of water on them. Some remained closed for quite some time which made matters worse for trying to do repairs.

I have seen photos on the Wadeye road. We try to do the right thing to get things fixed early, to our own detriment. I have seen pictures of bogged graders and equipment there while they were trying to get on those roads. It is unfortunate. We would love to get out there to fix these things early, but we need to measure those responses to make sure that we do not inflict further damage and cause further delays.

The team are there on a regular basis doing the inspections to make sure we get those pieces fixed that definitely need to be fixed. They are always prioritised, triaged in some respect and the worst parts are done

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immediately whilst we get to the rest. Coming into this Wet Season we have announced those panel contracts. The Deputy Chief Minister was announcing them this week, so we have a number of contractors across the Territory now ready to roll on standby should we see these significant weather events, and we need to get out and fix our roads. It speeds up our response time and gets those roads open quicker.

We have a number of contractors now that we can pick from, tap on the shoulder and reduce the red tape to get people out there to fix those roads, and I am hoping we have a much drier Wet Season this year.

Law and Order Reforms

Mr MACKAY to ATTORNEY-GENERAL

Territorians elected the Finocchiaro CLP government with a clear mandate to reduce crime, rebuild the economy and restore our Territory lifestyle. Two years on, Labor members are still flipflopping, changing their minds and struggling to agree with what they stand for. One minute they support something, and the next minute they are against it. One minute a member posts to Facebook, and the next minute he is overruled.

Can you update Territorians on what Labor actually did when in government, what those opposite are saying now and what results Territorians are seeing from our strong law and order reforms?

ANSWER

Madam Speaker, the Member for Goyder is right. Labor is trying to rewrite the history books, but Territorians have not forgotten how you led us into a mess after the last eight years. Two years ago, Territorians gave a clear mandate to the parliament, and they elected us on that mandate of reducing crime, rebuilding the economy and restoring our lifestyle. We, from day one, have gotten on with that job, but Labor has opposed nearly every one of our law and order policies and our legislation. They just vote it down, but we still keep getting on with that job.

No-one knows who they stand for. They talk about caring about housing, but they backflipped on Lee Point. They talk about caring for growth, but they have backflipped on data centres. They talk about local jobs but what about the local jobs of the local bookmakers—backflipped. They backflipped on the ‘do not deal’. They did five ‘do not deals’ for Middle Arm when they were in government, and now they are saying it is no good when we do a ‘do not deal’—disgraceful.

They are even confused about who will be their next leader because we do not know who that will be come Christmas. I have a media release from the former Labor Attorney-General, the Member for Gwoja, dated 22 November 2022. I table that document. He said that they need to be smart about the way we deliver justice. He said the NT was a dynamic society brimming with cultural and social diversity and that is what was at the heart of their law and order reform. That is such a strange thing to say because on this side of the House we believe that community safety is at the heart of our law reforms, not all this other wishy-washy stuff.

They went on to remove mandatory sentencing and repeal against DV offenders, raised the age of criminal responsibility to 12, changed sentencing laws for serious offences and recorded offences of an extra 11,000 people. DV offences rose by 82%. Victims were left waiting. They believed that a workshop and a warm meal was a way to deal with offenders instead of strong consequences and putting victims first.

Under the CLP government we are turning that around. We have 10,000 less recorded offences. DV is down by 12%, which is unbelievable after the last eight years. There are 4,000 fewer victims of crime, and the reason is because there are stronger sentences and consequences for DV offenders. We are reforming criminal procedure. We are putting victims first so they do not have to relive their trauma over and again like they did. Even the former Attorney-General, the Member for Gwoja, said on Katie Woolf on 20 February 2026 that he acknowledged DV was decreasing.

Nightcliff Jetty Upgrade

Mr SMELT to MINISTER for LOGISTICS and INFRASTRUCTURE

Upgrade works at the Nightcliff Jetty commenced in May this year and were originally expected to be completed by late July; however, your department has since confirmed that additional structural repairs have delayed this project until November, leaving this iconic community landmark closed for months longer than originally anticipated.

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Minister, can you confirm exactly when the Nightcliff Jetty will be reopened to the public and what the revised total cost will be?

ANSWER

Madam Speaker, I think when the Member for Nightcliff was employed by DLI he had quite a bit to do with the upgrades on the Nightcliff Jetty—funny that.

Like with any marine infrastructure—whether it is a jetty, a boat or anything else—the climate in the Territory takes a heavy toll. The tender went out to do upgrade works on the Nightcliff Jetty, and they commenced on 11 May.

Mr Young: Mandorah was great! Where were you?

Mr YAN: I pick up on the interjections from the Member for Daly. Let us talk about the Mandorah Jetty. That was 35% over budget and delayed by the previous Labor government. If I got onto the Minister for Police and got forensics to have a bit of a poke around on that project, guess whose fingerprints they will find? The Member for Nightcliff when he was working for the Department of Logistics and Infrastructure how his fingerprints all over that project as well. There is a theme here.

Let us get back to the Nightcliff Jetty, because it is a great piece of infrastructure. I have been there and seen it, and it is a great place to be on a nice Dry Season afternoon. We found once we got in there to look at that piece of infrastructure that the damage to the jetty was far greater than anticipated. Sometimes it is hard to anticipate what you will find. Once you start having a good poke around at some of these things you find more things to do, which is what has been found. We are doing the right thing, but according to the Member for Nightcliff maybe we should have opened it earlier. Should we open an unsafe piece of infrastructure? Should we put the people of Nightcliff at risk by allowing them onto a jetty that is not structurally safe? By the premise of your question, that is what you are asking me.

We will do the right thing and fix that infrastructure properly so that when people get down and want to use it, it is safe, no-one will get hurt and it will be there for quite some time. We want people to enjoy themselves there. Kids out fishing and people walking along and watching the sunset from that spot is quite nice.

Mr SMELT: A point of order, Madam Speaker! Standing Order 110; relevance. We had the history lesson from the minister. We just want to find out how much the total revised cost will be and when it will be open.

Madam SPEAKER: Minister, you have the call.

Mr YAN: Maybe you could answer that question for me, Member for Nightcliff. You were part of the team organising the works. You probably have a better idea than I had. We will make sure that every effort is made to reopen that jetty as soon as it is safe to do so. We will continue progressing those essential repairs and upgrades as efficiently as we can so people can utilise that infrastructure again.

VISITOR
Mr Damien Ryan

Madam SPEAKER: Honourable members, I welcome Alice Springs councillor Damien Ryan to Parliament House. Welcome, Damien.

Members: Hear, hear!

Budget Management

Dr RAHMAN to TREASURER

Territorians expect responsible financial management, sustainable public sector wages and a government that delivers on its budget commitments. Over recent years, the Territory has seen significant changes to public sector wage policies, government expenditure forecasts and approaches to budget repair. These decisions have long-term consequences for taxpayers, Territory businesses and the financial sustainability

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of government services. At the same time, supporting local businesses, encouraging employment and investing in the next generation of Territory workers remains critical to rebuilding our economy.

Can you outline the importance of consistency and accountability in budget management and how the Finocchiaro government is delivering practical economic reforms for Territorians?

ANSWER

Madam Speaker, the Member for Fong Lim knows how important our economic development is.

While those opposite spend their time justifying changing their positions, this government is getting on with delivering practical reforms like increasing the payroll tax-free threshold from $1.5m to $2.5m, helping our local businesses, and exempting wages paid to apprentices and eligible trainees from payroll tax. These practical measures are delivering results. These changes reduce employment costs for eligible businesses and support investment in the next generation of Territory workers. They give businesses more room to employ, train and grow.

Territorians deserve certainty, credible commitments and a government prepared to be accountable for its decisions. Labor can change its leader, shadow ministers and policies, but its record remains available for everybody to read. Before those opposite deliver another lecture about wages, savings and budget discipline, they should explain their own decisions. Labor wants Territorians to forget its record, but we intend to remind them.

Before those opposite lecture anyone else about wages, savings and budget discipline, they should read their own words. I have a copy of a media release titled, 'Budget 2020: Making the Territory Australia's Comeback Capital', dated 10 November 2020 and issued by then Chief Minister and Treasurer Michael Gunner. I table this document. This is Labor's account of its budget. It announced:

From 2021–22 wage indexation will be paused for four years …

That was Labor's policy for Territory public servants, with annual retention payments instead of percentage wage increases. Labor said:

The new wages policy will improve the budget position by $424 million …

We know how that ended. It put a $1bn on the credit card every year.

In October 2022 Labor reversed and introduced the annual percentage increases. Those opposite should remember that history before they present themselves as the unquestioned defenders of public servants.

What happened to Labor's expenditure forecast? In 2022 it forecast approximately $8.35bn in expenditure for 2023–24. The comparable actual expenditure was approximately $10.85bn, a huge $2.23bn above the original forecast. Labor cannot be trusted with the books. It cannot be trusted with the Territory's budget.

Centre Bush Bus

Mr PAECH to MINISTER for LOGISTICS and INFRASTRUCTURE

I give a shout-out to Alice Springs Councillor Damien Ryan.

I refer to your CLP government's decision to cut funding to the bush bus, a service that has reduced from twice a week to once a week in five communities. Can you explain to parliament what alternative support arrangements your government will provide for remote Territorians who rely on this essential service to access healthcare, shopping and necessities? Given your continual talk about cost-of-living relief, what practical measures are you delivering to make transport more accessible and affordable for remote Territorians? Can you confirm how much a round trip to Kintore costs?

ANSWER

Madam Speaker, I am glad to be able to set the record straight because there has been quite a bit misinformation thrown around regarding this over the past few weeks.

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When we look at our remote transport program we see that we increased the budget for this in the last budget round because we knew there were increased fuel costs. We knew we had to support the people providing those services and we did. That budget of about $3.2m covers about eight operators that go to 50 remote communities, including outstations, across the Territory. We are helping people in communities to get into town. We have those programs in place in everybody's electorates, including in Wadeye, Arnhem Land and Nhulunbuy.

Every business is eligible to put in for that grant funding. Centre Bush Bus put in for some of that funding last year. It was unsuccessful because there had been some issues with the acquittal of a previous grant funding given to it. We did the right thing leading into Christmas, understanding that there may have been some pressures. We provided some one-off funding only of $667,000 for five months.

When you look at the number of passengers who utilise that service …

Mr PAECH: A point of order, Madam Speaker! Standing Order 110; relevance. I asked a direct question of the minister about what additional cost of relief they will provide the transport services for remote Territorians and how much is the return trip to Kintore.

Madam SPEAKER: Please continue, minister.

Mr YAN: I am getting to the point about how that funding is used. We provided funding to Centre Bush Bus. Based on the number of passengers carried, when it is extrapolated out over five months, it worked out to be about $475 per person, plus the charge that Centre Bush Bus was applying to people using it. It was not just our subsidy, there was an additional charge on top of that.

When we looked at that longer term, the program is set up not to fully subsidise runs. When this program was set up many years ago it was to assist operators in seeing if a route was financially viable and not there to subsidise it long term. Centre Bush Bus told us in its report on that funding that over that period of time it had lost money on that run and it was not effectively financially viable.

We are looking at what we will be able to do over the period; at all available options within the funding arrangements that we have to make sure that we can provide services to those people in remote communities so they can get in and out of town when they need to.

Centre Bush Bus – Supplementary Question

Mr PAECH to MINISTER for LOGISTICS and INFRASTRUCTURE

What is the current amount that you are funding for free bus services in Darwin and Alice Springs? Why do remote people have to go without a subsidy when urban people get one?

ANSWER

Madam Speaker, I am not exactly sure on the exact number, but across the Territory it is around about $30m or $35m annually that we provide for urban bus services for the people of Darwin, Palmerston and, of course, Central Australia.

When you look at the population bases there again work that out as a per-capita expense, you will probably find that the per-capita expense in the urban areas is probably far less in some respects …

Mr Young: What is it? Break it down, Treasurer.

Ms Uibo: Take it on notice. Go and ask the Treasurer.

Mr YAN: Picking up on the interjections, let us consider the majority of the people who are using the public transport …

Mr PAECH: A point of order, Madam Speaker! Standing Order 110; relevance. It is a direct question. Why does this government make it free for urban people, but remote people have to pay?

Mr YAN: Do you know why it is free? Because those on the other side messed up the ticketing system. They tried to claim it as a cost-of-living expense, but the ticketing system was broken. That is why it ended up free.

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Lee Point Development

Mrs CARLSON to MINISTER for LANDS, PLANNING and ENVIRONMENT

The CLP government is focused on increasing housing supply, unlocking land and getting development moving because we all know Territorians need more homes and greater house choices, unlike those on the other side who continue to flipflop.

Can you outline the significant benefits the Lee Point development could deliver for Territorians, including the much-needed housing, jobs and economic growth, and explain the importance of progressing this development,, particularly given the former Labor government approved the project and the subsequent opposition expressed by the new Member for Nightcliff?

ANSWER

Madam Speaker, the Member for Wanguri is a member who understands how important it is for Territory to get into their first home.

The Defence Housing Australia development is an 800-home Lee Point development at Lee Point, Muirhead, delivered through two development permits which were approved by the Development Consent Authority following extensive community consultation and environmental studies.

The initial development permit for Lee Point—the Member for Wanguri is right—was issued in 2018–19 under Labor Minister Eva Lawler. In June 2021 then Chief Minister Michael Gunner went on radio and said:

> *The planning processes have been gone through … this got approved back in 2019. There's actually blocks for sale now. So, it's happened.*

I go back to what then Chief Minister Eva Lawler said regarding Lee Point:

'Lee Point is too far gone.

'This development has followed all the right processes through. The planning decisions were made many years ago. The DCA was involved. It has been through the independent EPA and it has been through the federal EPBC.

'As a minister, I am not going to start overturning decisions made by an independent statutory board, otherwise we will have chaos in the NT.'

Can anyone think about what would happen if we had NT Labor back in government? We would have chaos, as described by the previous Chief Minister Eva Lawler. What are those opposite really on about?

Our Finocchiaro CLP government wants to deliver housing for Territorians. We want to ensure that everyone has the right to own their home. We are delivering that through our first homeowner $50,000 grants.

Those opposite cannot decide whether they want to see houses built. They flipflop and cannot decide. Territory Labor spent nearly a decade backing the Defence development. Does it support households? Does it support renters or not? That is the reality because if we do not have additional supply, it will mean increased costs for people to get into housing. If we do not have the additional homes, it will mean additional costs for renters.

On this side of the Chamber we are all about ensuring that we are delivering homes for not only first homebuyers but also everyone across the Northern Territory. We understand how important it is for Territorians to get in their first home so that they can set down roots, own a slice of the Northern Territory and live the Australian dream.

Those opposite are only chasing votes. That is the reality. They are flipflopping on their decisions. They have no idea where they stand and it shows. Just like the previous Chief Minister Eva Lawler stated, under NT Labor, there would be chaos.

Woolworths Closure – Nhulunbuy

Mr McGRATH to CHIEF MINISTER

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Woolworths' announced departure from Nhulunbuy by June 2027 has created significant uncertainty for families, businesses and surrounding remote communities. I acknowledge the hard work of Territory public servants who have been working with stakeholders to find sustainable solutions and ensure continuity of essential services. Can you provide an update on what progress your government has made in securing a permanent replacement for Woolworths in Nhulunbuy? What steps are being taken to ensure there is no disruption to essential supermarket services when Woolworths leaves?

ANSWER

Madam Speaker, the Nhulunbuy transition is something that we are diligently working on. We want Nhulunbuy to remain a service hub for the Arnhem region. We want it to remain an open town that can retain the population and private sector businesses that are there and, therefore, all the government services at the standards and levels it has enjoyed for decades.

With the mine closure imminent, a number of years ago a group was put together to ensure we could support a transition. This included traditional owners, the Northern Territory Government, the federal government and other key stakeholders in Nhulunbuy.

Upon coming to government two years ago, we uncovered a scary thing. Member for Mulka, it would pay for you to dig deeper into this. Virtually nothing had been done. We had picked something up that no-one wanted to take leadership on; it had been the hot potato of government. There had been no direction. The federal government was hardly in the space at all. We picked it up and ran with it.

I immediately had the Member for Wanguri as assistant Treasurer be my front person on this issue. We have travelled to Nhulunbuy time and again. The progress has been unbelievable. We put our cards on the table and took the leadership role, and it is delivering results. We continue to work with Rirratjingu Aboriginal Corporation and Gumatj on that critical transition, particularly regarding land tenure.

As a result of the uncertainty that the mine closure is causing across the entire region, you are seeing, to some extent, a withdrawal. These people are making decisions to leave because they are unsure about the future, as are the private sector, and that is what we desperately want to stop. We do not want that reduction in critical mass to continue to decline, which is why working with the TOs on a decision on land tenure has been our number one priority; it is why we have an in-principle agreement with Rirratjingu because if we can secure open land tenure in Nhulunbuy, then the private sector will stay.

Mr McGRATH: A point of order, Madam Speaker! Standing Order 110; relevance. I asked the Chief Minister who is replacing Woolworths when it leaves?

Madam SPEAKER: The Chief Minister is getting to it, I understand.

Mrs FINOCCHIARO: Yes, I wish things were that simple, but I have to tell the story to indicate to you the next step. The private sector is withdrawing because the town is shrinking. We have to secure the land tenure to stop the shrinkage.

Woolworths has made its decision, and we condemn that and are very disappointed. Ultimately, that is a decision for its board, and the premises is owned by Rirratjingu. Much work is happening with the TOs to secure a new anchor supermarket. There will be a supermarket in Nhulunbuy—I can guarantee that—but it is about the private sector having confidence to operate in that town.

Data Centre Investment

Mr HOWE to MINISTER for TRADE, BUSINESS and ASIAN RELATIONS

More than two years in, the Finocchiaro CLP government is getting on with the job of delivering for Territorians. This includes backing the investment that grows our economy. The people of Drysdale, loud and clear, want a strong economy and more of their money in their pocket. Data centre investors are knocking on the Territory's door, and they need certainty.

Territory Labor had eight years to deliver for Territorians. Now, from the comfort of opposition, they cannot settle on a position. Can the minister update the Assembly on how the government is backing data centre investment, and has Labor forgotten the policies it once championed?

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ANSWER

Madam Speaker, strong economy is critical for the Territory moving forward. I had the opportunity to talk to the Member for Drysdale about data centres and what they can bring to the Northern Territory and how exciting it is that we have 12 proponents who are currently in discussions with the Department of Trade, Business and Asian Relations about what this would look like from their point of view and what it will deliver for the Territory. It is extraordinary. Those discussions are long-term in the planning. They have to go through all the environmental processes, but we can see that we have strong interest in this area.

The member asked about what was happening with those on the other side because it is confusing. It was good of him to point that out because three or four years back in 2022, the then Chief Minister made an exciting announcement with my predecessor, the Member for Port Darwin, that they would turn Darwin into a digital hub. They were excited about this; they said that data centres would be the backbone of the new global technology environment, and they released plans for a hyperscale campus in Darwin—the very thing that the Leader of the Opposition and those on the other side have been saying we should not be examining over the last few weeks. The flipflopping in that area is extraordinary.

I table, for the for the benefit of those opposite, the press release from 29 March 2022, 'Data centres turning Darwin into a digital hub'.

Not only did the former Chief Minister, Michael Gunner, announce it, but the other former Chief Minister—because there were three of them in a short time—Natasha Fyles, welcomed the construction of the data centre that we have seen on Garramilla Boulevard since 2023. While we see this constant change of leadership, we probably should not be that surprised they keep flipflopping about what they stand for because it continues. On 26 August the Deputy Leader of the Opposition said that Labor supports responsible data centre development and does not want to slow down investment. He said in this House that we did not need a moratorium. Seven weeks later his own leader called that out and said, 'We want one'. Clearly, we have a confused opposition, but this side of the House is not confused.

The future for data centres in the Territory is a strong one.

Kumanjayi Little Baby – Confidential Information Release

Mr YOUNG to MINISTER FOR CHILDREN and FAMILIES

Can you advise whether DFC has investigated how confidential information identifying five adults named in Kumanjayi Little Baby's safety plan, including the identification of Jefferson Lewis, came into possession of the media and whether any unauthorised disclosure of information has taken place? If there is a leak, what action will you be taking?

ANSWER

Madam Speaker, of course, any information coming into the public arena that one would not expect to is of concern. That front page was today, I think, so I can tell you that, from our point of view, we are focused on not having information in the public arena that should not be there. We have seen the great care taken through the investigation recently into the systemic challenges in the Department of Children and Families that meant we had a situation where the legislative requirements were unable to be properly accommodated into the frameworks under policy that had been established in the past. We had this challenging environment for child protection workers.

Mr YOUNG: A point of order, Madam Speaker!

Madam SPEAKER: What is your point of order, Member for Daly? She is only a minute in.

Mr YOUNG: The question was specifically about whether an investigation is happening regarding the confidential information and whether any unauthorised disclosure of information has taken place and what action will be taken.

Madam SPEAKER: You have repeated the question and the minister has plenty of time to answer it.

Ms CAHILL: I know that every person who works in the Department of Children and Families takes their responsibilities seriously. I am confident that nobody would have released information that they know they

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should not. If the Member for Daly has that question, why des he not ask the people who put the information into the public arena where they got it from? That is the logical place to start.

I take the opportunity to once again say that the report that was handed down contains clear pathways for us to make sure that we establish frameworks that support Children and Families workers who support the families they work with to protect the children of the Northern Territory. We are committed to following the pathway that has been set for us. I thank again the two authors of that report, Karen Webb and Greg Shanahan. They have done an extraordinary job to bring that information to the …

Mr YOUNG: A point of order, Madam Speaker!

Madam SPEAKER: Please do not ask the question again. What is your point of order? The minister can answer it the was she feels is appropriate.

Mr YOUNG: She has not got to the point. Standing Order 110; relevance. It was about whether there is an investigation, particularly regarding confidential information about safety plans.

Madam SPEAKER: I think the minister has got it. Continue, minister.

Ms CAHILL: I thank Karen Webb and Greg Shanahan for all the work they have done. It was an extraordinarily comprehensive investigation. They worked closely with the people who work on the ground. Everybody was respectful of the process and the confidentiality of that process.

What we can take away is that we have a robust, strong pathway forward to make sure that we can keep children safe into the future.

Corrections Update

Mr O'GALLAGHER to MINISTER for CORRECTIONS

The shadow Corrections spokesperson has criticised the CLP government's performance after just two years in office. Given that the Member for Gwoja served as Deputy Chief Minister, Attorney-General and the Minister for Justice during Labor's eight-year tenure, could you outline for the House the state of the Corrections and justice system that the CLP inherited and the steps this government has taken to stabilise and rebuild the system after years of Labor mismanagement?

ANSWER

Madam Speaker, the member understands how important it is to have a strong Corrections system. We need to break that cycle of reoffending and to do that we need to offer industry, education and rehabilitation.

Territorians deserve to know the state of the Corrections system we inherited two years ago. Eight years ago, the Member for Gwoja was the Member for Justice, Attorney-General …

Mr Paech interjecting.

Madam SPEAKER: There is no point of order, we are 30 seconds in …

Mr PAECH: A point of order, Madam Speaker! Standing Order 1; the information he is providing is misleading. I was not eight years ago in that position.

Madam SPEAKER: No, take your seat. You can address that through other means, it is not a point of order.

Mr MALEY: During the eight years, the Member for Gwoja was at the centre of it all. He was, at some stage, Deputy Chief Minister, Attorney General and the Minister for Justice. When CLP came to government, we knew that the Corrections system was in crisis. The watch houses were full, people were overflowing in the watch houses and kept in a small room. The police could not do their job.

More importantly, it made police officers come away from the beat to go into the watch houses to manage those people. The police were not out protecting the community. We know the Member for Goyder does not care about the community. His actions show that is exactly what happened, the police were dragged off.

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Inside our prison, the situation was even worse. Staff were taken back into the watch houses as well and police and Corrections had to work there making sure that they could not have (inaudible). They had to have internal lockdowns, because there were not enough staff and they had to cut the rehab and reoffending programs. These were not operational choices, they were consequences. underlay this was neglect. It was shameful.

Under Labor, the prison population blew out from 1,600 to 2,500 with no investment. All this time the Member for Gwoja wearing 'jailing is failing' shirts, and he blew out the population. There were no new beds, new industry, or education capacity. There was nothing at all. What they did cause was a $40m riot, which shut down the programs.

I wish to table another ABC article and read the line: 'Overcrowing, lockdowns, staff shortages and restricted access to programs, were significant contribution factors to the major riot at the Correctional centre in 2020', according to a newly released report. This shows that the damage done to the prison was caused by Labor, and the flow-on affect was that there was no industry. The education building was the one that burnt.

We have a plan, and we are now reinstating those programs. We have got industry happening and rehabilitation because we know how important it is to break that cycle of reoffending.

Calvary take-over – Darwin Private Hospital

J DAVIS to MINISTER for HEALTH

Constituents in my electorate with private health insurance, have asked me when Calvary takes over Darwin Private Hospital, will the government ensure they retain access to the full range of reproductive and end -of-life services that are legal in the Northern Territory, including pregnancy terminations, vasectomies, contraception and voluntary assisted dying at Calvary Hospital?

ANSWER

Madam Speaker, I express our thanks to Calvary, which is the successful bidder for the private hospital in Darwin. Whilst the Member for Johnston is keen to find out information, there is a range of things that are underway because Calvary does not even have the keys yet.

The conversations we are having with Calvary have been positive, and some of the things we have put on the table with Calvary are about private maternity services, which is something that the former Labor government knew well before it finished government in 2024.

We are working with Calvary about what services it will be delivering. We have introduced new legislation and will be debating that legislation in the future. We want to make sure that …

J DAVIS: A point of order, Madam Speaker! Standing Order 110; relevance. It was a direct question. Will the government ensure that those services are available at Calvary hospital?

Mr EDGINGTON: Calvary does not even have the keys to the hospital yet. When it comes to talking about the issues the Member for Johnston is talking about, as soon as they get the keys we are happy to have those conversations.

Housing Investment in Remote Communities

Mr MACKAY to MINISTER for HOUSING, LOCAL GOVERNMENT and COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

The CLP government had made a commitment to make the Territory the best place to work, visit and invest. We know investing in the Territory and, more specifically in remote areas, is important to support stable housing, employment and a healthy lifestyle. It is clear that when it mattered most to deliver for remote Territorians, the former Labor government did not.

Can you update the House on the CLP government's commitment to invest in remote housing in homelands to provide healthier homes and build stronger, sustainable communities?

ANSWER

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Madam Speaker, the Member for Goyder knows the CLP government recognises that access to safe and stable housing can improve overall health, school attendance, employment and improve the lifestyle for Territorians. The CLP government is here to deliver to Territorians across the Territory.

It is important that we look at the history and some of the failures of Labor to see where we are now when it comes to remote housing. In 2023 the Opposition Leader, who was the Minister for Housing and Homelands at the time, introduced a national remote housing partnership agreement. She not only worked on that agreement, but changed 'rooms' to 'houses' in a desperate attempt to mask the fact that Labor had fallen short of its targets.

It even overspent and still failed to deliver remote housing targets. In 2022–23 budget, it produced a net deficit of $347m. Go back to 2022, a remote housing class action was filed in the federal court against Housing. This goes to the nature of the services Labor was delivering when it was in charge of housing.

The claim before the court at the moment is a class action on behalf of remote tenants of 73 communities across the Northern Territory. This is what they are alleging: 'Failures in the condition, repairs and management of remote housing across the Northern Territory from 2007 to 2024', leaving the Territory to face one of the biggest class actions ever seen in the Territory because of the failures of the former Labor government.

In 2023, the Opposition Leader, in her role, introduced the remote rental framework. The High Court found that to be invalid as well. She implemented a program of $70 per room without talking to the people who live in those houses. Of course, the High Court found that not only they failed to consult, the whole program was invalid because of the actions …

Ms Uibo interjecting.

Madam SPEAKER: Opposition Leader!

Mr EDGINGTON: … of the Opposition Leader.

To top it off, Labor signed an agreement on the eve of the last election for remote housing but failed to include headworks and homelands. The Labor government is why Territorians across the Territory are facing homelessness.

Mr EDGINGTON (Leader of Government Business): Madam Speaker, I move that any further questions be placed on the Written Question Paper.

MARINE FACILITIES (ACCESS AND PRICING) BILL
Serial 78

Continued from earlier this day.

Mr YAN (Logistics and Infrastructure): Madam Speaker, I thank all members who have contributed to the debate today. This is an important legislation.

The Northern Marine Complex is the Territory's investment in building our marine services industry that keeps more work skills and revenue here.

The Darwin ship lift facility is the enabling infrastructure at the heart of that vision and the shared capabilities that businesses across the precinct will depend on. To that end, this Bill establishes a framework for the regulation of access and pricing for designated marine facilities in the Northern Territory, commencing with the Darwin ship lift facility. To be clear, this build does not regulate the Northern Marine Complex as a whole; it regulates access and pricing for the Darwin ship lift facility, the shared infrastructure that the rest of the complex is reliant upon.

Many Members have spoken about East Arm and what this project means for Territory businesses. They are right to focus on this, because this Bill is about more than a piece of equipment; it is about making sure that the 5,500-tonne capacity ship lift—the first working asset of the Northern Marine Complex—operates fairly and transparently for everyone who needs to use it.

Strategically located at East Arm, the Northern Marine Complex represents the Territory's largest public infrastructure investment and is central to our vision of developing a world-class maritime precinct. The

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complex will bring together marine engineering, fabrication, logistics and specialist services, creating opportunities for local businesses, supporting Defence capability and creating jobs for Territorians. For too long, vessels operating in our region have had to travel thousands of kilometres Interstate or even overseas for maintenance and servicing. That means work skills and revenue leaving the Territory.

The Northern Marine Complex is designed to help change that by building our local marine services industry and getting more work here. The Darwin ship lift facility will be critical to making this vision a reality. It will support a growing maritime industry, strengthen opportunities for local businesses and help position the Northern Territory as a leading marine services hub in northern Australia.

Construction is already more than halfway complete. While construction is temporary, the industry and opportunities this infrastructure can support are intended to deliver benefits for the Territory well into the future. We are already seeing industry interest in the Northern Marine Complex. Norship, one of the Territory's established marine service providers, has signed on as the complexes first commercial leasehold tenant. That is an encouraging development as we build local marine services capability and attract further commercial activity to East Arm. This Bill makes sure that when the facility is ready to operate, the rules governing access and pricing are ready to go.

Importantly, this Bill does not set prices itself, it establishes the framework under which access and pricing will be regulated with independent oversight by the Utilities Commission of the Northern Territory.

The Darwin ship lift facility will operate as a common-user facility. That means it will be available to different users, including local marine service providers, commercial vessel operators and Defence and Australian Border Force vessels. A precinct only works for industry if shared infrastructure works for everyone. That is why the ship lift is a common-user facility and why the rules for access need to be cleared before it opens.

For Territory businesses, the message is simple: we want local industry to have fair opportunity to access this infrastructure, to compete for work and to grow their businesses. Under the Bill, the general rule for allocating access is first come, first served, subject to a limited number of defined and transparent exceptions. These exceptions recognise practical realities of operating a marine facility. Ships do not book and arrive like hotel guests. Weather, tides, vessel types and maintenance windows can all affect scheduling.

The framework allows appropriate flexibility while maintaining clear rules. It does not give the operator open-ended discretion or provide preferential treatment to any user. The operator must publish its standard terms and conditions and assess access applications within prescribed timeframes.

Once operational, the operator will determine prices for access and services subject to pricing determinations made by the Utilities Commission under this legislation. The operator must provide regulated services fairly and transparently. They must comply with pricing determinations and report on their activities, including instances of noncompliance, access disputes and breaches of ring-fencing requirements. The Bill also prohibits conduct that prevents or hinders access to regulated services or unfairly discriminates between users in a way that materially disadvantages their ability to compete.

These are important safeguards. They provide confidence that access will be managed under clear rules. An access and pricing regime has always been anticipated as part of the Darwin ship lift project. This legislation delivers on that objective and also responds to the Public Accounts Committee's recommendation that an access and pricing regime be legislated.

The framework focuses on a defined set of regulated services. These include wet and dry berthing, vessel lifting services, access to infrastructure and areas within a designated facility and any additional services prescribed in the future. The intent is straightforward. These are services fundamental to operating within a marine facility and the Bill brings them within a transparent regulatory framework.

A key feature of the Bill is the role of the independent Utilities Commission of the Northern Territory. The commission already performs important regulatory functions across key Territory industries, including water, sewerage, electricity and existing port access and pricing regimes. It is therefore well placed to oversee the access and pricing framework for the Darwin ship lift facility.

The commission will make pricing determinations for regulated services and monitor compliance with the legislation. The first pricing determination for the Darwin ship lift facility will be price monitoring. This is appropriate for a new facility because there is not yet sufficient operating demand and cost information to justify more prescriptive price regulation.

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Price monitoring allows market behaviour, utilisation costs and pricing outcomes to be observed as the facility becomes operational, while maintaining transparency and regulatory oversight. This provides an evidence base for determining whether stronger regulatory intervention is warranted in future pricing determinations.

While the operator manages the facility day to day, its access and pricing arrangements will be subject to legislative requirements and independent oversight. The commission will have powers to request information, inspect records and, where appropriate, require independent audits to assess compliance.

The Bill also establishes pricing principles to guide the commission when making pricing determinations. These principles seek to balance fair and affordable access with the need for the operator to recover the efficient costs of providing services and maintain incentives for productivity and investment. This balance is important. The framework must support fair access for users while allowing the facility to operate sustainably and support the development of a competitive marine services industry.

The commission will also report annually to the minister, and those reports will be tabled in this Assembly. That provides an additional level of accountability, allowing members and industry to see how the framework is operating and how compliance is being monitored.

A clear access framework must also provide a practical way to resolve disputes should they arise. The Bill establishes a structured process for resolving access disputes, including when an application is considered invalid, a requested modification cannot be accommodated, parties cannot agree on access terms or concerns arise about queue management and first-come first-served arrangements.

Parties must first seek to resolve disputes through good-faith negotiations and, if that is unsuccessful, disputes can proceed to mediation and, if necessary, arbitration. This is a staged approach and encourages parties to resolve issues early and directly when possible, while providing an independent pathway when agreement cannot be reached. It gives the operator and users certainty about how disagreements will be handled and supports timely resolution so that the facility can operate effectively.

The Bill also establishes a formal complaints process. When a user believes that they have been adversely affected by conduct such as prevention of access, unfair differentiation, a breach of ring-fencing obligations or noncompliance with a pricing determination, they may lodge a complaint with the regulator. The regulator must assess and, where appropriate, investigate the complaint.

The Utilities Commission will have the investigation powers necessary to examine alleged breaches and determine whether noncompliance has occurred. Where wrongdoing is identified, appropriate enforcement mechanisms are available, including court remedies and compliance orders. These provisions establish clear avenues for users to raise concerns and seek redress while ensuring participants are held to the requirements of the legislation.

Transparency and accountability are central to this Bill. This was spoken about in other members' contributions. Reporting obligations, independent regulatory oversight and ring-fencing provisions will help protect commercially sensitive information and manage potential conflicts arising from the operation of the facility. These measures support confidence amongst business considering how they can participate in the marine services industry.

The ship lift is also designed to service Defence and Australian Border Force vessels alongside commercial fleets. This has significance beyond the Territory's economy. Building our capacity to service vessels in northern Australia supports sovereign capability, strengthens the Territory's role in national maritime industry and creates opportunities to contribute to the wider Indo-Pacific supply chain.

A clear access and pricing framework is important as part of those supporting ambitions for the Territory. Following passage and commencement of the Bill, supporting regulations will be developed to provide detailed operational arrangements, including dispute resolution and audit procedures. These arrangements will support the practical implementation of the framework while maintaining its core principles of fair access, transparent pricing and independent oversight.

Some ask whether this framework could apply beyond the ship lift. This Bill is deliberately designed as a framework for designated marine facilities, with the Darwin ship lift as the first. If shared infrastructure is developed within the Northern Marine Complex in the future, there is a clear, established mechanism available. Any decision to designate a facility would be made on its merits in the way this legislation provides.

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No decisions are being made about future designations. What the framework gives industry, though, is certainty. They can see now how access and pricing for common user marine infrastructure will be handled, and that approach does not need to be reinvented each time.

In conclusion, I thank the Office of Parliamentary Counsel for their work in drafting the Bill and I also give a big thank you to the action officers and the staff from the Department of Logistics and Infrastructure for their efforts in pulling this together. This has been underway for many years.

The Darwin ship lift facility is a significant investment in the Northern Territory's future. It is the enabling infrastructure at the heart of the Northern Marine Complex, its first working asset and a catalyst for developing a stronger marine services industry, supporting local businesses, creating jobs and strengthening our maritime capability. For too long, vessels operating in our region have had to look elsewhere for maintenance and servicing.

The Northern Marine Complex provides an opportunity to build more of that capability here in the Northern Territory, keeping more work, skills and economic activity on our doorstep and in our backyard. Delivering the infrastructure is only part of that task. We must also make sure the arrangements governing its use are clear, fair and accountable. That is what this Bill delivers.

As construction progresses, this Bill helps ensure the regulatory arrangements are in place for the facility to operate under a transparent and accountable framework. The framework will apply initially to the Darwin ship lift facility and provide a foundation for access and pricing regulation at future designated marine facilities across the Territory.

This relates to making sure a major public infrastructure and investment can support a strong, competitive and sustainable marine services industry with fair access for those who need to use it. It relates to backing Territory business, building local capability and positioning the Northern Territory for future economic and strategic opportunities.

The Darwin ship lift facility is the foundation. Fair access to it is how Territory businesses will share in what follows—a thriving Northern Marine Complex and a marine service industry that keeps more work in the Northern Territory.

Motion agreed to; Bill read a second time.

Mr YAN (Logistics and Infrastructure)(by leave): Madam Speaker, I move that the Bill be now read a third time.

Motion agreed to; Bill read a third time.

ENVIRONMENT LEGISLATION AMENDMENT (SAFE AIR) BILL
Serial 73

Continued from 26 August 2026.

Mr BURGOYNE (Lands, Planning and Environment): Madam Speaker, I move that the Bill be now read a second time.

Mr BROWN (Arafura): Madam Speaker, Territorians have the right to know what is in the air they breathe. They have every right to know what toxins are being emitted by LNG and hydrocarbon processing facilities operating in and around Darwin. They have every right to expect their government to prioritise their health, families and their communities. We would support any genuine scheme that improves transparency regarding air quality and provides the community with reliable information about the impacts of industrial activity on the air we breathe, but a genuine scheme must do more than promise transparency; it must deliver it.

It must be developed in genuine consultation with the community. It must identify and monitor toxic substances in the air. It must establish clear standards, provide for meaningful compliance and enforcement and ensure that the industries responsible for pollution pay their fair share of costs.

This Bill does not provide those assurances. Instead, it establishes the shell of a framework while leaving the critical detail in regulations that have not yet been developed. There is no certainty about what will be monitored, how it will be monitored, what standards will apply, how compliance will be enforced or how the

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scheme will be funded? In other words, the government is asking Territorians to trust the scheme, when the essential requirements have not even been established.

Given recent incidents involving toxin underreporting, vague commitments and hollow promises about safer air are simply not good enough. Given their track record on watering down environmental protections, why should Territorians trust the CLP government to do the right thing, with its flimsy piece of legislation.

The fundamental problem with this Bill is that it fails to establish the essential elements of an effective air monitoring scheme in legislation. Important things like scope of monitoring, the methodology to be used, standards to be applied, enforceability and financial arrangements, are all left to future regulations. That means parliament is being asked to pass a Bill without knowing the full substance of the scheme it is intended to establish.

How can the community assess whether the scheme will adequately protect their health when the government has not clearly set out what it will monitor? How can Territorians know whether industrial operators will be held accountable when the Bill does not establish clear and enforceable requirements, and how can the community …

Ms UIBO: A point of order, Madam Speaker! Standing Order 184: Quorum, drawing to your attention the state of the House.

Madam SPEAKER: Yes, there is a problem with the state of the House. Please ring the bells. No, it seems to be resolved. Please continue Member for Arafura.

Mr BROWN: How can the community be confident that industry will pay for the scheme when the legislation does not provide any detail about those financial arrangements? These are the foundations of an effective monitoring and accountability framework. Leaving these matters to regulations down the track also limits the opportunity for meaningful public scrutiny of the scheme's design and operation.

This is a Bill without any assurances regarding transparency, accountability or public health protections. It fails to establish clear limits to caps on emissions of volatile organic compounds that we know are being emitted by industry into the atmosphere. It fails to establish sufficiently clear requirements for direct emissions monitoring. Without these fundamental elements, the community cannot trust that it will receive the information needed to understand what industrial facilities are emitting into our air.

The Bill also fails to embed how national standards and measures will be met, including the National Environment Protection Measures. The government should explain how its proposed scheme will align with relevant national measures and how it will ensure that the substances of greatest concern are appropriately managed and monitored.

Instead, Territorians are left with uncertainty. They do not know what will be measured, what threshold will apply, what will happen when concerning results are detected or what consequences industrial operators will face if they fail to comply.

The government has claimed that the air monitoring scheme is being developed in consultation with industry experts, health authorities and community stakeholders, yet submissions to the scrutiny committee process raised consistent concerns about the lack of genuine community consultation and the lack of public hearings or industry expertise to inform the scheme.

Territorians living in communities potentially affected by industrial emissions should have meaningful opportunities to help shape the scheme that is supported to protect them. Informing the community about a decision that has effectively already been made is not consultation, yet it is something that this government is constantly guilty of. Consultation means listening to concerns, considering evidence and reflecting on community expectation of the legislation itself. Minister Burgoyne and the CLP government must explain why these essential questions have not been resolved before bringing this Bill to parliament.

This debate is not just about environmental regulations; it is about the health and wellbeing of Territorians. Air pollution is a recognised public health concern and exposure to fine particle matter and other pollutants is associated with cardiovascular harm. Research has linked air pollution exposure with effects on blood vessels, blood pressure, blood clotting and heart rhythm. The Northern Territory already faces the highest burden of chronic illness and cardiovascular disease in the country. Approximately 230 Territorians die of cardiovascular disease each year. Industrial air pollution needs to be considered in the context of its public

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health impacts. A comprehensive and effective air monitoring scheme needs to consider this in a number of ways:

- timely monitoring can help identify pollution spikes and provide information to support public health services
- accessibility to air quality information can help people, particularly those with existing health conditions, make informed decisions about outdoor activities and potential exposure
- reliable data can help our hospitals and health authorities better understand patterns of exposure and prepare for potential pollution spikes
- consistent monitoring can support evidence-based environmental policy
- transparent monitoring can provide Territorians with a clear picture of whether industrial operators are meeting environmental requirements and standards.

From this Bill Territorians cannot be confident that these essential public health considerations will be addressed because the legislation provides little detail about what the scheme will deliver. People should not have to rely on assurances when it comes to understanding the quality of the air they breathe.

There is another fundamental issue with this Bill—that is, the question of who pays. The government has committed to an air monitoring scheme intended to improve transparency regarding industrial emissions, but the legislation does not provide sufficient certainty about whether the operators responsible for those emissions will bear the cost of the scheme. Territorians should not be left to shoulder the cost of monitoring and scrutinising industry activity. If the government expects the community to trust this framework, it must establish clear funding arrangements and establish how industry contributions will be decided and enforced.

The same principle applies to compliance. A credible scheme must establish consequences for noncompliance. It must be capable of identifying problems and triggering appropriate compliance responses. It must deliver more than the appearance of action.

The concerns surrounding this Bill must be considered in light of the serious incidents involving toxin under-reporting uncovered earlier this year. Those incidents highlighted the importance of transparent reporting, independent scrutiny and public confidence in systems designed to monitor industrial emissions. In that context, the community is entitled to ask a simple question: what will this Bill change? The answer is we do not know; it is the central failing of this legislation.

This Bill fails to provide the certainty, transparency and accountability that Territorians should expect from an effective air monitoring scheme. It leaves critical detail to regulations that have not yet been developed. It does not establish the monitoring requirement standards, reporting obligations, enforcement arrangements and funding mechanisms needed to give community confidence in the scheme. It does not provide certainty about how toxic substances will be monitored and how the public will be informed about emissions. It does not adequately demonstrate how industry will be held accountable.

The government may present this Bill as a significant step towards protecting Territorians, but there is nothing to back that up. Territorians deserve legislation that establishes clear obligation, not legislation that leaves the most important questions unanswered. They deserve genuine consultation and to see their expectations reflected in legislation. They deserve transparency, not uncertainty about what information will be collected and published. They deserve an effective system of accountability that ensures industry meets its obligation and contributes to the cost of monitoring its environmental impact.

The people of the Northern Territory have the right to know what is in the air they breathe. They have the right to expect their government to act in the public interest and that when the government promises greater transparency and accountability, those promises will be reflected in enforceable legislation.

The opposition will propose a number of amendments to the Bill that seek to embed critical details about the genuine environmental monitoring scheme because when it comes to the health of Territorians, the government must do more than look like it has taken action. Territorians deserve clean air, real accountability and a government that puts their health first. They deserve more than hot air.

Mr MACKAY (Goyder): Madam Speaker, I thank the Minister for Lands, Planning and Environment for bringing forth this Bill.

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I appreciate the view the Member for Arafura has provided, but I like this Bill for probably the reasons he does not. This Bill is good law. This Bill is something that can be adapted over time without having to be tweaked in legislation time and again as new threats emerge.

It is important that we have clean air, clean water and that the pollutants that are being released into the environment are monitored and we make sure that they are safe for humans and the environment.

This Bill is a short Bill, with only a handful of clauses—I think 14 clauses. This framework established in the Bill can be used not only in the immediate case for the clean air and the air monitoring around the greater Darwin Harbour, but for monitoring in the future of water, soil, pollutants, noise or odour. It is not specific to any particular industry, sector or activity.

It is something that can be used to set up more environmental monitoring schemes over the future of the Northern Territory without having to be embedded in legislation and come back in here to go through a full legislative process when it is something that can be managed by the experts.

We have experts in the Northern Territory government. The people who work at the Environmental Protection Authority and across the department of Environment know what they are doing; that is why they are in those jobs.

The second part of this Bill raises the licence fees on INPEX, Santos and Blacktip. We heard in the briefing that the fee increase will increase from about $20,000 a year to over $250,000 contribution towards the monitoring of those facilities. That is great to see, because when an industry comes to the Territory, we are not America and we make sure that we do things right. We want to make sure that they are co-contributing towards the monitoring schemes that are in place to make sure Territorians are safe.

This legislation allows for constant updating for the scheme remains fit for purpose without having to come back for legislation change. It is about making sure when the scheme is developed—I draw everyone's attention to clause 4 of the Bill which amends Part 6A in section 126B that the regulations may establish one or more environmental monitoring schemes. The regulations can provide the purpose of the scheme—whether it be air, water or soil pollutants, noise or odour—and the area or region.

If another large gas plant or gas emitter set up say, for example in the Member for Mulka's electorate at Nhulunbuy, we would be able to apply a new scheme that was relevant for that area with monitoring points in that area to make sure that the people across the Territory are safe.

It allows the appointment of people to help monitor that scheme. Most importantly, it allows the ability to levy contributions towards part or all of the costs of those schemes. We can make sure that the Territory taxpayer is not footing the bill to make sure that we are safe. It is about making sure that the polluters pay.

It also allows the flexibility in the method of calculating those contributions and the minister to have the power to gazette the method of calculating those contributions so it can remain relevant to whatever the situation might be.

It allows the establishment of a fund for the scheme where the money can go to make sure that those funds can be used for accounting, auditing, reporting, but also the monitoring and the equipment.

It is about making sure that the legislation remains fit-for-purpose well into the future. I find it highly unlikely—I can always be wrong; there will always be amendments over time. The basis of this legislation is something that the Territorians decades and generations from now will be able to look back on and admire the simplicity, but also the flexibility of this scheme to remain relevant in the Northern Territory context for many generations to come.

I commend the Bill to the Assembly and I commend the minister for bringing this important legislation.

Mr CHARLS (People, Sport and Culture): Madam Speaker. I thank the Minister for Lands, Planning and Environment for bringing the Environment Legislation Amendment (Safe Air) Bill 2026 to the Chamber.

I support this Bill. I do so as the Member for Sanderson, as a Territorian, and as someone who believes that being a good local member starts with three simple things: listening to the community, respecting the concerns people raise and taking action when something needs to be done. That is what our community expects of us and that is what this government is doing.

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In Darwin we are fortunate to enjoy a lifestyle that many people across Australia would envy. We enjoy our outdoor life, our back yards, our parks, our beaches and the freedom to get outside and spend time with our families. We value our community, our environment and the things that make the Territory such a special place to live.

We want to protect that lifestyle. We want our children to grow up here, enjoy the Territory outdoors and have confidence that their health and future matter. We want a strong economy, good local jobs and industries that contribute to the Territory's future. These things are not in conflict. We can support industry, jobs and economic development while also insisting on strong environmental oversight and reliable information regarding the air we breathe.

That is what this Bill is about. Community concerns regarding air quality in the greater Darwin and Palmerston area have been raised for some time, particularly in relation to emissions from liquefied natural gas facilities and chemicals such as benzene and toluene.

Those concerns intensified after INPEX advised the Northern Territory Environment Protection Authority of errors in its historical emissions reporting. When people hear that emission figures previously reported by a major industrial operator were incorrect, it is entirely understandable that they want answers. They want to know what has been released into the air, whether it presents a risk to their families and that the regulator has the information it needs to do its job.

As a local member, I respect those questions. I would never tell residents that their concerns do not matter or that they should simply accept what they are told. People deserve transparency, accountability and a government that listens and responds. That is why this government is acting. This Bill establishes the legislative framework for environmental monitoring schemes, beginning with an industry-funded ambient air quality monitoring scheme for the Darwin airshed.

Our existing government-run monitoring network has primarily focused on particulate matter, including smoke from bushfires. This Bill creates the opportunity to expand monitoring to volatile organic compounds including benzene, toluene, ethyl benzene and xylenes. In practical terms, that means better information about the pollutants that matter to our community, strengthening the evidence available to the NT EPA and building public confidence through monitoring that is independent of the industries contributing to its cause.

One of the important principles behind this Bill is that industries creating the need for additional monitoring should contribute to paying for it. Why should the full cost fall on Territory taxpayers when the need for enhanced monitoring arises principally from industrial activity? Industry will fund the scheme, but it will not control how the monitoring is conducted or how the results are reported.

The monitoring arrangements must be independent, technically sound and transparent. The community must be able to trust the information. The regulator must be able to rely on the data and those who contribute financially must not be able to dictate the findings. That distinction is fundamental. The Bill also allows regulations to establish how monitoring data will be published.

The government's intention is for monitoring data to be available in real time through the existing NT EPA website. That is important because transparency should not stop at collecting the data. People need to be able to access it, understand it and have confidence that it is being used appropriately. It is also important to recognise that this Bill is one part of a broader response.

In March this year, the NT EPA initiated a review of licence conditions for LNG facilities in Darwin airshed. That review was completed in in July and work is underway to implement its 23 recommendations, including stronger emissions limits. The NT EPA also issued INPEX with an audit notice to examine the adequacy of its systems and processes for accurately estimating emissions. The resulting report was received in June and is publicly available.

An independent review of INPEX's air quality modelling was also commissioned. That review found that modelling was technically sound and it recommended further work to address cumulative emissions. The NT EPA has commenced prosecution against the company in relation to a breach of licence conditions concerning the underreporting of benzene and toluene.

These actions matter. They demonstrate that government oversight does not simply consist of writing new laws. It consists of using the laws we have, strengthening them where necessary and holding operators accountable when obligations are breached.

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I also want to acknowledge the independent human health risk assessment commissioned by the Chief Health Officer. Based on the available modelling and monitoring data, that assessment found that current levels of the relevant pollutants were well below evidence-based safety thresholds and posed a low risk to human health.

That is reassuring information for our community, but reassurance must go hand in hand with vigilance. We should never use a reassuring assessment as an excuse to stop monitoring, asking questions and improving our systems. The responsible approach is to keep gathering reliable evidence, respond appropriately to the results and ensure that the community remains informed.

The Bill also takes a sensible approach to the future. While the immediate priority is air quality monitoring, the framework can support other environmental monitoring schemes in the future, including schemes relating to water, soil, noise, odour and other environmental concerns. That gives the Territory flexibility to respond to emerging issues without having to return to parliament to create an entirely new legislative framework each time. The detailed arrangements will be developed through regulations, with targeted consultation informing the scheme and its funding model.

The Assembly amendments also strengthen the framework by allowing regulations to provide for the manner and form in which monitoring data is published, and by allowing the minister to specify contributors through a gazette notice. These changes support transparency and allow the scheme to respond as circumstances change.

Protecting our environment is not about being anti-industry; it is about making sure that development happens responsibly. The Territory needs investment. We need jobs and we industries that support our economy and provide opportunities for Territorians. We also need a clean environment, effective regulation and a community that can trust the information it receives.

As the Member for Sanderson, I will always stand up for the people who live in our suburbs and raise concerns about the things that affect their everyday lives. I will listen when residents have questions, respect their right to expect answers and support practical action that protects their health and their families and the lifestyle we all value. Our Territory lifestyle is not something we can take for granted; we have a responsibility to protect it.

This Bill is a practical step towards doing that. It strengthens environmental monitoring, places appropriate costs on industry, improves the information available to the community and supports better regulatory decision-making. Most importantly, it reflects a government that when a problem arises, does not simply look the other way; it listens, investigates, responds and acts.

For those reasons, I commend the Environment Legislation Amendment (Safe Air) Bill 2026 to the Assembly.

J DAVIS (Johnston): Madam Speaker, I am sure that every person in this Assembly and every person who made a submission to the scrutiny committee on this Bill supported the aim of better air quality in the Northern Territory, and so do I and so does the minister.

In June this year the *NT News* reported:

> *Environment Minister Joshua Burgoyne said human health was the top priority and Territorians deserved transparency regarding air quality in the Darwin airshed, including Darwin, Palmerston and surrounding communities.*

He said:

> *Industrial activity is vital to economic growth and jobs, but maintaining public confidence requires transparent monitoring and reporting of industrial emissions and pollutants …*
>
> *That's why our government is proposing changes to develop an improved monitoring program, which will provide the community with greater certainty and evidence-based communication about air quality in real time.*

That is a wonderful commitment from the minister, so how does this Bill stack up?

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In June 2024 Darwin and Palmerston ranked among the top 10 most polluted cities in Australia. The measure was PM2.5. That means these are fine particles from smoke and combustion that are so small they can get deep into the lungs and the bloodstream. At one point, levels were nearly five times the World Health Organization annual guideline. Outside Darwin and Katherine, we do not know what people are breathing because current air quality is only measured at three stations in the Darwin region and one in Katherine.

In the Territory we also have an industry that releases huge amounts of dangerous pollutants into the air. People live near it and they are entitled to know what is in the air they breathe. Therefore, I, along with many others, welcome parts of this Bill as an overdue recognition of the serious risks posed to our communities. People are worried, and they have good reason to be.

I am on the scrutiny committee that examined this Bill. I dissented from the committee's majority report. I support the committee's recommendations, but I dissented and recommended that the Assembly should not pass the Bill in its current form. I will explain why.

Parliament is being asked to hand over decisions that matter. This is framework legislation. That means it does not set up a monitoring scheme now; it just gives the government the power to set up one later by regulation. It does not do what the minister promised Territorians—transparent monitoring and reporting of industrial emissions and pollutants in real time. The problem with this is that regulations do not have to come before the parliament before they are decided. They are decided without public input and without transparency. Who actually decides what is in the regulations?

When we asked about this in the briefing, the department confirmed that the drafting of regulations has begun and that the only consultation has been with industry—that is, polluters are writing their own regulations. The industry in question has a history of scandal, including under-reporting its emissions. Last year INPEX reported that its emissions included 4.12 tonnes of benzene, but the actual figure was 556.9 tonnes. It is important to be clear that the reason we care so much about the levels of benzene being emitted from these plants is that benzene exposure is linked to increased risk of long-term blood and bone cancers, including leukaemia. The amount being emitted at these facilities is a critical public health concern.

Territorians deserve a say in how clean air protections are built. Proposed section 126B(2) lists what the regulations cover, the scheme's purpose, its area, who runs it, who pays, how much and how it is enforced and reported. Every item on that list is optional. That means regulations could make industry pay for a monitoring scheme without the Act saying what the scheme is for, what it must monitor, who will run it or how the results are reported. These are essential details about how safe air will be monitored. They should not be left to be worked out later.

When we sought advice on this, the committee's legal counsel Professor Aughterson said:

> *It is not clear why most if not all the matters at sub-clauses (a) to (i) are not mandated should a scheme be established …*

At the public briefing when the department was asked why they are not mandated, it agreed that these matters would all be needed. Apart from naming an administrator and setting up a fund, the department could not explain why the Bill makes them optional. Its written advice said that it could amend the Bill to require the regulations to address certain matters. I look forward to the minister's response to that, because if a matter is necessary, it should be written into the law.

The whole committee report noted:

> *… the Bill is an example of 'framework' or 'skeleton' legislation. Framework legislation establishes the principles or architecture of a policy in primary legislation, then enables a substantive delivery of the policy to be made by subordinate legislation. The Committee notes it is generally considered inappropriate to include procedural matters that go to the essence of the legislative scheme in subordinate legislation, rather than in an Act.*

Which is exactly what this Bill does. That is important to note. It is supported by the Senate Standing Committee for the Scrutiny of Bills that says levies, key elements of a new policy, significant penalties and procedural matters that go to the essence of a scheme belong in an Act. It also says that the wish for flexibility by itself is not enough to justify leaving them out.

The committee's majority report gave two reasons for accepting the framework approach. First, it said that mandatory requirements could be overly prescriptive, but requiring a scheme to have a purpose—that is,

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what it is for—to operate properly, to say who pays and to be accountable is not excessive; it is the bare minimum.

Second, it pointed to the Assembly's power to disallow regulations, but disallowance is a yes or a no. We can accept regulations or reject them. We cannot rewrite them, and by then the power is already handed over. Saying that we can just disallow regulations later is not an answer when the question is: what is monitored, by whom, and where will the results go? The Act should set the minimum protections. Regulations can add to them. They should not be able to remove them or decide whether they exist at all.

That is why I will move an amendment to address this issue, which will replace proposed section 126B(2). My amendment will provide that if a scheme is established, the regulations must provide for five things: the purpose of the scheme; the actions and the region that it applies to; how it operates and is administered; compliance, enforcement and reporting; and public access to the data. This is not a radical list, it is the department's own list. The department told the committee these matters would all be needed. My amendment simply writes that into the Bill.

It is also deliberately modest. It does not stop the government setting up a scheme, or the regulations covering more. The matters that can reasonably stay flexible, like how contributions are calculated, the fund and other operational detail, stay in a new subsection (3) as things the regulations may provide for. The gazette power the government asked for is still there. It only asks that the foundations of the Bill are fixed in law, not left to chance.

The minister told this Assembly that this Bill would improve data, promote transparency and strengthen public confidence in the environmental regulation of Territory industries. He said growth must go hand-in-hand with upholding environmental standards and public confidence, and that is what this Bill delivers.

I take that as a sincere statement of intent, but the Bill does not deliver it. It does not require data to be published. It sets no air quality standard, no emission limit. It does not say what level of pollution is a breach. It does not say what will be monitored to what ,standard or where the results will go.

The majority report says in its recommendations that it will better align the statutory framework outlined in the Bill with the policy intention described by the minister. Our recommendation—I support them—attempt to address this issue because the Bill actually does not match up with what the minister said it does.

A name sets an expectation. A Bill called 'Safe Air' tells the community the law will make its air safe. You cannot guarantee safe air if the law does not even define what safe air means. The Heart Foundation, its submission, said it clearly: measurement alone without enforceable limits is not enough to protect community health.

The committee heard in submissions that emission caps, hot venting limits and VTEC standards are out of scope. We heard that from the department. The reasoning behind this is that the Bill is ahead of power-for-cost recovery—the reason we were given—and emissions, venting limits and standards belong in the regulations. That describes what the Bill does, but it does not answer the concern.

The government has chosen to draft a framework bill with no detail. It cannot leave safeguards out and then say they are out of scope because they were left out; that is completely circular. It matters because of what this Bill is built to do. It sets up ambient monitoring that tells us about the quality of air across an area. It can tell us something has gone wrong but, as it is written, it cannot tell us what facility caused it.

Here is where the Bill leaves us. We measure the air, we see a spike, we do not know who is responsible and there is no limit in the law to say whether a breach has happened. A reading that connects to no source and no standard is a record; it is not protection. Ambient monitoring is important. It tells us about the quality of the air across an area, but it can tell us something has gone wrong without telling us what facility caused it or where it happened.

The Heart Foundation, the Climate and Health Alliance, the Environmental Defenders Office and others said this clearly in their submissions. They asked for emission caps, hot venting limits and clear thresholds in law. Submitters also told the committee that unmonitored hot venting and flaring causes sudden spikes in air toxins. Monitoring that cannot connect a spike to its source only records a problem. It does not do anything to help us stop it happening again.

I also have a concern about something that arose in the minister's answer to my Written Questions 253. The answer was:

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The Safe Air Bill will fund improvements to the government air quality monitoring network, including monitoring for BTEX. This will displace the need for facility-level ambient air quality monitoring.

I am unclear whether this means facilities will no longer be required to measure and report on the emissions produced at their facilities. The issue is that the government's air monitors may be based a long way away from the facilities. We do not know where they will be based because that is not in the Bill. Their readings will only pick up dispersed pollution and be affected by wind direction. They therefore cannot serve as a substitute for direct measuring at the facility, where a more accurate reading of the volume of pollutants being emitted by each plant could be taken.

Put clearly, if emissions are not measured at a facility level, we cannot tell who is responsible for the pollution or how they can be reduced. When we are talking about companies that historically under-reported benzene emissions by 13,000%—for which there was no safe amount—then we need to do better.

We also heard that the Bill does not implement the Darwin Airshed LNG Licence Review, and the government confirmed that it does not. That review was done by the government's own department after INPEX revised its benzene estimate from about five tonnes to about 500 tonnes. It made 23 recommendations and three specifically matter here. It recommended hot venting limits and a targeted 99% availability for the equipment that burns off toxic gas; continuous real-time monitoring of benzene at the INPEX acid gas stream; and continuous air monitoring data be given to the public in real time. The review also said that the new law would enable publication of data in real time, but this Bill does not require it.

I accept that the review's recommendations are for licence conditions and the government says that it will deal with them through licences, but the review itself says that the licence amendments have not started and gave no dates, so we now have a Bill called Safe Air and a review that says what needs to happen and no law and no timetable that connect them.

I will move an amendment that does not try to fix all this, but will make sure that compliance and enforcement must be addressed in any scheme rather than left optional. There is a gap in enforcement because the department says that enforcement can be dealt with by regulation under section 126B(2)(h), but the scrutiny committee's legal counsel told us that section 126B does not clearly enable regulations to create offences. He also advised that the EPA Act 2019 does not allow offences to be created by regulation. The scrutiny committee agreed with this and said that the Act should be amended if offences are intended.

This is exactly the kind of amendment that we need to make before we pass the Bill, not after. If the power is unclear, any penalty made later by regulation may be open to challenge in court. A penalty that cannot be enforced does not protect anyone. The government should say plainly what enforcement it intends. If offences are intended, the Act needs to include an express power to create them; that does not exist now. If the only enforcement intended is recovering unpaid contributions as a debt, the Act should say so.

Members of the public should be able to see clearly the protections they have and those they do not. That brings me to data, because public data should be public. We heard a commitment for that from the minister, and the committee recommended that the minister may publish monitoring data. That was one of our recommendations, which I support, but saying the minister 'may' publish it instead of 'must' publish is not enough.

The department told the committee that the existing power already allows publication and that it intends to publish new air data in real time. If that is the plan, the Bill should require it. At the public briefing on 31 August, I asked whether anything in this Bill guarantees that data will be public. The department said no.

A public right to know about whether the air we are breathing is safe should not depend on whether a future minister chooses to use a discretionary power. Without a clear duty, people may have to keep making costly and heavily delayed freedom of information requests. We heard in one submission that a submitter was quoted more than $1,200 for a request with a $600 deposit before work would begin.

A person in Sydney can look up that data for free. There is no reason that should not be the same in the Northern Territory. Territorians should not have to pay to find out whether the air outside their home or their child's school is safe. If the government collects air data to protect the public, that data belongs to the public. Monitoring data should be published online free of charge, with a maximum publication delay set in the Act. Ambient data should be published in real time when feasible, and in raw form so that short-term spikes are not hidden by averaging. Licence holders should publish their own results too, as submitters said happens in New South Wales.

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I will move an amendment to fix this. My proposed section 126B(2)(e) requires the regulations to provide that any monitoring data collected under the scheme be made available to the public as soon as reasonably practical and free of charge. There is a floor, not a ceiling. There should be a firm maximum delay in the Act and real-time publication of ambient data in raw form so that short-term spikes are not hidden by averaging. Licence holders should publish their own results too, as happens in New South Wales. My amendment does not go that far, but it guarantees the principle, and it ends the idea that the public's right to know depends on a minister's discretion or an expensive freedom of information application.

The committee also recommended a company required to pay for a scheme should not run it. I absolutely support this, but I think it needs to go further. It does not clearly deal with associates or contractors and it sets no qualifications for an administrator. The department said that schemes will be government-owned and government-operated and if that is the case then the bill should say so, clearly.

To make that clear, I will be moving an amendment to add new subsection for the regulations must not appoint a scheme administrator, unless that person is a government authority or a qualified person and does not hold a financial interest relevant to the scheme. Whoever runs a scheme should have no stake in the industry being monitored. This puts that directly into the act.

Industry paying for monitoring is appropriate and reasonable. It reflects the polluter pays principle and I support it. If industry is paying, the public should be able to see what each operator contributes, how it was calculated, what the money is spent on and whether there is a surplus.

I also have some concerns about the Bills gazette power. The minister will be able to name who must contribute or see how contributions are calculated by gazette notice. The department asked for this after the bill was introduced. It said the need became clear when it started drafting the regulations. That suggests the bill went in unfinished. A gazette notice is not a regulation. It does not give the public or this parliament the transparency the government has promised in this bill.

My amendment keeps this power in place. I say to the government, if you wanted, every notice should be tabled in this Assembly and open to disallowance at the bare minimum.

I also support independent merit reviews of decisions about what a person must pay by NTCAT. In the Bill and in our briefing, we heard about judicial review. Judicial review asks only whether a decision was lawful. It does not ask whether it was the right decision. There is no definition of what small means. We were told these will be small matters, but there is not even an estimate. A promise that costs will be small means nothing when we do not know what small means. It is not the same as a cap in the law.

The bill would also let the minister name who must contribute or set the method for calculating contributions by gazette notice—Sorry, I'll skip ahead.

My position is that the Assembly should not pass the bill in its current form. If it does proceed, to ensure it is good law for everyone in the Northern Territory, the Assembly should first adopt the committee's recommendations that improve the Bill. Secondly, support the amendments that I will move at the consideration in detail stage, which, as I said, are modest.

They require the regulations to cover the core matters if a scheme is established. They require monitoring data to be published free of charge in as close to real time as possible, and require the scheme administrator to be independent of those who pay for the scheme. Thirdly, make sure the Act itself sets the minimum standards, protections, transparency and accountability that an effective scheme needs.

None of this stops the government doing what it says it wants to do. The department told us these matters are needed. The department also told us the bill can be amended. These amendments ensure the government's own advice is written into the law.

The minister told the public and this Assembly this Bill would strengthen public confidence, and Territorians have been told this Bill delivers safe air, but in its current form it cannot. Territorians were entitled to a law that says what will be measured, who will measure it, who will pay and where the results will be published. They are entitled to know what happens when limits are broken.

These are not matters to leave for future regulations. They are matters for parliament. If this bill is going to have safe air in its name, the law should tell Territorians what safe air means. parliament should settle these questions before the Bill is passed, not afterwards.

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Mr HOWE (Drysdale): Mr Deputy Speaker, I rise in support of the Safe Air Bill. I thank the minister for bringing this on and his continued commitment in this area.

Being a Palmerston representative, air quality is important to all of us. I have stood and strongly support the growth of industry throughout the Northern Territory, and I continue to do that. I do think it is important we balance that with ensuring that economic growth we strive for is monitored and we can see the effects of those industries. Which is why I support this bill.

I thank my fellow Legislative Scrutiny Committee members for their time as we went over this Bill.

I am raising my children in Palmerston. I am here on behalf of all the families in Palmerston. Whilst we push for that economic growth, and we have huge potential in the Northern Territory for that, ensuring that we know the air we are breathing is safe into the future is a great thing. I commend the minister for bringing this on and creating a framework that will be adaptable into the future. That is a key part. The Member for Goyder spoke about that quite well. We have an adaptable framework that can change as industry changes. We will be able to have reliable measurements of the air in the Palmerston area. I commend the minister for his work and his team for putting this together.

Mr BURGOYNE (Lands, Planning and Environment)(in reply): Mr Deputy Speaker, I thank all the members who have contributed to the debate and those members who took the opportunity to receive a briefing on the Bill.

I also acknowledge the Legislative Scrutiny Committee for its consideration of the Bill and thank all stakeholders who engaged with the committee process and provided submissions.

Upon its introduction, the Bill was referred to the Legislative Scrutiny Committee. On 7 October 2026 the committee published its report titled Inquiry into the Environment Legislation Amendment (Safe Air) Bill 2026. The report made six recommendations.

The first recommendation was that the Legislative Assembly pass the Bill with the proposed amendments set out in the other five recommendations. This recommendation was noted.

The second recommendation was that clause 4 of the Bill be amended to prohibit a person from being appointed as a scheme administrator if they are required to make contributions towards that environmental monitoring scheme. There may be instances where the contributor to a scheme is well placed to be the administrator. Let me explain. A scheme may be of interest to a research institution or benevolent organisation. Restricting the scheme administrator from being a contributing participant would unnecessarily limit the range of entities able to administer such a scheme which have relevant expertise and may also wish to contribute to the scheme. As such, this recommendation was not accepted.

The third recommendation was that proposed section 126B(2)(e) be amended to provide that a specified person or class of person required to make contributions towards an environmental monitoring scheme must have taken, or may have taken, an action that impacts the environmental quality, environment or human health being monitored. This proposal is unduly restrictive and may exclude persons who wish to fund or contribute to a scheme whose activities do not directly impact the environmental quality, environment or human health being monitored—for example, research institutions and benevolent organisations. Further, there may be circumstances when the need for monitoring arises in the absence of a clear or readily attributable impact on the environment or human health. As such, this recommendation was not accepted.

The fourth recommendation was that clause 4 of the Bill be amended to provide a mechanism for specified persons or classes of persons to seek review regarding an environmental monitoring scheme, including whether a person should be required to contribute to costs and the calculation of the amount required to be contributed. Section 277 and item 11 of the Schedule of the *Environment Protection Act 2019* provide that regulations can prescribe a reviewable decision. As such, this recommendation was noted, given that review provisions can be included in the regulations that will be made under the Act.

The fifth recommendation was that proposed section 126B(2)(e) be amended to provide that the regulations may empower the minister to specify by gazette notice the persons or classes of persons to whom the contribution requirements apply. This recommendation was accepted as it will avoid the need to identify individual persons or bodies corporate in the regulations and provide the flexibility to bring new entrants into an environmental monitoring scheme, or remove entities that are no longer captured in a timely manner, without requiring amendments to the regulations.

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The final recommendation was that proposed section 126B(2) be amended to provide that regulations may provide for a manner and form of publishing monitoring data relating to an environmental monitoring scheme. This recommendation was accepted as it will enhance the transparency of environmental monitoring schemes by allowing regulations to specify public access to a scheme's data.

An Assembly amendment schedule has been prepared that addresses both accepted recommendations.

This Bill and the Assembly amendment schedule address three key issues. This Bill corrects a current anomaly where the Blacktip Yelcherr Gas Plant near Wadeye operated by Eni Australia sits outside the usual fee requirements. The amendment applies a consistent approach across all operators of hydrocarbon facilities, creating a level playing field.

The Bill also addresses a longstanding concern that the hydrocarbon industry's annual licensing fee set in the *Waste Management and Pollution Control Act 1998* for processing facilities has not kept pace with the cost of regulation. The Bill amends the annual fee so that it is expressed in revenue units for each tonne of hydrocarbons likely to be handled in the plant in a 12-month period. Revenue units are indexed against inflation, so the fee will remain appropriate. This amendment will ensure that hydrocarbon processing facilities contribute a fair and realistic amount to the cost of regulating their operations.

Furthermore, the Bill enables regulations under the *Environment Protection Act 2019* to establish an environmental monitoring scheme for any aspect of the environment, including air, water, soil and pollutants. The regulations may prescribe the scheme, scope, establishment, operation and administration as well as identify contributors and the method for calculating contributions.

As I have mentioned previously, government has a clear vision of how this legislative power will initially be used once it commences. A framework to provide for an industry-funded government-operated air quality monitoring scheme is currently under development. Cost recovery from industry is intended to ensure those whose activities contribute to the need for monitoring make an appropriate contribution to its cost while ensuring that the monitoring network will remain independent, government managed and publicly accountable. This framework will be prescribed in the regulations.

Government understands the need for independent air quality monitoring to improve community confidence in the safety of development activity in the Darwin region and ensure the Northern Territory Environment Protection Authority, as the regulator, has reliable data on which to make decisions. This Bill supports that. The air quality monitoring scheme will be the first scheme developed; however, the power to create regulations in this Bill is broad and can be used for any kind of environmental monitoring scheme, including other pollution, noise, odour et cetera.

I again acknowledge the contributions of everyone who spoke in this debate; members of the Legislative Scrutiny Committee and stakeholders that contributed to the scrutiny process; the staff in the Office of the Parliamentary Counsel, who, as always, have done an excellent job in preparing the Bill and the amendment schedule; and, last but not least, the officers from the Department of Lands, Planning Environment who contributed to the development of the Bill.

In summary, this Bill lays the legislative foundation to establish a cost-recovered environmental monitoring scheme; increases annual licensing fees for the hydrocarbon industry to reflect the cost of regulating and ensure these fees are applied consistently across all hydrocarbon operators; and strengthens public confidence in environmental regulation of Territory industries.

I commend the Bill to the Assembly.

Motion agreed to; Bill read a second time.

Consideration in detail

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: The Assembly will consider the Environment Legislation Amendment (Safe Air) Bill 2026, Serial 73, together with the amendment schedule 73GOV circulated by the Minister for Lands, Planning and Environment; the amendment schedule 73OPP circulated by the Member for Arafura; and the amendment schedule 73IND circulated by the Member for Johnston.

Clause 1:

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J DAVIS: This Bill has ‘safe air’ in its title. Where in the Bill is ‘safe air’ defined?

Mr BURGOYNE: I think it is clear for those in the Chamber today that we seek to introduce a legislative framework to monitor and put in place monitoring schemes, in this case to monitor the air in the Darwin airshed. That has been spoken about at great length, hence why we are making sure the air we breathe is safe.

J DAVIS: I understand there is no definition of ‘safe air’. Does the Bill set an air quality standard or an emission limit?

Mr BURGOYNE: This Bill seeks to put in place a regulatory framework so that we can set in place monitoring schemes across the Northern Territory. One of those monitoring schemes that we are keen to introduce is the Darwin Airshed Monitoring Scheme.

J DAVIS: Does the Bill require any monitoring data to be published?

Mr BURGOYNE: The details of the scheme are no mystery. This is really important for everyone listening today. There is an existing network live now that is being monitored and has live data going to it. The difference is that it does not currently take into account volatile organic compounds.

We are seeking to create a legislative framework so that we can set up a user-pays—polluter-pays, to use the words of the Member for Johnston—scheme so that we can monitor the air in the Darwin airshed and make sure the air everyone is breathing is safe to do so.

J DAVIS: The question was: does the Bill require any monitoring data to be published?

Mr BURGOYNE: One of the amendments—I am speaking now to another clause—to clause 4 is to insert ‘the manner and form of publication of monitoring data collected under the scheme’. We are setting in place the necessary framework to monitor and allow for the publication of data in regard to a monitoring scheme in the Northern Territory.

J DAVIS: Thank you, minister, recognising that goes to a different clause.

In answer to written question 253, you said that the proposed network, which we are now discussing, would include BTEX. Can you identify where in the Bill any particular pollutant, including BTEX, is required to be monitored?

Mr BURGOYNE: I get where you are going. We are putting in place a legislative framework that can then measure all the necessary things as far as air quality is concerned.

I understand that your trust in government is not where you would like it to be. We have said clearly what we are seeking to do as a government. We are putting in place the legislative framework to allow it to happen. I think that should be commended. No other government in the history of the Northern Territory has done this. We are doing this because it is good environmental regulation. That is why we are putting in place this legislation.

Clause 1 agreed to.

Clause 2:

Mr BROWN: Why was consultation open for only 11 days on a Bill of such public significance?

Mr BURGOYNE: I do not think the question goes to the clause.

Mr BROWN: Given the specifics of your proposed environmental monitoring scheme will be captured in regulations, not in this legislation, when will the regulations commence?

Mr BURGOYNE: The regulations will be in place by the middle of next year.

To lay out the commencement, because it is important, Parts 1, 2 and 5 of the Bill—which relate to preliminary matters providing a head of power to establish an industry-funded environmental monitoring scheme and repeal of the Act retrospectively—will commence on the day after which the Administrator provides assent. That is as soon as possible.

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Parts 3 and 4 of the Bill—which relate to applying an annual licence fee to all hydrocarbon operators and increasing these fees—applies on 1 January, because that relates to the actual fees being paid by hydrocarbon operators.

We seek to have the regulations ready by the middle of next year.

Mr BROWN: What is the timeline for drafting the regulations?

Mr BURGOYNE: We will be working on it over Christmas and by the middle of next year we seek to have them done.

Mr BROWN: Will the community be consulted during the drafting process?

Mr BURGOYNE: The legislation and the framework we are putting in place are to give better information to the Northern Territory EPA, an independent statutory authority, so that it can better regulate, along with the Environment department, hydrocarbon facilities in the Northern Territory. It sets out a framework that can do a range of things as far as monitoring schemes go, but we will be working with folks like the NT EPA with the Environment department to ensure that we are putting in place the right regulation that enables this scheme to do exactly what we want it to do.

Mr BROWN: Will health experts be consulted?

Mr BURGOYNE: What is important to note throughout the development of regulations is that the guidelines around air quality are set by experts federally, and we also have our own set of experts within the department who look at air quality standards. We will be working with all these people to ensure that our scheme is fit for purpose.

Mr BROWN: Will environmental experts be consulted?

Mr BURGOYNE: We have a number of environmental experts in the department, and as part of the NT EPA.

J DAVIS: Will draft regulations be published for public comment before a scheme is established?

Mr BURGOYNE: No, they will not.

Clause 2 agreed to.

Clause 3, by leave, agreed to.

Clause 4:

J DAVIS: Proposed section 126B(2) lists nine matters in paragraphs (a) to (j). Every one of them says ‘the regulations may provide’; is that correct?

Mr BURGOYNE: It provides for aspects of the environmental monitoring scheme that may be provided for in the regulations. These are broad by design to ensure flexibility in setting up the environmental monitoring schemes into the future. That is important. Although we know that we will introduce the Darwin Airshed Monitoring Scheme straight off the bat, for future monitoring schemes we may need—whether they be for water, odour or other things I have spoken about—we want to set the framework broadly so that we can then adapt it.

J DAVIS: When this was asked about in the briefing, the department said that the majority of these matters would be something that is expected to happen. Is there a reason why they are not ‘must’? They are obviously not precluding other things. I understand that the intent of the Bill is to be open and flexible. It is not precluding additions. Is there a reason why it is ‘may’?

Mr BURGOYNE: Sorry—in regard to which part?

J DAVIS: In regard to the nine matters listed in new section 126B(2)(a) to (j).

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Mr BURGOYNE: To confirm exactly what you are asking for, Member for Johnson, new section 126B(2) provides that the regulations may provide for the purpose of the scheme a list of things. You are asking why it is certain things because it only talks about 'may'. Is that what you are …

J DAVIS: Sorry; to make my question clear, we heard from legal counsel that it is not clear why these matters are not 'must'. We heard from the department that all these matters will be needed apart from naming an administrator and setting up a fund. I am curious about why it is 'may' and not 'must'.

Mr BURGOYNE: The design futureproofs. The reason why it is 'may' is that this legislation needs to be broad for potential future schemes. The air quality scheme will be detailed in the regulations. That is important.

I understand the premise of your questions previously about why is there so much left to the regulations. What we are putting in place is a broad regulatory scheme, a broad set of rules. Then we can adapt specific schemes in regulation as put forward by this legislation.

Mr BROWN: Can you outline the specific pollutants or toxins that this scheme will be monitoring? If not, why not?

Mr BURGOYNE: That is not outlined specifically in the Bill. What we are setting in place is a framework so that we can set up schemes. The one which we are seeking to implement that has been ventilated—I use that word purposefully—quite widely, is to measure VOCs in the Darwin airshed, such as benzene, toluene, ethylbenzene. These are all VOCs. This will be stipulated in the regulations. I completely understand the line of questioning. We look forward to getting this air quality monitoring scheme in place.

Mr BROWN: Will identified pollutants be subject to continuous point source, fenceline and ambient monitoring?

Mr BURGOYNE: The fenceline part of this is done by the companies. This is ambient air quality monitoring. We will have six stations speaking to the Darwin airshed scheme around Darwin Harbour monitoring the ambient air quality around Darwin.

Mr BROWN: Will there be enforceable concentration limits for air toxics that industry will need to adhere to?

Mr BURGOYNE: It is a good question. The ambient air quality and air toxic standards are set by the existing national process, the NEPMs. The facility level limits are set by the Northern Territory Environment Protection Authority. The NT EPA is currently reviewing limits in the LNG licences so that we can then work together—this is what it is about when you are a regulator—and ensure that the new air quality monitoring means we can monitor the air toxics and VOCs and have limits set by the NT EPA.

Mr BROWN: How will the scheme identify and locate sources of air toxic emissions?

Mr BURGOYNE: We are getting into the weeds of how a designated scheme could work. I will give an example. I will be kind today; I am feeling generous. Imagine the NT EPA is monitoring the air quality and sees a spike. It will then go to the people they know are hydrocarbon emitters throughout the Darwin airshed and say, 'What was happening at your facility on this day?' It gives them the ability to find out what was happening at each individual place as a regulator on any certain day, and if something went wrong at a facility that saw an increase in VOCs, they can address the issue. This is something we have previously been unable to do because, essentially, we are waiting for a period for them to report emissions.

Mr BROWN: Will those spikes be published?

Mr BURGOYNE: The data will be available publicly.

Mr BROWN: Will data be made publicly available, and will it be real-time data?

Mr BURGOYNE: Yes.

Mr BROWN: Will it include public notification of exceedance, and by who?

Mr BURGOYNE: In regard to our current air quality monitoring—this is important—let us say we have a bad week of fires around the area, which impacts the air quality around Darwin. NT Health puts out warnings in regard to that. A similar thing would happen if we saw spikes in ambient air quality.

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Mr BROWN: What are the offence provisions for breaches of exceedance of maximum pollutant limits?

Mr BURGOYNE: The NT EPA sets the rules for each individual licence to operate a hydrocarbon facility. If they breach those, they can be held accountable.

Mr BROWN: How will breaches or exceedances be investigated, and by who?

Mr BURGOYNE: The NT EPA sets licence rules in line with the *Waste Management and Pollution Control Act* and there are offences as part of that, if you breach.

Mr BROWN: Will the regulations be written to comply with the National Environment Protection Measures, as is required of every state and territory?

Mr BURGOYNE: Current air quality monitoring reports to the NEPM. I never like acronyms. It stands for National Environment Protection Measures. That is reported on annually so that we are in line with all reporting standards.

Mr BROWN: Will the regulations be written to comply with National Environment Protection Measures?

Mr BURGOYNE: It will be detailed in the regulations. The Northern Territory Environment Protection Authority will work out the rules.

Mr BROWN: Does the NT currently meet the national air toxic measure?

Mr BURGOYNE: Through the rules and regulations, the Northern Territory is required to report every year, which we do, on any exceedances.

Mr BROWN: Will this scheme be reviewed? If yes, how regularly and by who?

Mr BURGOYNE: That will be detailed in the regulations.

Mr BROWN: How will the industry pay for the scheme? How much will it be expected to pay?

Mr BURGOYNE: That is a great question. I am getting my annual fees mixed up with the air quality monitoring. We are working out how much the scheme will cost, dividing up by the number of emitters and then making sure the industry is paying for it, so it will be proportionate to emissions.

Mr BROWN: Will any of this cost end up back on Territory taxpayers?

Mr BURGOYNE: Not if I have anything to do with it.

Mr BROWN: Who have you consulted in relation to the scheme?

Mr BURGOYNE: Industry will be consulted about how we will recover those costs.

Mr BROWN: Given the significance of an air quality monitoring scheme—it is literally about the air we breathe—will you hold public hearings before drafting the regulations?

Mr BURGOYNE: No. We know what we are seeking to do. We are seeking to set in place a scheme so that we can put everyone's mind at ease, and that is what we will do.

Mr BROWN: How will this Bill provide safer air for Territorians, as the title suggests?

Mr BURGOYNE: It sets in place a regulatory scheme so that we can set up monitoring schemes. The Darwin Airshed Monitoring Scheme, which has been broadly spoken about, is one that we are looking forward to setting up so that members of the public will be able to see live what the quality of the air is in the Darwin airshed, and it will also assist the Northern Territory Environment Protection Authority in regulating emitters into the future.

J DAVIS: In your answer to written question 253 you said that the proposed government network we are talking about would replace the need for monitoring by facilities themselves. Is there any part of this Bill that removes the monitoring requirement from a licence?

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Mr BURGOYNE: Under their licensing arrangements they also have to report their emissions, and under the National Pollutant Inventory they have to report their emissions, which is a federal scheme. They will still have their own monitoring and be reporting on that; it is just that we will now also have our own air quality monitoring with publicly available data.

J DAVIS: So, it is not actually replacing theirs; it is adding to it?

Mr BURGOYNE: Yes, good point; it is adding to it.

J DAVIS: Earlier you talked about companies being held accountable; there is no definition of offences in the Bill. Is that correct?

Mr BURGOYNE: It is important to understand that the Northern Territory Environment Protection Authority sets licence rules, and in the *Waste Management and Pollution Control Act* there are offences for breaches of those licence rules.

J DAVIS: This may go to your amendment 1, so you may want to talk about it then, but I have heard you say several times that data will be made public. I want to confirm that the intention is that data will be made public in real time.

Mr BURGOYNE: It is a great point for me to clarify. Currently, the ambient air quality monitoring is exactly that. It measures in real time. I know you have asked me questions about it in Question Time. We are seeking to expand that system and make sure it now incorporates volatile organic compounds as well. It will be as it currently is, which is live and available. It will continue to be into the future.

J DAVIS: INPEX has been running continuous BTEX monitoring since July 2025. The review said that data is not public; is it public now, or is there an intention to make it public?

Mr BURGOYNE: It is important that is being addressed with the NT EPA through the licence review process. I will not speak on what the outcome of that will be; it will be for the independent statutory authority. It is being reviewed.

J DAVIS: Does anything in the Bill stop a company that is paying for a scheme from running it?

Mr BURGOYNE: I completely understand where the Member for Johnston is coming from. There is nothing stopping that from happening, but that would not occur. We are seeking to—I have spoken to the department at great lengths about this. If, in the future, Charles Darwin University wanted to run a monitoring scheme for water, odour or ambient air and had government funds to do so—they are essentially paying into their own scheme—we would not want them not to be able to. Let us be clear: we are not letting polluters in Darwin Harbour run the air quality monitoring scheme from the Darwin airshed.

J DAVIS: That is a great relief. Is there anything in this Bill that guarantees that?

Mr BURGOYNE: It is important for those listening to understand that this Bill sets up a regulatory framework for us to put in place monitoring schemes. The monitoring schemes are made up of regulations. That is what ensures it can occur. What we are talking about today enables the monitoring scheme to occur.

J DAVIS: I move amendment 1 to clause 4.

I have already discussed the intent of this amendment, which is to make sure the minister and the department is clear that the intent of the Bill is put in the law and not left to regulations.

It is relatively long, but I will read it. The amendment to clause 4, proposed section 126B(2), to omit and insert:

(2) If an environmental monitoring scheme is established under subsection (1), the regulations must provide for the following in relation to the scheme:

(a) the purpose of the scheme;

(b) the actions and the regional area to which the scheme applies;

(c) the operation and administration of the scheme;

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(d) compliance, enforcement and reporting requirements in relation to the scheme;

(e) the requirement for any environmental monitoring data collected under the scheme to be made available to the public as soon as reasonably practicable and free of charge.

(3) Without limiting subsection (1), the Regulations may provide for the following in relation to an environmental monitoring scheme:

(a) the requirement for specified persons or classes of persons to make contributions towards all or part of the costs of anticipated costs of establishing, operating and administering the scheme;

(b) in relation to the contributions to be made by persons, or different classes of persons:

(i) the method of calculating those contributions, whether by reference to region, area, type of action or other criteria; or

(ii) the Minister to have the power to determine, by Gazette notice, the method of calculating those contributions whether by reference to region, area, type of action or other criteria;

(c) the appointment of one or more persons as a scheme administrator or as joint scheme administrators, and the conferral of functions and powers on the administrator or administrators;

(d) the establishment of a fund for the scheme, including payments into and out of the fund and requirements relating to accounting, auditing and reporting;

(e) any other matter necessary or convenient for the establishment, operation or administration of the scheme.

(4) The Regulations must not provide for the appointment of a person mentioned in subsection (3)(c) in relation to an environmental monitoring scheme unless the person:

(a) is a government authority or a qualified person; and

(b) does not hold a financial interest relevant to the scheme.

I note I have explained the intent of this motion but reiterate that none of these amendments go against anything I have heard is actually the purpose of the scheme. They are there to reassure Territorians, exactly as you have said that you want to do, minister.

Amendment not agreed to.

Mr BURGOYNE: I move amendment 1 to clause 4.

Clause 4 provides a definition for an environmental monitoring scheme and aspects of an environmental monitoring scheme that may be provided in regulations. Amendment 1 inserts a new section 126B(2)(c)(a) to provide that the regulations may provide for the manner and form of publishing monitoring data, which will enhance the transparency of environmental monitoring schemes by allowing public access to scheme data. This is dealing with some of the concerns I have heard this afternoon.

J DAVIS: I support this. I believe it could go further. For example, and maybe you would be open to amending it on the floor, that any data will be available free of charge, which is one of the concerns that was raised during the during the scrutiny committee process.

Amendment agreed to.

Mr BURGOYNE: I move amendment 2 to clause 4.

Amendment 2 inserts a new section 126B(2)(ea) to provide that the regulations may empower the minister to specify, by gazette notice, the persons or classes of persons required to make contributions towards the cost of a scheme. This will avoid the need to identify individual persons or bodies corporate in the regulations and provide the flexibility to bring new entrants into an environmental monitoring scheme or remove entities that are no longer captured in a timely manner, without requiring amendments to the regulations.

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Amendment agreed to.

Mr BROWN: I move amendment 1 in amendment schedule 73OPP to clause 4.

Territorians deserve transparency regarding the government's proposed environmental monitoring scheme. They deserve to see the details of the scheme, but this Bill gives them nothing. This legislation as it stands does not set out the scope, methodology, standards, enforceability or financial arrangements of any proposed environmental monitoring scheme.

It does not give Territorians any confidence that the CLP government is serious about the air quality monitoring scheme because this Bill allows it to sidestep public scrutiny of the details of that scheme. The minister has not talked through the detail of the scheme and has no intention of consulting with Territorians about it. It is not good enough, and Territorians deserve better.

This is a government that has a poor track record on environmental safeguards. It has walked back on climate change targets and renewable energy; removed third-party merits review from petroleum, planning and water legislation; and walked back on other recommendations from the Pepper inquiry for regulating the onshore gas industry. This is not a government that can be trusted with environmental safeguards, and Territorians are right to be concerned about how flimsy this Bill is.

We will propose amendments that will seek to enshrine specific requirements into legislation because we believe that will mean a more accountable and transparent environmental monitoring scheme.

Mr BURGOYNE: A lot of the standards and assessment of monitoring relating to air pollutants obviously change over time. There are additional pollutants added. Setting it in legislation would mean that there would need to be changes constantly. The National Environment Protection Measures (NEPM) set a lot of these standards. Having it in regulation allows much more freedom to move with a changing environment in regard to standards.

Amendment not agreed to.

Clause 4, as amended, agreed to.

Clauses 5 to 13, by leave, taken together and agreed to.

Remainder of the Bill, by leave, taken together and agreed to.

Bill agreed to.

Mr BURGOYNE (Lands, Planning and Environment): Mr Deputy Speaker, I move that the Bill be now read a third time.

Motion agreed to; Bill read a third time.

PAPERS TABLED

Legal and Constitutional Affairs Committee Report of Ministerial Correspondence on Subordinate Legislation and Publications August 2025 – August 2026

Mrs ZIO (Chair of Legal and Constitutional Affairs Committee): Madam Speaker, I table the Legal and Constitutional Affairs Committee report, Report of Ministerial Correspondence on Subordinate Legislation and Publications August 2025 – August 2026 and associated minutes of proceedings.

During the reporting period the committee considered 33 pieces of subordinate legislation as detailed in this report. The committee's legal counsel, Professor Ned Aughterson, raised concerns regarding three of these. This report places on the public record those concerns and allows interested persons to see clarifications regarding the intended operations of the regulations or undertakings to correct any errors as provided by ministers.

In addition to the scrutiny of subordinate legislation, the committee is responsible for monitoring the statutory reporting requirements of 85 government entities. It is pleasing to note that during the current reporting period the majority of agencies, independent officers, statutory authorities and government-owned corporations met their relevant reporting obligations within the required timeframes.

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I thank my fellow committee members for their bipartisan approach in seeking to ensure a high standard of rules and regulations in the Northern Territory.

On behalf of the committee, I also thank ministers, their staff and agencies for their responses to the committee's queries.

The committee also acknowledges the significant contribution made by Professor Aughterson and thank him for his diligence in advising the committee.

Finally, I also acknowledge the committee secretariat for the substantial research, analysis and administrative work required to bring this inquiry and report together.

I move that the report be noted.

Motion agreed to; report noted.

ADJOURNMENT

Mr MALEY (Agriculture and Fisheries): Madam Speaker, I move that the Assembly do now adjourn.

Mr O'GALLAGHER (Karama): Madam Speaker, these sittings can be a bit scary at times. We all get a bit worried about it. Some of us even bleed a little every now and then. It is part of it.

We have Halloween coming up. We have the the Haunting of Spring Hill coming up in Anula, which is actually in the Member for Sanderson's electorate, but Spring Hill Road is only about 100 metres from my electorate. The Haunting of Spring Hill is a community Halloween haunt that brings together more than 4,000 local children and families for a night of spooky fun. Isn't that wonderful on a little suburban street?

This has been organised by Paul Burgess, who has been doing it for many years. He is known as the Australian King of Halloween. He and his family put all this together.

Beyond creating unforgettable memories for local kids, the main goal is to give back to our Northern Territory community. This year, all proceeds raised during the event will go directly to Amber NT, an extraordinary local charity that provides vital support to Territorian families navigating the loss of a child. We can all relate to that. I am proud to say that Paul reached out to me—I have known him for a long time—and I was more than happy to come on board as one of his sponsors because they give out more than 1,000 lolly bags for the kids who come in and out.

Think about this: 4,000-plus visitors to a suburban house. We look forward to it. Anyone else who wants to get behind and sponsor him, feel free to reach out. He would be more than happy to talk to people.

I will give a quick summary of the event details. It is on Saturday 31 October. It typically runs during the peak trick or treating hours, approximately 6 pm to 9 pm. The location is 6 Spring Hill Street, Anula, NT 0812. The cost of entry is free, but visitors are definitely encouraged to bring a gold coin or a digital donation for charity.

I encourage anyone, if you are not doing anything on that Saturday night or if you have family visiting, bring them along. You will see an incredible setup and it is a great opportunity to give back to the community.

On that same note, may I say that I am also working with my local community for another charity event on Australia Day that supports Variety NT. We are looking to have a morning where we all set up for a bit of a family morning to watch the Australia Day Ute Run go past. I am working with Sarah Grego, one of our local residents who started this initiative last year by herself, and now I have come behind to try to help her, and I am getting other partners and industry partners behind it just to make a great family event on the morning of Australia Day.

Apart from everyone coming down to watch the Ute Run, I have already organised to get Hyper the Clown there. Hyper the Clown will do the magic tricks and balloons for the kids. We decided we would not do the face painting because it just takes too long trying to do individual face painting. We might have some temporary Australian flag tattoos. We will put flags everywhere. We will look to get a coffee shop there. I am doing the barbecue with some of my staff and colleagues. We will get out there. Everything is free, but we will have the Variety buckets out for gold coin donations or whatever. I am looking forward to the event. I pray

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that it does not rain. Outside of that, we will put up marquees and other things to help people, but everyone else will be bringing their own chairs and rugs and a great attitude.

We have the Haunting of Springhill and then looking forward to Australia Day. I commend all the volunteers involved.

Mr YAN (Namatjira): Madam Speaker, I will speak about the events that took place in Alice Springs just last Monday. It seemed like a lifetime ago, but it was not that long ago.

I know we have had weather events, like microbursts across Alice Springs over many years, and they tend to cut a small swathe of destruction through the town. You can see where they have come through. They are generally narrow; a few hundred metres wide, but they certainly have a big impact on the areas they hit.

The event last Monday, Madam Speaker, as you are well aware, hit the whole town. Just about every area within our town and our rural area, our town camps and communities outside of Alice Springs, Hermannsburg, Wallace Rockhole and Amoonguna—it was felt out at Santa Teresa—all were impacted by that weather event to the extent that there are 12,000 residences in Alice Springs and straight after the storm 9,000 were without power. That is unprecedented.

My thanks goes to the Power and Water crews and the other contractors who were with them restoring power across our community. I think overnight they got power to 1,000 houses back on and those numbers went down significantly until we are now down to a handful of 10 or 14 houses without power, due to the structural damage to those houses. I take my hat off to the Power and Water teams, along with the contractors. They came from Darwin, Katherine and Tennant Creek to assist us in Central Australia to get the power back on.

I lost power at my house. I was here, but my daughter was at home. I think she got power back on Wednesday night, and when you consider the damage around my area that was that was pretty good. I know the team from DLI were out on the ground making sure that the roads we are responsible for were open, particularly out to the highway, and dealing with damage to some of our government buildings, mostly schools that received damage. I think there were more than 200 urgent minor repair requests and they were all actioned quickly. My thanks goes to the contractors in Alice Springs doing that work for us.

Of course, I cannot make this contribution without thanking NTES. The teams in Alice Springs are used to dealing with events, but not events of this scale. All those crews were on the ground straightaway, but we had crews come from Darwin. I think there were two. I was out there with some of those crews over the weekend when I got home. They would not take a break that lot. There was the coordinator from Alice Springs NTES team making those Darwin crews take a break, take a rest, bring them out their lunch. Making them and sit down and have a rest. That goes a long way to the show the dedication of those NTES crews down there helping us out.

What really springs to mind was on Sunday morning, the NTES crew from Darwin, along with some people from bushfires NT volunteers, and the NTES Alice Springs team at the Old Timers Camp in Alice Springs doing a major clean up. They got hit pretty bad. There was a young fella, young Leighton was in alongside that team helping pull out branches, bits and pieces. He ended up with his hard hat and gloves working side by side with those volunteers, helping clear up his little patch of the community. It was great to see. He has been made an honorary member of NTES, I believe. He is 10 years old at the moment. They are waiting till he hits 14, and they will tap him on the shoulder and see if he wants to sign up as a volunteer.

The Alice Springs Town Council are in there again alongside everybody and doing the right thing. Getting the tip open for green waste, making sure the commercial operators, along with all the residents and volunteers were able to get that green waste off the streets and get that clean up happening.

The team from Corrections, my old mob. Monday night after the event, they were already preparing to be on the ground Tuesday morning. Monday night the events just finished, their own people are suffering from damage, bits and pieces in their own homes and they are getting ready to be back out on the ground Tuesday morning supporting the community.

In the first instance, they are out there helping with a lot of those government areas, particularly schools, getting them cleaned up and making them safe so kids can get back out to schools. I know that effort will continue now for quite some time. Like the events of, I think it was 2021, those teams from corrections were on the ground from maybe a month or six weeks. Methodically working their way around the town doing that cleanup.

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The cleanup in Alice Springs will take some time. The level of damage, you have to see it to believe it. I was not at home when it took place. I got home Friday morning, and immediately went in for a drive around town, around Blatherskite Park and around the areas I represent. Until you get there and see it, you cannot begin to comprehend the damage that has happened in Alice Springs.

Our cleanup will take a while. My hat goes off and my thanks goes to all those people. The community came together. There were volunteers who were putting up posts on Facebook of groups of people who were available to come and help. If you did not have any help, there was this group of people on Facebook. You would message them and they would come around and give you a hand. It is heartwarming to see that level of community spirit.

We know Alice Springs, when things go down, the community comes together to help each other out. We have a bit to go as far as clean up, but I know we will get there. We have still got a bit of inclement weather floating around. Let us hope we do not see too much because I think we have already had enough for this year. We do not want to see anymore. Thanks to our community spirit, we will bounce back.

I thank the people from the Masters Games. I was talking to some people from Major Events today, even though we had that major weather event and everything went to hell in a handbasket, those people from the Masters Games, who came from Interstate, hung in there and had a great time. They are going home with some great stories. They are going home with stories of the Masters Games and the fun they had, but the one thing that will stick in their mind is the weather events.

Friday night, even at sign on, at Lasseters at the Convention Centre. I was there when that hailstorm hit and that was epic. To then back that up Monday night with what we saw in our community. Those people stayed. They are going home with great memories of the fun they had at the Masters, but also a pretty major weather evert they will not forget in a hurry. They will go back with the memories of a community that got together and made that event continue. That is special.

Hopefully, they will be telling all their friends, 'Get to Alice Springs for the Masters in 2028'. It will be bigger and better than ever. We will put in an email to Mother Nature to say, 'Leave us alone for the Masters in 2028. We would like some nice good weather—no hail, no wind and no major weather events.' The Masters in 2028 will be special. We want to make sure that we have a good time and our community is ready for it.

J DAVIS (Johnston): Madam Speaker, I have about 10 adjournment subjects. I will try to fit them all into one. I will note the time.

First, as we all know it is World Teachers' Day next Friday. I give a huge shout-out in recognition of all the incredible teachers across the Territory, particularly in my electorate of Johnston, where I have six amazing schools.

Congratulations to the teachers who have been nominated and are finalists in the Teachers' Day Awards:

- Lana Howitt, Leader in Education of the Year and Noella Goveas, Principal of the Year from Millner Primary School
- Fiona Henry, Early Childhood Educator of the Year from Alawa Primary School
- Lisa Hughes, Early Childhood Educator of the Year from Nemarluk School
- Gina Barker, School Based Support Person of the Year and Tara Binder, Secondary Educator of the Year from Casuarina Senior College.

A huge thanks to them.

It is traditional on World Teachers' Day to drop off something at the school. People often drop off cakes. I mix that up. I dropped off to all my schools trays of mangoes. I had excellent feedback about that, so I will do that again next Friday.

I also remind everyone that it is Aussie Bird Count Week. Darwin is a self-proclaimed city of birds, so for people who live here or are visiting, this is your chance to count the birds that are here—everything from curlews to finches. It is easy to join the bird count; just 20 minutes of logging on. If you look at Aussie Bird Count Week, it will tell you exactly what to do. On that website you can also find out what bird you are. There is a little quiz to find out what bird you are. You might be a bin chicken or an far eastern curlew.

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I also give a shout-out to BirdLife Top End. I am proud to be one of the patrons of the Darwin-Garramilla ShoreBird Festival which was on a few weeks ago, which welcomed the shorebirds back to Darwin. They travel thousands of kilometres to return here. It is an amazing journey and it is incredible to think of. They do not come here by chance; they come back because these places provide exactly what they need—food, mudflats, saltmarsh, mangroves and places to rest. Darwin Harbour is extraordinary.

There are 35 species of migratory shorebirds that are recorded here. They are a living reminder that Darwin Harbour is not just empty space waiting to be developed; it is a living ecosystem that we must protect. The birds are under enormous pressure. Their populations are under threat; they are declining around the world. We need to do everything we can to make sure that this is a safe place for them to come back to and rest after that incredible journey.

I also give a shout-out to the wonderful Mindil Aces Football Club. The Mindil Aces has always been a wonderful club. I remember 25 years ago when my boys played there. The thing we loved most about it was the way it created a sense of place for every person. Our office is proud to support the club. I was happy to be at its awards ceremony where there were lovely stories told about the way the club works with the community and goes beyond what a normal club might. For example, some young people who are playing in that club were caught up in international conflict and unable to obtain the visa that would let them stay in Australia. The whole club got behind them to make that happen. That is exactly the kind of club it is. I congratulate not only the winners of the awards, but every person who makes that club the wonderful place it is.

I also thank the Youth Parliament, with so many amazing and inspiring young people from across the Territory. Many of us in this Chamber got to meet and spend time with them. One of my key takeaways, which I reckon you will love, Madam Speaker, is that their debate speeches are capped at three minutes and they manage to say everything they need to in that time. Maybe we could all learn something from that.

I finish by sending my love and strength—as I know we all do—to Dr Helen Haines. We heard from her amazing husband yesterday, and we now know that she has lost both her legs. As he said, she is a fighter and a determined person. She is a person determined to do her best. He said our support and love will help her recover and that is what we hope for.

Her heart is huge: she is a compassionate, caring, loving person who is incredibly supportive of all around her. Her mind—she has the sharpest intellect, has always had the most intense desire to learn, read, synthesise and understand what is going on. We are grateful that at this stage both her heart and her mind are in good shape.

There has been so much commentary in the last few days about what Helen represents; the way she works with her community and with her colleagues in parliament from all sides, her integrity, her fierce intelligence, her commitment and her kindness.

There has also been a lot of commentary about what this means for Australia, for our politics in a time of increasing division and hate. Someone sent me a message as soon as we heard about the terrible attack, saying how terrible it was, but that they hope it can be a catalyst for building a safer, kinder and more respectful society, and I hope so too. As leaders in our communities, here in this Chamber we can start building that.

Strength and love to Helen. For anyone interested, there will be a candle lighting for her across Australia tomorrow at 6.30 pm. People can light their own candle, or if they want to come together with others, there will be people gathering at the Waterfront in Darwin or at Goyder Square in Palmerston.

Mrs FINOCCHIARO (Spillett): Madam Speaker, I recognise Benjamin ‘Benny’ King, a talented young man in my electorate who I have known for many years and who has often helped me letterbox drop my newsletter. At just 15 years old, Benny has recently been selected to represent the Northern Territory in the under-17 boys cricket team, which will compete in Perth in January. That is exciting. Benny is the only player from Palmerston Cricket Club selected for the team. I am patron of that wonderful club. It is an incredible achievement for him, and he has worked hard for it.

Benny has had an excellent year on the cricket field. He helped Palmerston Cricket Club reach the semifinals this season and was awarded the Captain’s Player of the Year, which is special. In under-16 junior cricket, he collected nearly every award on offer and was also named in the Darwin and Districts Under-16 Team of the Year. Earlier this year, Benny also competed in the Under-17 Kookaburra Junior Boys Strike League,

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coming out on top against seven other teams. Benny also proudly carried the flag at the Australia v Bangladesh test match in Darwin earlier this year. This is Benny's final season of junior cricket with the Palmerston Cricket Club before he moves into the senior ranks next year.

The Territory Under-17 team will be coached by former England international cricketer, Tim Bresnan, who played against Australia in the 2010–11 Ashes Series. Tim has already developed a good relationship with the boys, and they will have the opportunity to learn from someone who has played cricket at the highest level. I congratulate Benny on his selection and everything he has achieved and works hard for. I know his family and everyone at Palmerston Cricket Club are incredibly proud of him. I wish Benny and the entire team all the best in Perth in January. Go Benny, well done.

The Northern Territory has never been afraid of doing things differently. We back people with an idea, a strong work ethic and the determination to build something exceptional. I recognise one of those Territorians, Anneliese Grazioli. Anneliese is the founder of Bar Kokomo, recently voted the Northern Territory's favourite bar in Time Out Australia's inaugural People's Choice Awards. More than 10,000 Australians voted in the awards, with Bar Kokomo chosen as the Territory's favourite. It is a significant achievement for the venue, but it also reflects the vision and leadership behind it. Anneliese began her career in hospitality as a teenager and has spent more than a decade building her knowledge, refining her craft and raising the standard of hospitality in the Northern Territory. Along the way, she has earned national recognition through cocktail competitions, industry awards and her leadership roles before opening her own venues in the Territory.

Her success has never been about simply serving great cocktails—although that is what she does. It has been about creating destinations that people seek out, experiences that visitors remember and workplaces where talented hospitality professionals can develop their careers. In 2024 she was awarded Australian Bartender Magazine's Bar Operator of the Year and that success has continued. Anneliese has again been recognised nationally as a finalist in the Bar Operator of the Year in the 2026 Australian Bar Awards. Her venues have also earned national recognition, with Hanky Panky Lounge shortlisted for Regional Bar of the Year and Bar Kokomo for Rum Bar of the Year.

Recognition like this really matters and it highlights all that Anneliese has achieved. I congratulate Anneliese and her entire team on this outstanding recognition and wish her the very best of luck as she continues to do the Territory v proud.

I rise to congratulate Hoops 4 Health and its founder Timmy Duggan on being named NT Blak Business of the Year at the 2026 NT Blak Business Awards last weekend.

The awards add to the impressive list of achievements for Timmy, including receiving the Medal of the Order of Australia in 2023 for his significant service to youth and sport and being inducted into the Northern Territory Sport Hall of Champions in 2024. In 1996 Timmy made history by becoming the first born and bred Territorian in the NBL, the first Indigenous Territorian in the NBL and the sole Indigenous Australian in the NBL in the 1990s; an achievement that marked the beginning of a remarkable career both on and off the basketball court.

Through Hoops 4 Health, Timmy has spent decades using basketball, cultural connection and mentoring to support thousands of young Territorians. I congratulate Timmy and everyone involved with Hoops 4 Health on this well-deserved recognition. Thank you for the difference you continue to make in the lives of young Territorians.

I rise to congratulate Bronte Bellett on her outstanding performance at the Victorian All School Athletics Championships. Competing in cold and wet conditions at Lakeside Stadium, Bronte won both the under-16 girls 400-metre and 800-metre events, a fantastic result that demonstrates her talent and determination.

These victories add to an impressive year for Bronte, who has continued to compete against strong fields while representing the Northern Territory. In May Bronte competed at the Oceania Athletics Championships held in Darwin and at just 15 years of age she reached the under-18 400-metre final. At the same championships she also ran as part of the mixed 4x4 400-metre relay team which finished second in the final.

Bronte has continued to build on those performances at home, recording personal bests of 57.2 seconds in the 400 metres and two minutes 15.84 seconds in the 800 metres. I am told that the 0.84 seconds is very important. That feels unfair to me.

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Balancing school with the demands of training and competition takes determination and commitment, but she happens to have a mother who is determined and committed herself, so I know she is well supported at home and by Darwin Athletics Club.

I congratulate Bronte on winning both Victorian titles. It is wonderful to see a young Territorian achieving such success interstate. She continues to make the Territory proud and to make her mark on athletics in this country. Congratulations, Bronte.

I congratulate Ezekiel Jape on an outstanding performance at the 2026 South Australian Brazilian Jiu Jitsu Championship. Competing in Adelaide, Ezekiel delivered an impressive result winning bronze in Gi and Silver in No-Gi in the boys' 14 years 44-kilogram grey belt division. This was a five-star national ranking event bringing together talented competitors and providing an opportunity for athletes to test themselves against strong opposition. For a young athlete to compete at this level is an achievement requiring discipline, strength and determination.

Ezekiel represented Brazilian Jiu Jitsu Darwin as part of its junior development and elite team, showing that Territory athletes of all ages can compete and succeed on the national stage. His achievement is also a credit to everyone who supports him—his coaches, teammates and family—to make sure that he can achieve these incredible goals. It is fantastic to see a young Territorians working hard, representing the Territory and achieving success in growing the sport. Congratulations, Ezekiel.

I congratulate the 21 members of our Northern Territory Police Force who competed at the 2026 Australasian Police and Emergency Services Games held on the Gold Coast last week. The 20th Games brought together police and emergency services personnel from 21 countries who competed across 73 sports from swimming, golf and volleyball to Brazilian jiu-jitsu, axe throwing and tug-of-war. The program offered plenty of variety. Our Territory contingent competed across a broad range of events, with several participants returning home with medals, and we would expect nothing less from our Territory team.

Benjamin was one of the standout performers, claiming three gold medals in the 3.5-kilometre cross country run, the 2000 metre standup paddleboard event, and the 14-kilometre trail run. Jake Harkies also had a successful games, winning three silver medals across men's and mixed tug-of-war, and indoor go kart racing. Donna Kayley and Joanne Lamont each secured silver medals in the indoor go kart racing. Steve Farve won silver and bronze in beach volleyball, and Amman Kumar claimed silver and bronze in Brazilian Jiu Jitsu. Celio Levoure also earned a bronze medal in tenpin bowling. These were excellent results for the Northern Territory, and I congratulate each of our medal winners.

I also acknowledge every member of the Northern Territory contingent by excusing rank: Warwick Wesholme, Donna Kayley, Sally Ellis, Jake Harkies, Joan Lamont, Rosemary Miller, Georgia Lowe, Taylor Hill, Ian Young, Steve Favave, Lisa Padden, Cililo Levoure, Angela Stringer, Thomas Mosquera, who was one of our civilian members, Giorgio Romano, Andrew Grant, Chris Ford, Lachlan Boyle, Riley Collins, Benjamin Stove and Aman Kumar.

Our police and emergency services do demanding jobs, but it was fantastic that they were able to compete. Congratulations to all 21 competitors. Thank you for representing the Northern Territory so proudly, and for the important work you do every day in keeping the Territory safe.

Mr YOUNG (Daly): Madam Speaker, I thank the Assembly for allowing me leave of absence yesterday to attend an important funeral for a close friend that I have known for roughly 15 years.

Yesterday, I travelled to Wadeye to attend the funeral of Mr Keringbo, who was from Madjellindi Valley on the Fitzmaurice River, close to the WA border. It was a beautiful send off for Mr Keringbo with the Wangga dancers there from his mother's side and a beautiful church service to recognise his life.

Mr Keringbo was one of those men who had a beautiful soul. He deeply cared about everyone he came across, and he also deeply cared about his family. He was a family man. He loved his wife dearly and, in fact, when he got sick, they got married last year to tie the knot. He would tell me, 'I have got to tie the knot, Dheran', and he did with his beautiful wife, Rosa Parry. He also has eight beautiful kids. To Selena, Nikki, Anastasia, Alan, Delvina, Marcia, Cyril and Maria, we are there for you, thinking of you, and we will be there to support you through this tough time. They have taken this heavily, as anyone would when you lose a father, particularly like someone like Mr Keringbo.

He was always eager to get out on his country, roughly 50 kilometres west of Palumpa. It took about two hours to get there on a road that goes up the escarpment country. I went many times and on weekends with

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him out there and camped. It is one of the most isolated places I have ever been in my life. You know you are in the middle of nowhere and you feel like you are in the middle of nowhere. It is one of the most spectacular places, and I have travelled to Africa. I have been on safaris over there to Maasai Mara and the like, and that is what it reminded me of with its beautiful big plains and hills. A lot of his kids' bush names are named after those hills. For him to share his culture with me was something that I have not taken for granted.

His sister, who I am close to as well, Marita Chula, has been amazing and strong through that, staying at their house every night to support the family with Rosa and all the kids and grandkids. He was very deeply loved by Marita. We were always going out bush and on country with him.

In fact, I used to joke to Marita when I lived out there that I used to love giving my car to Mr Keringbo because it would come back cleaner than when I had it. He would come to my house and ask, 'Dheran, can I borrow your car?' I had this old 1990s Hilux. I would say sure, because he was always going out bush, hunting and taking the kids out. He would take my car and I will never forget that every time he took it, it came back so shiny. He would clean the inside and ensure it was spotless. It was great. I never hesitated to hand over those keys. Out of it I would get a couple of ducks and shoot a bullocky occasionally. I would get a little bit of meat out of it too, so I was not too bad, but it was better when I was there with them on country.

I am thinking of the Kardu Diminin family who are the traditional owners of Wadeye. When Mr Keringbo's dad passed away, he was adopted in through the late Boniface Perdjert, some might know him as Deacon Boniface Perdjert. He was the first Catholic Aboriginal Deacon in Australia. He also met Pope John O'Loughlin when he came to Australia. Mr Perdjert took Mr Keringbo in as his son and all the kids when his dad passed away. There were many Kardu Diminin people there, the traditional people of Wadeye, to pay their respects and deep cultural connection to Mr Keringbo.

To Rosa; all the kids; and Marita, the sister; we are thinking of you. I really appreciate his friendship, loyalty and also taking me out on his country and camping out there. It is one of those experiences you can never take back.

Ms BOOTHBY (Brennan): Madam Speaker, I thank some of the crew from the Northern Territory Parks and Wildlife team.

Territorians know our rangers work hard to support our unique Territory lifestyle and landscapes, but they do more than look after our 5.1 million hectares of parks and promote our unique plants and wildlife; in severe weather, rangers are the first responders. When a critical incident occurs in one of our 85 Territory parks, our rangers are on the ground supporting police, rescue teams, disaster recovery and investigations.

We have seen it recently with two tragedies, one in Edith Falls and one at Litchfield. I recognise the men and women of the Northern Territory Parks and Wildlife team who responded to both tragic incidents and worked with law enforcement in search efforts, retrieval and the aftermath.

The people from the team at Nitmiluk National Park involved in the retrieval from Edith Falls were Reece Verdoorn; Barry Churchill; Ben Spencer; Gill Trowler; Liam Durie; Cosmo White; Rob Richardson; Rowan Coward; Amanda Arnold; and Tom Lewsley.

From Litchfield National Park, the people involved with the retrieval from the Lost City were Andrew Turner; Norman Greenfield; Sam Croft; Adrian McKenzie; Darius Nasir; Paloma Poncini; Michael Sikyr; Dan Anderson; Tyson Francis; Ella Poustie; Max Werner; Toby Bishop; David (Davo)McLachlan; James (Jim) Raimondo; Matt Stiles; Richard Blitner; and Ciaran Abbey.

I recognise all the staff who delivered the 2026 Alice Springs Masters Games and made it such a resounding success, despite the severe weather in Central Australia. Our team worked with more than 300 volunteers, 1,800 participants and a huge number of stakeholders. They rallied to keep the games going in the face of the hail, torrential rain and all the uncertainty wet weather can bring.

A big thank you to the team at Tourism Events NT, in particular the staff who were on the ground: Aimee Luxton, Jason Potter, Jan Andersen, Caleb Melville. Dee Petrohilos, Dylan Etherington, Josh Hill, Simon Hargrave, Michelle Hampton, Shannon Byrne, Natalie Major, Travis Longmire and Debbie Heller.

Severe weather conditions have certainly had an impact on our tourism, events and recreation in Northern Territory this year. Also rising fuel costs had a big impact. That is why we have strengthened the fuel compliance with initiatives like the MyFuel NT, the Plan Your Trip with Confidence platform and our AI monitoring. In my portfolio, we changed the 24-hour fuel price lock.

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Our Consumer Affairs Team have played a crucial role in enforcing our strong fuel price measures. It has issued 11 infringements notices totalling over $164,000 after nearly 3000 compliance checks across the Northern Territory. I recognise the staff on the ground in the Consumer Affairs Team, but also across the government. There were teams we were able to pull from other agencies who supported the compliance checks, and still do.

The Manager of Compliance, Hilbert Wienekamp, along with Larissa Toft, Jacqueline Renfrey, Ashleen Whitford and Amanda Saunders are in Alice Springs.

We also had people from Consumer Affairs noncompliance who got their hands dirty to help out: Michael Barritt, Tiffany Riley, Janet Bell, Susan Edwards, Greg Cusbert, Janine Dempsey, Shelagh Leonard and Danielle Wilks.

Many other departments were also supportive and helped out, especially throughout our regions where we have other public servants living in Tennant Creek, Alice Springs, Katherine and across the Territory: Ryan Tucker and Robert Mengler from Parks and Wildlife were helping out with compliance; Lorraine Armour from Licensing NT; Ellis Tracey from WorkSafe was also helping; Isaac Benz from the Department of Children and Families; Bill Dalton from the Department of Trade, Business and Asian Relations; Raj Baniya from the Department of Trade, Business and Asian Relations; and Bob Petersen from the Department of Logistics and Infrastructure.

We also had some extra staff come along—some casual positions—during that peak season of compliance that we had to do. They were : Hope Price from WorkSafe; Jordan Lucas from Department of Corrections; and Madia Solien from the Supreme Court. There were people from the Department of Tourism and Hospitality as well: Rachel Telford; Monica Tonkin; Gemma Whelan; and Staci Mellman. All of these people were helping out when it comes to fuel compliance for those 3,000 compliance checks we did.

The Territory's hospitality industry is second to none. It is also one of a kind. It employs over 6,000 people and invests back into our sports clubs, community groups and local events like the Laksa Festival, Darwin Festival and so many more. While I always talk about the bumper year that we had in tourism, I take a moment to celebrate the huge year we had in our hospitality industry.

The Chief Minister and I, on 24 August, attended the Hospitality NT Gold Plate Awards which celebrated local operators. There were 27 winners and 99 nominees cheered on by a record 600 attendees, showing how huge our hospitality industry is. There are so many achievements which have gone unnoticed, now I put them onto the permanent record.

We all know that Michelin Stars recognise restaurants and Michelin Keys recognise hospitality venues that include accommodation. Longitude 131 at Uluru was awarded two Michelin Keys. It has also featured in World's Best Hotel listings all year, from Condé Nast in the UK to LaList in France. Well done to Longitude 131; an incredible achievement.

The 2026 Australian Good Food Guide also recognised 44 venues with Reader's Choice Awards, including Madam Za and District North Kitchen in Palmerston. Four of those businesses received prestigious chef hats, including Ella by Minoli in Darwin with 13 hats, Junoon Restaurant and Bar in Darwin with 12 hats, Arnguli Grill in Yulara with 12 hats, and Tali Wiru in Yulara with 15 hats. They were also named Oceana's Best Fine Dining Hotel Restaurant in the World Culinary Awards.

At the Time Out People's Choice Awards there were three Territory listings: Favourite Bar, Bar Kokomo in Darwin; Favourite Pub, Hotel Darwin; and Favourite Restaurant, Ella by Minoli.

The NT Local Business Awards a couple of weeks ago saw Dukes Cafe take out Outstanding Cafe, whilst the Great Darwin Regional Business Awards celebrated the Darwin Convention Centre and Thyme Hospitality as Venue of the Year and Employer of the Year.

Our hospitality industry would be nothing without its people like Annie Nguyen at Hanky Panky who was the Hospitality NT Bartender of the Year; Jake Horyna at the Cinema Collective, the Chef of the Year; Shimon Shimeezu at Perk and Palate, the Barista of the Year; and Anneliese Grazioli, who Drinks 100 named NT Bar Operator of the Year. In September she was named the 12th in Australia's most influential bar industry figures, and after years of success with venues like Hanky Panky, I am proud to say that Anneliese was inducted into the Australian Bar Awards Hall of Fame last month.

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The wins continue in our hotel industry. Ayers Rock Resort has racked up awards this year with a Platinum Award in the 2026 MUSE Hotel Awards. They were also named Oceania's Leading Resort Responsible Tourism winner and Leading Tourism Attraction at the World Travel Awards. Buymarr Getaways in East Arnhem were named Blak Tourism Business of the Year last week. The Star Ratings Australia 2026 Gold List recognised venues like Cooinda Lodge, Cicada Lodge, Palms City Resort, Hilton Garden Inn, Sails in the Desert, Outback Hotel and Lodge and the Desert Gardens Hotel.

Hilton Darwin took out the Booking.com Traveller Review Award and, after already being nominated for the HM Hotel Excellence Award, their restaurant PepperBerry won the TripAdvisor Best of the Best award as well. Of course, congratulations to all of our craft breweries, wineries, distilleries and manufacturers in our hospitality industry who do such an awesome job, businesses like Northern Distilling, who took out five awards at the 2026 Australian International Spirits Awards, including the Best New World Gin and Australian Contemporary Gin.

Speargrass Distillery took out two awards for their vodka and Arafura Fin. Willing Distillery has had a huge year on the back of their 2025 Brolga Award. They took out five prizes at the International Spirits Awards, six prizes at the Australian Gin Awards, and three prizes at the Sydney Royal Spirits Show. Darwin Distillery continues to receive recognition for their unique Territory flavours.

There you go; it is a huge list of hospitality businesses with amazing efforts, and we are so proud of every single one of them. They are putting the Northern Territory on the map for all the right reasons. We should all be proud of them. They are the gateway, the front door and everything to the locals and our tourists, and we are proud.

Mr CHARLS (Sanderson): Madam Speaker, I rise to speak about the many multicultural events I have had the privilege of hosting and attending. I was delighted to host the Dashain celebration at Parliament House, alongside the Non-Resident Nepali Association of Northern Territory. I thank President Trilochan and the committee for their ongoing contribution to the community, and all the volunteers who made the celebration possible.

It was a pleasure to celebrate Bathukamma 2026 with the Telangana community, alongside the Chief Minister Lia Finocchiaro. Thank you to the Telangana Association of Darwin (TAD) for the warm invitation and for sharing one of your most cherished festival's, celebrating flowers, culture, tradition and community spirit. I thank President Mithun Keesara, committee members and all volunteers.

It was a pleasure to attend the annual dinner dance hosted by St Savvas of Kalymnos Greek Orthodox Parish NT. I thank Father Christos Tsoraklidis, directors and volunteers for all the hard work for the event. Events like these celebrate the rich traditions of the Greek Orthodox community, strengthen connections and bring people together.

As Minister for Multicultural Affairs, I was pleased to join the Taiwanese Community of the Northern Territory in celebrating its culture, heritage and valued contribution to our multicultural community. I recognised the important role the Taiwanese community played in strengthening the Territory's connections across the Asia-Pacific through business, education, tourism and cultural exchange. I thank the president Janet, committee members and all the volunteers Taiwanese Community of the Northern Territory (TCNT) for bringing the community together.

As Minister for Multicultural Affairs, I was pleased to host the BAPS Swaminarayan Sanstha Australia at Parliament House for the celebration of Annakut. Annakut is an important Hindu tradition which celebrates gratitude, generosity and community. It is also an opportunity to recognise the cultural and religious traditions that contribute to the Territory's vibrant multicultural identity. I would like to thank Ketan Patel, President of the BAPS, Anand Panchal and all volunteers who supported and make this event possible.

I was delighted to attend the Navratri Dance Festival at Marrara Indoor Stadium, organised by then Gujarati Cultural Association of Darwin (GCAD). Thank you to President Hiranch Patel for the invitation to this wonderful celebration of culture and community spirit. It was a pleasure to attend the Pchum Ben Festival at the Khmer Darwin Temple, organised by the Cambodian Association of the NT. I thank Thyra Ou for the invitation.

It was wonderful to drop in and say hello to the Cyprus Community of the NT volunteers at their thankyou party. The 2026 Cyprus Food and Wine Festival was a fantastic success, and it was great to see everyone come together to celebrate and recognise the incredible efforts of the volunteers who help make it possible.

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I thank President Alexandra Magriplis, Toulla Patsalou, other committee members and every volunteer for their hard work, dedication and contribution to a vibrant multicultural community.

As the Minister for Multicultural Affairs, I was delighted to join the Nigerian community in celebrating Nigeria's 66th Independence Day. Thank you to the Nigerian Association of Northern Territory President Dr Oyelola Adegboye, Secretary General Francisca Nnanna, and the committee, volunteers and supporters who made the celebration possible. I also recognise the valuable contributions Nigerian Australians make to the Northern Territory's culture, economy and community life.

I was delighted to join the Double Ten Day celebrations, commemorating the founding of the Republic of China and its enduring historical significance. As Minister for Multicultural Affairs, I valued the opportunity to recognise the rich contributions of the Northern Territory's Taiwanese community. I would like to thank Kivi Lay for the invitation and coordinating the event for the community.

It was a pleasure to host the first Pacific Island community event at Parliament House, bringing together Pacific communities from across the Northern Territory. It was wonderful to see the contribution of Pacific Australians make to the Territory in our workplaces, communities, churches, families and sporting team. Thank you to Reverand Haloti Kailahi, the Pacific Islands Council of Northern Territory, and our community leaders for helping bring everyone together.

The colour, the joy and community spirit on display at this year's Tết Trung Thu celebration was truly something special. Known as the Vietnamese mid-autumn festival, this cherished event brought together generations to celebrate culture, family and tradition. From the lantern parade to the traditional performance performances, it was a wonderful reminder of the rich multicultural heritage that helps shape the Territory lifestyle. Thank you to President Thien Le, Phuong Le, and the Vietnamese Community in Australia NT Chapter for hosting such a fantastic event and creating an opportunity for all Territorians from all backgrounds to come together, learn from one another and celebrate community.

It was a fantastic celebration of culture, community and connection at the 2026 Iri-Ji Festival. It was a privilege to join the Igbo community in their celebrations, a tradition that reflects the gratitude, renewal and the strength of community. Thank you to ONINTA President, Rita Ativie and the entire organising committee for hosting such a wonderful event and for sharing the rich traditions, music, dance and cuisine of Igbo culture with the broader Territory community.

I attended a wonderful evening celebrating Ganesh Chaturthi with the Telangana Association of Darwin. It was great to come together, celebrate the traditions of the Telugu and Hindu communities and share in the colour, culture and spirit of the festival. I thank the Telangana Association of Darwin Presidentm, Mithun Keesara, and committee for the invitation and for the work you do to keep traditions strong in the Territory.

I joined the Australia-China Friendship Society for the grand opening of their new community shed and to celebrate the mid-autumn Moon Festival, a beautiful celebration of family, friendship and unity. Congratulations to Dr Shu Li, and the whole Australia-China Friendship Society, and happy Moon Festival to all. I also want to congratulate Dr Shu Li as she has recently been appointed as President of the Australia-China Friendship Society at the national level.

I joined the Hindu community for the inaugural annual temple festival at the Darwin Sri Sithy Vinayakar Temple, Darwin Hindu Temple. It was a special occasion to celebrate the official commencements or commencement of the festival, raise the Australian and Northern Territory flags, and recognise the respected community elder Mr Sabaratnam Prathaban for his contribution to the community.

For nearly 40 years, the temple has been a place of faith, culture and community, bringing Territorians together through tradition, music, dance, ceremony and shared values. My sincere thanks to the President of the Hindu Society of the Northern Territory, Krishnapradeep Vijayaraghavan, and his committee, as well as the Chief Priest. Narayanan Eeswaranivasa Kurukkal, for such a wonderful event. I wish the festival continued success in the years ahead and look forward to returning.

It was wonderful to join the community at the Darwin Waterfront to celebrate the fifth anniversary of the Vietnamese Lantern Festival by the Australian Vietnamese Family Association. Congratulations to president Anna Dam, the committee and volunteers for another fantastic celebration of Vietnamese culture. The NT Government is proud to support events like this that bring our multicultural community together and celebrate the diversity that makes the Territory so special.

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I attended the Nusantara Foundation for a cultural night. I thank president Faizal Poulter for the invitation. It was a wonderful opportunity to celebrate Indonesia's traditions and heritage, while recognising the strong and enduring relationship between Indonesia and the Northern Territory.

I thank the Darwin Tongan Association Incorporated and president John Terepo for the invitation and wonderful hospitality at Tonga Day celebration. It was a privilege to join the Tongan community in celebrating its culture, traditions and contribution to our multicultural Northern Territory.

It was wonderful to join the Filipino Australian Association of the Northern Territory for its 29th Barrio Fiesta. The event showcased the vibrant Filipino Australian community in the Northern Territory, bringing everyone together. As Minister for Multicultural Affairs, I am proud to celebrate the Filipino community and the contribution it makes to the Territory. Congratulations to the organisers and everyone involved in making this year's Barrio Fiesta such a fantastic event.

Ms UIBO (Arnhem): Mr Deputy Speaker, I acknowledge the award finalists for World Teachers' Day from the great electorate of Arnhem.

I will start with the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Educator of the Year. Congratulations to the following nominees: Edna Nelson from Urapunga School; Edwin Bundurr Rami from Numbulwar School; and Rebecca Dhamarrandji from Baniyala School.

For the category of Early Childhood Educator of the Year, congratulations to Gaynor Klaase from Alyangula Area School on Groote Eyland and Natalie Carrol from Umbakumba School on Groote Eylandt.

For the category of Inclusion Educator of the Year, congratulations to Alli Wagstaff of Alyangula Area School on Groote Eylandt.

In the category of Leader in Education of the Year, congratulations to Bridget McMeel from Barunga School and Emmy Macrae from Gapuwiyak School.

In the category of Primary Educator of the Year, congratulations to Jarrod Mcclay from Gapuwiyak School, Jess Gysbert from Alyangula Area School and Stephen Klingenberg from Minyerri School.

In the category of Principal of the Year, congratulations to Genevieve Wild from Umbakumba School on Groote Eylandt and Christopher O'Neill from Gapuwiyak School. I believe this is Chris's second nomination as Principal of the Year. That is exciting; well done, Chris.

In the category of School Based Support Person of the Year, congratulations to Duane 'Max Ahfat from Barunga School and Suerita Gurruwiwi from Gapuwiyak School.

In the category of Secondary Educator of the Year, congratulations to Emily Wilson from Barunga School.

I was excited to see so many great educators from across the Arnhem electorate who have been nominated. World Teachers' Day in the Territory will be next Friday, 30 October. I look forward to seeing the outcome and excited to see so many nominees. Hopefully some of the winners are from the Arnhem electorate.

We had a lot of focus this week on remote housing, so I want to place on the record and correct the Member for Barkly who is the minister for Housing. I thought he would have read the Partnership Agreement of the Joint Steering Committee of Remote Housing Northern Territory. This document has been spoken about many times this week, particularly by the Member for Barkly.

He has incorrectly stated that there is no mention, focus or planning on housing when it comes to the new partnership agreement that was signed in July 2024.

I seek leave to table this document so the parliament and anyone listening can see for themselves that 'homelands' is, indeed, part and parcel of this important 10-year, $4bn agreement on remote housing.

Leave granted.

Ms UIBO: For the record, because it seemed like the Member for Nelson or those saying, 'Oh, shame job. There are no homelands in that agreement' have read the agreement either. That is quite shocking when we are two years into a CLP government that we have ministers calling out jovially that there are no homelands

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outlined in the partnership agreement. I will correct the Member for Barkly, the legally responsible minister for Housing in the Northern Territory when it comes to delivering on the remote housing agreement.

The first mention on page 4 of 13, Objectives of the Agreement, subsection 2.1(c) says:

achieve better housing outcomes for homelands residents

There is your first one. There is a subsequent section on page 9 and 10 of the 13-page agreement. I will read it for the record because I do not know if the Member for Barkly and his office have done any of the research or reading of this important document. It astounds me, not in a good way, that the Member for Barkly, who supports remote housing, as much as his team does not, and comes to parliament and states an infactual piece of information as a minister legally responsible for housing in the Northern Territory and mislead parliament. I can only assume he has done this deliberately.

Part 7.5(c) is about targets under the national agreement:

c. Invest in Homelands

i. Under the Agreement, additional investment of $40 million per annum will be provided by the Commonwealth Government over three years ($120 million total) to continue the program of investment for urgent repairs and maintenance to housing and infrastructure across Northern Territory homelands through the Homelands Housing and Infrastructure Program (HHIP).

ii. The HHIP will be informed by investment priorities identified under regional work plans. The regional work plans will be agreed with the Land Councils and AHNT, and identify needs, issues and priorities regarding housing, municipal and essential infrastructure for homelands in each region.

iii. The Commonwealth Government's investment will match the Northern Territory Government's continuing investment of $40 million per annum for three years to the Northern Territory Homelands Program. The Homelands Program provides grant funding to service providers for the repairs and maintenance and operational costs of housing, municipal and essential services in homelands identified as permanently occupied.

iv. The Parties commit to working together through the JSC-RHNT to develop a long-term policy position for homelands within the first two years …

That is now, 2026, the present day—dare I say that date; the CLP is obsessed with the past. This is under the CLP's watch. It continues:

… of this Agreement, including in relation to new and replacement homes.

v. The Commonwealth and Northern Territory governments agree to review the current funding arrangements for homelands in two years

That is now, too. I continue:

… and to take into consideration the JSC-RHNT policy position on homelands.

It seems clearly, in black and white—the document has been tabled for all to see—the Member for Barkly, the responsible minister for Housing in the Northern Territory, has misled parliament by stating the Remote Housing Agreement does not talk about homelands. This was an essential part of our negotiation.

We know when Adam Giles was the former CLP Chief Minister—we talk about history lessons—he cashed out. We know for a fact Adam Giles cashed out all the money meant for homelands and spent it on other things under the CLP's watch. We do not ever want to see a repeat of that shameless, disrespectful and uncaring behaviour of a Chief Minister who has responsibilities to Northern Territory residents, who reside in homelands.

We do not want to ever see that. I am growing increasingly concerned we may start to see that. Those two timeframes outlined clearly in the Remote Housing Agreement in the Northern Territory allocated around responsibilities for the Northern Territory Government.

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Perhaps—I say this openly—it is a deliberate attempt by the Housing minister, the Member for Barkly, and the CLP government to scrap homelands from the housing agreement. The CLP has good form for doing it in the past. They like talking about the past. Perhaps they will do that now in the current and into the future. I would be very worried if that is what we will be leading to in the Territory where the minister who is responsible for a $4bn 10-year deal in the Northern Territory to improve housing outcomes In our remote communities and on our homelands is misleading parliament saying that homelands is not part of the agreement.

Please, I urge CLP government members, particularly the ministers who were jeering and shouting out yesterday and today and whenever it was, saying that homelands is not part of the agreement, go and read the facts. Read the very important agreement that your government is legally responsible for now, as the CLP is responsible for governing the Northern Territory. Read what your obligations and responsibilities are regarding homelands. No more misinformation and no fibbing in parliament by the Member for Barkly. We want to see results in homelands and communities and on that partnership agreement, which is thankfully safeguarded by seven entities on the JSC, the Joint Steering Committee on remote housing.

Mrs ZIO (Fannie Bay): Mr Deputy Speaker, I acknowledge two schools in the Fannie Bay electorate, the achievements of their students and the teachers who work tirelessly to create an environment for young Territorians to excel in everything that they do.

Firstly, Ludmilla Primary School is a fantastic school with a strong connection to its community. Despite being one of Darwin's smallest schools, Ludmilla is producing some incredibly bright students and emerging sporting talent.

This year the NT Schools AFL team competed against much larger schools. After winning a lower division last year, Ludmilla fielded students from as young as Year 3 against teams made up of Year 5 and 6 students. Despite the age difference, the team went on to win the competition, demonstrating the talent, determination and teamwork coming out of this school. It is an incredible achievement for the students, staff and wider community. They should be extremely proud of these guys.

Secondly, I was proud to support Parap Primary School with its school disco last week, recent school concert and trivia night at the Darwin Trailer Boat Club. The school is led by Mrs Bianca Hyke and assistant principals Mrs Cimarra Stephensen and Mrs Kathryn Sparks. Everyone at the school works incredibly hard to foster a learning environment that supports every child who walks through its doors.

I congratulate Dean and Taisei, winners of the 2026 CDU IT Code Fair Minecraft Challenge. Impressively, these boys also won this competition in 2025, making them back-to-back winners.

I congratulate Ibukun in Year 6 who represented the Darwin region at the NT School Sports Athletics Championships, winning a silver medal and achieving a new personal best.

Lachie competed at the NT Short Course Swimming Championship, winning medals, achieving personal bests and setting a new record in the 100-metre butterfly. Lachie was also named Junior Male Champion and qualified for the School Nationals. Lily won medals and achieved personal bests at the NT Short Course Swimming Championship and qualified for School Nationals as well. Pippa won medals and achieved personal bests at those same championships.

Beau in Year 6 represented the Northern Territory in AFL in Canberra.

Andrew in Year 6 placed first in doubles and second in singles at the Northern Territory Open Badminton Championships. He also placed second in the under-13 division at the NT Junior Championships.

Parap Primary School has seven staff members nominated for the 2026 World Teachers' Day Awards, Jacinta Berger; Rebecca McGill; Robert Anita; Aimee Coffin; Breanna Hawken; Sonia Wright; and Megan Nielson. Additionally, Mrs Debby Gribben will be recognised for an incredible 50 years of service with the department of Education, with her award being presented to her this year at the World Teachers' Day ceremony.

There are pretty amazing Jacintas in the Northern Territory, with our Jacinta Nampijinpa Price being one of them, but in the electorate of Fannie Bay there are education awards for two specific ones I would like to mention. For the World Teachers Day' Awards in the category of Leader in Education of the Year, Parap Primary School's Year 6 teacher Miss Jacinta Berger is a finalist; and in the Northern Territory Education and

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Care Awards in the category of Outstanding Educator Awards, Ms Jacinta Stewart from Ludmilla Primary School was a finalist. Congratulations to them for being nominated.

There is a special birthday in my electorate today, Ms Marjorie Nelson is celebrating her 100th birthday. I wish her happy birthday. By the end of the year, the electorate of Fannie Bay would have had five centenarians: Emelia Finocchiaro, our Chief Minister's nonna, who passed away just after her 100th birthday this year—may she rest in peace; Miss Emily James; Miss Katherine French; Miss Norma Lee; and Marjorie Nelson.

Marjorie has called Darwin home for the past 38 years and is a proud war widow. She holds a special place in the Northern Territory, and the Darwin war widows community. Marjorie is proof that age is just a number. She was honoured at Monday's NT war widows event here in Parliament House and again yesterday at a special luncheon at Legacy House, surrounded by people who hold her in such high regard. The celebrations are not over yet. This weekend her extended family will be arriving in the Northern Territory to share this wonderful occasion with her.

It is people like Marjorie who remind us how fortunate we are to have such remarkable people in our Territory community. Her life, resilience and experiences are something to be celebrated and treasured. Marjorie, congratulations on this incredible milestone. I wish you more happy moments surrounded by family and friends.

I seek leave to table a couple of pictures from Marjorie's attendance at the War Widow's event at Parliament House on Monday night.

Leave granted.

Mrs ZIO: I am sure you will agree by looking at these pictures that she is 100 years young, not 100 years old.

The little electorate of Fannie Bay also has a Halloween event on 31 October in Lores Bonney Park in Parap Grove. This is a free event that I host every year. We have a sausage sizzle, Fairy Jill is there, we have lolly bags, and we have some competitions. It attracts huge numbers across the electorate, and we cannot wait to host this event again.

Today our team went out again with our regular stall in the mall, something that we hold each week during parliamentary sittings to get to get out, meet Territorians and hear what is happening in our community. Today we were joined by the Darwin International Laksa Festival team who were handing out samples of some delicious laksa-inspired sausages. On the menu there were chicken sausages from Palmerston Quality Meats and beef sausages from Fannie Bay Meats and Poultry. Naturally, a little friendly competition followed between members of the CLP team, between Palmerston and Darwin, and while both were delicious, I have to say that among the people that I spoke with, as the Member for Fannie Bay, Fannie Bay Meats and Poultry were definitely the overwhelming favourites. This is a great result for a business in my electorate.

Fannie Bay Meats and Poultry is owned by Terry and Nunki, who took over the business in October 2025 and have been kicking goals ever since. Not only are they producing fantastic products, but they are also great supporters of our community, sponsoring local events, getting behind community initiatives and proudly putting their products to the test. Their hard work is paying off; they were finalists in the NT Local Business Awards in September and have been making their mark in the Sausage King Competition and the Australian Meat Industry Council's NT Meat Excellence Awards, taking home a gold medal for gourmet sausage, with their Worcestershire and cracked black pepper sausage, and gold in their continental sausage for their hot Italian sausage. What a fantastic achievement for a new business in the electorate of Fannie Bay.

That is exactly why we are, as a government, getting behind our small businesses. We know it is important. Small businesses are the backbone of our local economy. They create jobs, support families, train local workers and give back to the communities that support them. When we choose to shop locally, we are doing more than just making a purchase. We are backing hardworking Territorians who take risks, invest in our community and help keep our economy strong.
Congratulations to Terry and Nunki. Thank you to the Darwin International Laksa Festival team and Palmerston Quality Meats for joining us today. Next time you are enjoying or planning a barbecue, why not give your local butcher a go rather than one of the major shopping providers?

On Sunday, I supported and attended the first Brazilian Association of the Northern Territory event at Lake Alexander, and it was an amazing event. They had numbers beyond what they thought they would get.

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People came down and celebrated Brazilian culture. There was music, dance, some quizzes, and most importantly, lots of amazing food. I was proud to support that event and make sure that could happen.

I wanted to raise the City of Darwin's decision to cancel this year's pre-cyclone cleanup and postpone it to May next year. I understand that the council is considering removing that service altogether. I have spoken to countless Fannie Bay constituents who are concerned about this. After last year's weather events, you would think that the cyclone cleanup would be high on the radar of Darwin City Council. Although the council noted the petition we presented to them, not one sitting councillor called for a report into the matter. Given the number of residents who raised their concerns, that is really disappointing.

I raise the impact that this has on elderly residents and people with disability. We have asked for data on the assisted pickup and how many people receive that service. We have not received that as yet, but I am hoping to receive it soon.

One of my constituents, 84-year-old Antonina, told me that she only became aware of the cancellation when I spoke to her about it for my petition. Antonina contacted the council on 7 October and was told that she should have applied earlier. What followed was far from straightforward. She was asked to complete a form online. Despite not knowing how to use the internet, she was told to go to a library, provide proof of her age and obtain a doctor's certificate to confirm her age-related frailty. I question why an 84-year-old resident must go to such lengths to prove she needs assistance with a service specifically intended to help people like her, as if being 84-year-old is not proof enough. Antonina had to navigate the process, and she confided the experience brought her to her knees and left her in tears. Yes, she was applying late, but that is no reason to not provide that service to her.

We will continue to advocate for that service. That is all I have time for.

Mrs HERSEY (Katherine): Madam Speaker, I acknowledge and congratulate Neveah Willcox, a 14-year-old from Katherine and a member of the St John Youth Team.

Recently, a team of St John youths competed in realistic scenarios that challenged their judgement, teamwork and first aid skills. For many of these St John NT youth members, these skills become the foundation for future careers, whether in ambulance or other health services. This year's youth competition centred on flood response, with teams required to lead, communicate, problem-solve and support each other as simulated emergencies changed and escalated around them.

For 14-year-old Katherine youth member Neveah Willcox, the flood theme reflected an emergency she had experienced firsthand after her own family home was inundated during major flooding earlier this year. While the emergency unfolded, she spent much of the response at the Katherine Ambulance Station with her mother, Tamara Willcox, Ambulance Support Coordinator, Katherine Adult and Youth Divisional Officer, seeing firsthand how ambulance crews, volunteers and other services adapted to a rapidly changing situation.

On Saturday that real-world experience was evident in Neveah's actions. During the competition's major flood simulation, Neveah took the lead in caring for an NTES volunteer turned patient, who had become trapped beneath a boat, while also ensuring her teammates were supported in managing their own patients.

Congratulations, Neveah, on showing your leadership whilst checking in with your team and guiding them over the competition.

The Katherine Youth Division delivered an impressive performance across the day, showing composure, confidence and skills beyond their years. Their capability was reflected across the competition, with teams re-enacting scenarios, adapting as conditions changed and finding practical solutions to challenges, including the major flood simulation. They also had scenarios of mental health.

The Parap Youth Division was named NT Champions and will head to Perth in January to contend for the national title. The Youth Program is about building skills early. Seeing them applied shows confidence in our next generation of St John cadets and leads into paramedicine and health roles across the Territory.

The 2026 St John NT Youth Competition showed just how strong the working relationship is between first responders and NTES, which provided the venue and contributed significant time and volunteer support throughout the weekend.

I thank the Members for Nelson, Casuarina, Karama and Wanguri who also supported that event with me.

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I recognise the achievements of Northern Territory students in a national spelling bee. I congratulate the young people whose results feature on the Northern Territory National Final Honour Roll. Across three age categories, students from four Territory schools have given their school communities and families good reason to be proud. Tonight I ensure that their achievements are put on the record.

In the green level for students in Years 3 and 4, the three leading Territory places went to students from Haileybury Rendall School. Elliott and Hannah each correctly spelled 26 out of 30 words, with Elliott taking the leading Territory position. Xander followed with an excellent score of 25 out of 30.

In the orange level for Years 5 and 6, Emily from Haileybury Rendall School led the Territory result with 26 out of 30. Christophe from Larrakia Primary School and Samuel from Haileybury Rendall School each scored 25 out of 30, taking the second and third Territory places respectively.

In the red level for Years 7 and 8, Penelope from St John's Catholic College was the highest ranked Territory student, correctly spelling 23 words out of 30. Congratulations, Penelope.

Ellie from Marrara Christian College placed second in the Territory, followed by Locke from Haileybury Rendall School.

I congratulate all nine students on their achievements. I acknowledge every Territory student who took part, challenged themselves and put their spelling skills to the test. A competition like this calls on students to draw on their vocabulary, concentrate under pressure and work through unfamiliar words. It gives them an opportunity to see what they can achieve and a reason to keep learning.

As the Minister for Education and Training, I am pleased to recognise academic achievement and the effort that supports it. We want our young people to know that their curiosity, persistence and success are valued by the wider Territory community. I thank the teachers and school staff who encourage students to participate and help them develop their literacy. To the parents, carers and families who practise these words, encourage reading and support their children along the way, thank you for the part you play.

This starts at such a young age. From when they go to preschool and transition and learn their sight words, their spelling and their reading. It is important that this is something that they can do later.

To Haileybury Rendall School, Larrakia Primary School, St John's Catholic College and Marrara Christian College, congratulations; you can all take pride in having students represented on this Honour Roll. To the students recognised, congratulations. You have represented your schools in the Territory with distinction. I wish you every success as you continue to learn and challenge yourselves.

Mr BROWN (Arafura): Madam Speaker, I acknowledge the team from NTIBN. Last Saturday they had their Blak Business Awards that I attended with Yiwarr and the Members for Barkly and Port Darwin. It was an amazing night. I give a big shout-out to the team at NTIBN, Naomi Anstess, Deb Anstess, Stephen Cardona 'the Blakenator', he called himself, and the team there. They put on a great show, and I acknowledge some of the some of the award winners from the night.

The Blak Business of the Year Award went to Hoops 4 Health, a well-known organisation that does a lot for Indigenous kids in the Territory. There is a big boxing event happening tomorrow. I do not know whether anyone is going to that. It is held at the NT Netball Stadium in Marrara.

In the individual and young leader categories, Nicole Thompson from Tracks Integrated Services won Female Business Owner of the Year; Michael Assan from Micks Cranes, Male Business Owner; and Sinead Burnett—I worked with Sinead Burnett about 10 years ago when she was young—was awarded Young Entrepreneur of the Year. Regional and Impact awards went to Triple P Contracting and AKJ Services. It has a big hauling company that employs a lot of Indigenous people and train them up in the art of driving big trucks and cranes and stuff.

In the business categories, McMahon Services was an ally business winner. In small up and coming businesses, I am proud of Jipungwayi from Milikapiti, the community I come from. He is like a cousin brother, so I was starring up there when he got his award in one of his picks. Nalan Seafoods is a new seafood company out of Winnellie. Bo Carne runs it with a Tiwi person, Shay Vigona. Black Cat Civil Pty Ltd was another winner. Shots on Country is a great little business, just an individual actually taking pictures around landscapes. Buymarr Getaways and Cross Cultural Consultants we also winners.

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NTIBN is absolutely breaking down walls and barriers in regard to getting black businesses and Indigenous businesses in the market. They mentor, get their networks out and guide people who want to get into business. Their membership contributes billions into the NT economy every year. This is something to get behind. They had their office on the Esplanade, but they were relocated to Winnellie. That did not slow them down. I went to an organisation breakfast, which was an Ironbark coffee with Indigenous leaders. I met some Ironbark staff. I used to work for Ironbark. They support businesses, corporations and organisations that are trying to increase the employment of Indigenous Australians, and they are doing that very well.

Congratulations to the team, great night. I shout out to them. I will be visiting you mob soon.

Mr KERLE (Blain): Madam Speaker, I congratulate Kelly Bryant of Moulden for winning the Pride in Your Place Award for June 2025. The Pride in Your Place Awards are a monthly award designed to recognise and thank tenants in public housing who look after their home and garden and maintain their property. Congratulations, Kelly. I have been past Kelly's house many times and she does an amazing job, looking after not just her garden but also large parts of the garden in the common areas. Congratulations, Kelly, well done and please continue.

I rise tonight to congratulate Vicky Goude from Rosebery Senior School, who this week at morning tea received her 10 years of service certificate signed by Chief Minister Lia Finocchiaro and the Minister for the Public Service, Jo Hersey. Thank you very much for your service, Vicky; we really appreciate it.

I congratulate a group of young Territory gymnasts who recently returned from the 2026 National Clubs Carnival on the Gold Coast with an outstanding result. The National Clubs Carnival is one of Australia's largest gymnastics events, bringing together more than 5,000 athletes from across the country.

The girls from Territory Gymnastics Academy competed in the Women's Artistic Gymnastics Level 5 competition against 91 other clubs and almost 600 gymnasts. After placing third in their division on day one, the girls qualified for the Division A finals reserved for the top 24 teams. This was the first time in more than 15 years that a Northern Territory club had reached Division A. The girls went on to finish 14th overall in Australia. The five girls who competed were aged between eight and 12 and were among the youngest gymnasts at the competition. I acknowledge each of them and their individual achievements this year:

- Zoe Jones, 11, is the current Northern Territory Level 5 champion and has won six gold medals at Territory competitions this year
- Jun Lim, 10, placed second overall at the Northern Territory Championships and has won four gold medals this year
- Eight-year-old Shayla Ainsworth placed third overall at the NT Championships, winning gold on uneven bars and beam
- Maisie Moses also eight placed fourth on beam at the Northern Territory Championships.
- Mia Hatzivalsamis, 12, placed second overall in the Open Age division at the Northern Territory Championships, including gold on floor.

I also acknowledge 13-year-old Penelope Stuckert, the current NT Level 5 Open Age champion, who unfortunately had to withdraw from the carnival at the last minute due to injury.

Congratulations also to their coach, Honey Miller, who at just 17 was the youngest coach at the competition and to team manager, Michelle Fettes. For such a young team to finish 14th nationally is a significant achievement for Territory Gymnastics Academy and gymnastics in the Northern Territory. Congratulations to everyone involved.

Mr PAECH (Gwoja): Madam Speaker, tonight I will take a moment to reflect on something personal to me. Ten years or 3,650 days ago, I walked into this parliament for the first time, elected as the Member for Namatjira, now the Member for Gwoja.

As a young fella from Central Australia, I was proud of where I came from, proud of my family and my people and determined to make sure their voices from the bush were heard in this place. I remember the enormous sense of responsibility walking into this Chamber because I knew I was not walking in alone. I was carrying the hopes and expectations of my family, community, elders and the many people who had put their trust and faith in me. Ten years later, that responsibility is something that I have never taken for granted. The bush

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is my home, our people are my strength and representing them remains one of the greatest privileges of my life.

Over the last decade, I had the opportunity to serve in a government, as a minister, a Deputy Chief Minister, sit around the Cabinet table, serve as a Speaker of the parliament, as a Whip and now in opposition. I have experienced some of the greatest joys of public life, and I also experienced some of its toughest moments. There have been victories, disappointments, challenges and plenty of lessons along the way. There have been times when we have laughed together, cried together, celebrated together and grieved together. There have been days when politics has not been particularly kind. Through all of it, one thing has never changed: who I am, where I come from and who I am here to represent.

For me, being a member of parliament has never just been about sitting in a Chamber and making speeches or debating legislation. It is about people, families in Yuendumu, Papunya, Lajamanu, Ntaria, Kintore, Kalkarindji, Docker River, Mutitjulu, Santa Teresa, Haasts Bluff, Finke and all other communities across Central Australia. It is about the elders who welcome me into and onto their country, who sit with me and share their knowledge, frustrations, hopes and dreams for the next generation. It is about the mums and dads working hard to give their children a better future. It is about the grandparents raising their grandchildren, the aunties and the uncles keeping families together and the incredible community leaders who do so much with so little. It is about the kids growing up in the bush today who deserve every opportunity to succeed, no matter how remote their home might be.

One of the greatest things about representing the bush is that these are not just places I visit for work. They are places where my family live, where my connection runs deep, where I sit around campfires, share a feed, a laugh and family and listen to stories. Sometimes I enjoy the quiet beauty of country itself.

I have slept in overcrowded houses, sat in kitchens where the oven does not work and sat in hot summer nights in houses without functioning air conditioning. I have listened to families who are angry and frustrated because they have been asking for the same basic services for years. I have seen the sadness in people's eyes when they feel that their community has been forgotten. Those experiences stay with all of us. They remind all of us that decisions in parliament have real consequences for real people.

I will always speak up—sometimes loudly, sometimes passionately and sometimes in ways that make people in this Chamber uncomfortable. I make no apology for standing up for the people who sent me here. Our people in the bush deserve the same dignity, opportunities and basic services as every Territorian. They deserve a government and a parliament that listens.

I also acknowledge the people who made these last 10 years possible, my family. My beautiful mum and my family who supported me and encouraged me through all the hard times, who have kept my feet firmly planted on the ground. My family has always reminded me that no matter what title you hold or what position you occupy, you are still accountable to your people and the values you are raised with.

To my partner, I thank you for your love, patience and support. To my electorate officers, past and present, I thank you for your service, commitment and love.

To my previous staff in ministerial positions, I thank you for your commitment to public service, reform and your energy along the way. Public life is not easy on people, but it is not easy on the people we love. There are long days, weeks away from home, missed birthdays, family gatherings and special moments. I know the sacrifices of public life are never made by us alone.

To my friends, colleagues, electorate staff and everyone who has walked alongside me over the last decade, thank you so much. To the elders, community leaders and families throughout Gwoja and Namatjira who have opened their homes, shared their stories, challenged me when I needed challenging and trusted me to carry their voice into parliament, I am forever grateful.

I have been incredibly fortunate to learn from extraordinary people. Some are still with us today, and others have sadly passed on. Tonight I acknowledge those who are no longer with us to see this milestone. Their wisdom, guidance, belief in a better future for our people continues to shape the work I do.

When I first entered parliament, I was young, enthusiastic and perhaps a little more optimistic about how quickly we could change the world. Ten years later, I am a little older, perhaps a little wiser and I have learned that meaningful change does not happen overnight. I have not lost that determination. If anything, the past 10 years has strengthened it.

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I still believe the Northern Territory is the best place in Australia. Where every child can get a good education, every family has a safe place to call home, every woman and child can be safe from violence and people can access healthcare without having to leave their communities and families behind.

I believe in a Territory where Aboriginal people have a genuine voice in decisions that affect their lives. Where our culture, languages, connections are respected and celebrated. Where living in a remote community does not mean settling for second best. I know there is still an enormous amount of work ahead of us. There are still homes that need building, roads that need sealing, clinics that need developing and families who are waiting for voices to be heard. There are still many people in the bush who feel forgotten.

I acknowledge this is an enormous privilege for each and every one of us. As long as I have the privilege of sitting in this parliament, I will continue to stand up, speak out and fight for the people of Central Australia. I will continue to challenge decisions that leave our communities behind. I will continue to listen, learn and walk alongside our people. I will never forget the responsibility given to me 10 years ago. Politics comes and goes, governments and ministers change and eventually every one of us will leave this parliament. Our communities, families, culture and country will remain.

When my time eventually comes to leave this place, I hope people will remember me not for the titles I have held or positions I have occupied; I hope they will remember me for the young bloke from the bush who never forgot where he came from and who always stood up for the people.

I have always made that commitment, and I stand here again making that commitment. Ten years ago, I made that commitment to the people of Central Australia. Tonight I renew that commitment. The bush is my home, the people are my strength, and I will never stop fighting for them.

Mrs CARLSON (Wanguri): Madam Speaker, I recognise and celebrate the achievements of some wonderful people in my community, both on the sporting field and in our schools.

Firstly, I congratulate the Casuarina Football Club, affectionately known as the Rowdies, on the conclusion of another fantastic football season. On Saturday 10 October, the Rowdy family came together to celebrate their 2026 senior teams and recognise the individual achievements and reflect on that successful year.

The Casuarina Football Club is more than a football club. It is a community where friendships are formed, families come together, and people of all ages and backgrounds have shared their love of football for nearly 50 years. Look out for a special celebration next year. I hear they are already planning some exciting things. Community sporting clubs are the heart of the Northern Territory, and Casuarina Football Club is a wonderful example of this dedication. The teamwork and volunteers make it so special.

I acknowledge the outstanding achievements of the club for the 2026 senior award winners. In the men's premier league, congratulations to Chevayo Roe, the Player's Player; Bradley Douglas, the Top Goal Scorer; Dylan Newall, Coaches Award; and Darius Krajsek, Rookie of the Year.

In the Men's Premier League Reserves, congratulations to Tuluga Adakpoku, Best and Fairest—I believe he is in Spain at the moment, umm at another elite soccer club, practising his football; James Vong was the Player's Players; Bilal Mir, Coaches' Award; and Nikolas Petrakis, Most Improved.

In the Women's Premier League, congratulations to Ameliah Howard, who received both the Best and Fairest and Top Goal Scorer—I attended the NT Football Awards and she was named in the Team of the Year as well; Claire Cobern, Player's Player; Floriana Lamboa, Coaches' Award; and Xyza Ramos, Rising Star.

In the Women's Under 23 team, congratulations to Maggie King, Best and Fairest; Gisele Roe, Player's Player; Hana Sobby, Coaches' Award; and Serena Adams, Best Team Player.

In the Men's Division 3, congratulations to Petros Gerakios, Best and Fairest; Artemis Prodromou, Coaches' Award; and Alfonito Da Silva and Jack Turner, who were both recognised as Most Improved.

These awards reflect the hard work, commitment and sportsmanship demonstrated throughout the season. I congratulate every award winner and every player who proudly represents the Rowdies in the 2026 year.

I also acknowledge two individuals who received a special honour that night. Alan Krajsek and Peter Kammas were welcomed as Casuarina Football Club's new Honorary Life Members. Both have made outstanding contributions to the club over many years through their involvement as players, coaches, sponsors and volunteer. Life membership recognises the people who give so much to their themselves to their community

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and for the club to continue to thrive. Alan and Peter, congratulations on this thoroughly deserved honour. Thank you for your dedication to the Rowdie family.

I also extend my sincere thanks to the coaches, committee members, volunteers, families and supporters who make each season possible and, of course, the club's generous sponsors. Without them, the games would not exist. I acknowledge NT EX Solutions, Fannie Bay Cool Spot, The Foreshore Restaurant and Café, ATF Darwin, Tropic Cleaning Services, Saunders Conveyancing NT, CTM Refrigeration, Airconditioning and Mechanical Services, AJ Couriers, Xipnos Consulting and Training Services, Argos, Happy Garden Northern Territory, JKW Law, Biddlecombe Properties, the Portuguese and Timorese Social Club providing a space for them all the time, ICON Sports Northern Territory, NSCON and Intersport Casuarina and, of course, I am a proud sponsor.

The generosity of these organisations help create the opportunities for those players and ensure the Casuarina Football Club remains strong, inclusive and welcoming for everybody. To the entire Rowdie family, congratulations on another wonderful season. I wish you all success in 2027.

I now turn my attention from the sporting field to the classroom and recognise some outstanding educators and school staff who have been named finalists in the 2026 Territory Education Excellence Awards, as we celebrate World Teachers' Day next week, as everybody else has mentioned.

World Teachers' Day is an important opportunity to acknowledge the extraordinary contribution that teachers and school staff make to the lives of all our young Territorians. Every day our educators go above and beyond to inspire, encourage and support our students to reach their full potential. Their work extends far beyond the classroom and they build confidence, nurture their curiosity and create those opportunities which help shape our future for the Territory.

I am delighted to congratulate Amy Ratcliffe from Sanderson High, who lives in my electorate, who has been named as a finalist in the School Based Support Person category. Congratulations Amy.

School support staff are often the quiet achievers of our education system because they provide the essential support for students, teachers and the families helping create positive, welcoming and inclusive learning environments.

Amy, congratulations on this fantastic recognition. It is wonderful to see your contribution to the Sanderson High School community acknowledged at the Territory level.

I also recognise two exceptional educators from schools connected to my local community. Bandi Roopa from Dripstone Secondary College has been named finalist for Secondary Educator of the Year. She is one of the senior science teachers there, and she does an amazing job. Talia Destreza from Mimik-Ga has also been named a finalist in the Secondary Education of the Year category.

While these educators may not all reside within my electorate, their work in the schools, serving their community, makes an enormous difference to all our local students and families. To Bandi and Talia, congratulations on this deserved recognition. Being named a finalist is significant and it reflects the dedication, professionalism and passion of education here in the Territory.

To Amy, Bandi and Talia, I wish you all the best for the upcoming awards. Regardless of the final results, you should be incredibly proud of this achievement and the positive impact you make on all our Territorians.

Whether it is coaching and encouraging young footballers or volunteering and supporting a local club, the teachers that inspire a student or a school support officer helping a child succeed, these are the people who make our community stronger. They give their time, share their knowledge and create opportunities for others. I am proud to recognise their contributions and celebrate their wonderful community spirit they represent. Congratulations again, and thank you.

Mr MACKAY (Goyder): Madam Speaker, before I begin, I acknowledge in the gallery my beautiful wife, Mel and former employer and great friend, Christine.

A lot goes into organising a wedding, and I will say, I was pretty good at sitting on the couch nodding my head. My wonderful wife has compiled a list of thankyous that I should acknowledge. On August 2 I took away her last name and gave her mine. I do not know if you are aware, but it is quite hard to change your last name on every legal document. Mel has finally completed that process and is now officially Mackay.

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I shout out McMinns Lagoon Recreation Reserve; they are a fantastic organisation, and it was a beautiful venue for our special wedding. I thank the Rusty Putter Bistro at Humpty Doo Golf Club for providing a wonderful feed as many will attest to; Jimjams Cakes for making a fantastic wedding cake; Attitude for Men for selling me my second-ever suit and making sure me and the boys looked good; the celebrant, Mr Digby Hart, who did a fantastic job; She Cave for providing the seating and the furniture, a great Humpty Doo business if you are ever having an event in the rural area—I highly recommend them; Glam Me by Dani Makeup, which did the makeup, I am guessing, but Mel is always beautiful to me with or without—I am sure they did a great job; Flowers by Elise Palmerston; the Big Day Bridal; and cousin Elisa, who backed up a big night to help the brides and bridesmaids do their hair.

I shout out Jordan Firley and Jessyka Hanson for helping with the setup, as well as Jason Clark and Robert Mills. A big shout out to the bridesmaids. They were all beautiful on the day—not as beautiful as Mel, but still pretty: Jess Crews, Brie Gilbert, Tabitha Newman, Crystal Mills and Sarah Wahltinez. I also shout out my boys, the groomsmen, Lachlan Casburn, Sean Bond, Chris Stafford, Jack Silburn and Eric Horng. You put on the hats, we put on the suits, and we actually look all right.

I give a big shoutout to the emcee of the evening, Mr Kris Civitarese, and his beautiful wife Nicole, who helped put together the ceremony and emceeing the ceremony as well. There are so many more people that I would like to thank, but that is the list I have in front of me.

Also in the gallery tonight is Dr Christine Huynh, who is a fantastic aquaculture vet. She runs a great team, Nautilus Collaboration, there is pretty much not an aquaculture project in Australia they have not had their hands on. They are making the world a better place, making sure the food we eat is safe and the fish and everything swimming, is good. It is wonderful to have her in Darwin.

I will quickly talk about the Southern Districts Cricket Club because in August their home grounds at the Freds Pass Sport and Recreation Reserve hosted the 2026 Study NT Top End T20 Series, NT Strike versus Adelaide Strikers match. It was a ripper with some great cricket on display. The Member for Nelson almost caught a ball.

The Member for Nelson and I proudly presented club representatives with their CBF major grant check for their new curated shed. It is a $78,209 investment into rural cricket by the Finocchiaro CLP government.

The Crocs also had a terrific season with the Under 16s Blue, Under 16s Red Salties, Under 16s Red Freshies and Under 13s Blue Salties, all earning their plate in the semi-finals. In case you have not figured it out, the Crocs' icon is a crocodile. The Under 16s Red Salties went on to win their first ever grand final. All this success made for a wonderful junior presentation event, and shoutout to Matt Cartwright who cooked up an amazing feast.

The A-grade women's and the B-grades men's team made it to their Grand Final clashes and took home the Shields. The Southern District's club was also awarded the Club Championship for 2026. The Club Championship is awarded to the most successful club across all Darwin and Districts cricket competition grades based on regular season performance.

Individual players were also recognised. Taking home awards were Justin Galeotti, A Grade Batting award; Justin Galeotti, A Grade Team of the Year Award; Anthony Scott, B Grade Club Cricketer of the Year; Kelly Armstrong, Women's Division 1 Team of the Year Award and Overall Team of the Year award; Nasimana Navaika, Women's Division 1 Team of the Year Award; and Craig Johnston, Volunteer of the Year. Go the Crocs. What an amazing achievement by the players, coaches, teams, managers, volunteers and families.

The Member for Nelson and I had a great time at the Crocs Senior Presentation evening. Congratulations to all the winners. I give a special shoutout to Tory St Clair who was honoured as the Club Person of the Year.

We all know how much I love animals, so it was my absolute pleasure to open the 3 October Darwin Ladies Kennel Club Show. I have never been to a Kennel Club show before, and I was pleasantly surprised. It was a great atmosphere, with a lot of passionate dog owners there, and lots of dogs as well. I want to give a big shout out and congratulations to President Melissa Purich, committee members, stewards, and judges who came all the way from New Zealand, volunteers, competitors and of course the dogs for a thoroughly enjoyable evening.

Held earlier this month, the 2026 Rural Seniors Expo was a partnership between COTA NT, NBN Co and the Lichfield Community Library. It was a great success. Now in its second year, the expo continues to grow and has become a great opportunity for connection and information for rural seniors. The Member for Nelson and

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I had a stall at the expo, and we were joined by the Member for Blaine, the Member for Brennan, the Member for Drysdale, and the Member for Spillett, for an enjoyable morning at Coolalinga Central. Seniors are invaluable to our community and enjoy every opportunity to engage and hear how we can better support our rural seniors.

I acknowledge two recent appointments to the Litchfield Council Executive team. Congratulations to Rebecca Taylor and Ankit Pansal on their respective appointments as Director of Governance and Community, and Director of Corporate Services. Rebecca is a Goyder resident and has been at Council for a number of years across a variety of positions. Always willing to take on new challenges, Rebecca's can-do approach saw her navigate and deliver the 'My Litchfield' program during the COVID times.

Initially joining council on a temporary assignment approximately 6 years ago, Ankit has also worked across departments including Human Resources. The Director Corporate Services role will have Ankit now overseeing the HR functions together with ICT, workplace health and safety, and finance, which also comprises the rates department. That is not a not a fun job sometimes. No-one likes going out there and getting the money, but it is important.

Congratulations, Rebecca and Ankit. I look forward to seeing the positive delivery of council services to Lichfield residents under their operational leadership.

I was contacted after last week's adjournments on the late great Leo Izod, and I seek leave to table a set of notes by Anya Lorimer for Leo Izod so it can go on the record.

Leave granted.

Mr MACKAY: I want to shout out to my stunning, beautiful wife who stands by me all the time.

We have found the limits of our relationship taken at some AGMs, but we have good healthy boundaries now. I know what events she will accompany me and have a great time. It is always great when I go home and she will put up with me whingeing and complaining, and always make sure that I get fed. The only thing I wish she would appreciate is my love of spaghetti bolognese. She restricts me to twice a week. Thank you, Mel. I love you. Again, thank you, Christine, for making the journey to the Territory.

Madam SPEAKER: Congratulations on your wedding, Member for Goyder. Congratulations, Mr and Mrs Mackay. I hope you have a long, happy life together.

Mr EDGINGTON (Barkly): Madam Speaker, I will speak about the Remote Housing Agreement in the Northern Territory, a partnership between the Northern Territory Government and the Commonwealth Government. The agreement itself is $4bn over 10 years and has been discussed various times during the week. It is important to put on the record that the $4bn is for remote housing and town camps. The agreement is clear that up to 2,700 homes can be built under the agreement in town camps and remote communities.

There has been some debate about whether homelands is included when it comes to building new homes in communities, but let me be clear that the agreement itself relates to an agreement to build up to 2,700 homes in remote communities and town camps, and those town camps are the Alice Springs town camps, the Tennant Creek town camps and there are two town camps in Elliott that are part of that agreement.

There is a separate federation funding agreement which relates to homelands, and there has been discussion. I think I mentioned during the week that the Northern Territory Government continues to put in $40m to the homelands program and, at this stage, although the funding from the Commonwealth expires in June next year, there has been no further commitment from the Commonwealth to provide funding for homelands. That funding for homelands is to provide municipal and essential services and housing repairs and maintenance. It does not include building new homes in town camps, and perhaps the Member for Arnhem misunderstood the position that I had, but the position I have is clear: the $4bn agreement is to build new homes in remote communities and town camps.

I will read a clause from the federation funding agreement where it does come to the agreement on homelands. I will table this document shortly. This schedule was signed by the Leader of the Opposition, who was the Minister for Remote Housing and Homelands, on 17 July 2024 and it was also co-signed, I believe, by Hon Linda Burney, the federal minister at the time. Clause 6 clearly says:

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This Schedule does not support the delivery of new or replacement houses on homelands, noting further work is underway by the JSC to inform housing arrangements for homelands on expiry of this Schedule.

Just to put it clearly on the record for one more time, because it seems that the Member for Arnhem, who was the responsible minister at the time, was clearly focused on doing a deal, but she forgot to do the detail, and this is important: the clause itself rules out building and the delivery of new or replacement houses on homelands.

I table this document titled, Restoring Funding for Northern Territory Homelands, the schedule, which is a federation funding agreement relating to homelands.

Mr HOWE (Drysdale): Madam Speaker, my adjournment speech is about a group of veterans who are representing veterans all across the NT as part of the Veteran Games. I will read out a message from the team who are there. The message comes from the RSL Palmerston Sub-branch President and Litchfield Councillor Kris Civitarese:

'The Veteran Games are a military-inspired team competition that brings together current and former Defence personnel through physical challenges, teamwork and mateship. While there is certainly a competitive element, the games are really about reconnecting with others, building camaraderie and encouraging veterans to stay active and involved.

'This year marked our second year participating in the Darwin Heats, held at Robertson Barracks in September. There were 12 teams involved, including serving Defence personnel and veterans, all taking on a series of challenges designed to test teamwork, fitness and problem-solving. Our team, Mad Snakes on a Plane, is a group of former servicemen who are probably a little older and less fit than they once were but still enjoy a challenge and a good laugh. The Darwin competition included an obstacle course, stores carry, water activity, ninja wall and tug of war. We held our own in a few events, particularly the tug of war and water activity, while others reminded us that we are not quite as young and agile as we used to be.

'The 1st Combat Engineer Regiment won the Darwin heat but, through sponsorship support from Veterans First Consulting and fundraising efforts, our team was given the opportunity to head to the national finals on the Sunshine Coast.

'This weekend, 24 and 25 October, will be joining teams from across Australia, the United Kingdom and the United States at the Sunshine Coast Stadium for two days of competition. It is the first time the Veteran Games finals have included international teams from the UK and USA, which makes this year's event particularly exciting. The finals will bring together serving personnel and veterans from all three countries, competing in military-inspired challenges while sharing the camaraderie and connections that come from a common experience of military service.

'For us, it has been a great journey from the Darwin heats through to the National Finals. We managed to squeeze in some extra training, shared plenty of laughs and enjoyed getting together as a team. We are not heading over expecting to win the competition, but we will give it our best shot and enjoy the experience. More importantly, it is a fantastic example of what the Veteran Games are all about: bringing former and serving Defence personnel together; encouraging physical activity; strengthening friendships; and maintaining that sense of belonging and mateship that can sometimes be missed after leaving Defence. If a bunch of old ex-servicemen from Darwin can make it to the National Finals, that is a pretty good story in itself.'

A massive shout-out goes to all those gentlemen. A shout-out also goes to Councillor Sam Weston from Darwin City Council who is on that team. I particularly like the name, Mad Snakes on a Plane. All of us veterans carry a little bit of issued madness given to us by Army, Air Force or Navy, myself included. I think it is fantastic that those guys are getting back out there and getting physical. It is an important part of Defence life, and it can be something that easily slips away. I would say the vast majority of us carry injuries of some sort, myself included. It is getting back into physical activity and using the body again, enjoying all those things we used to.

Massive shout-outs go to Kris Civitarese, Sam Weston and the rest of the veteran team. I hope you kick ass this weekend. The Territory is going for you; we are all backing and getting behind you. Well done. There are some ladies on the team as well, so a shout-out to them. Give it all your best; the NT is backing you. Embrace the madness, and I am sure they will party like they are in their early 20s living on the block again. Come home safely, and enjoy the experience.

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I am not sure what events will be on. I know Kris Civitarese has the great figure of the long-distance runner.

Mr Maley: He is not a sprinter either!

Mr HOWE: The man has some strength, I can assure you. Well done, boys and ladies. Just enjoy the weekend, and enjoy being around that Defence atmosphere again and the camaraderie that comes with it. Maybe one day I can get down to the games myself.

Motion agreed to; the Assembly adjourned.

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