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15th Assembly



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Debates and Questions



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Madam Speaker Lambley took the Chair at 10 am.

SPEAKER'S STATEMENT
Committee Membership

Madam SPEAKER: Honourable members, I report that pursuant to Standing Order 181, the following government members were appointed to committees on 17 October 2024:

- Public Accounts Committee: Members for Drysdale, Fannie Bay and Karama
- Legal and Constitutional Affairs Committee: Members for Wanguri, Fong Lim and Blain
- Standing Orders Committee: Members for Barkly, Goyder and Blain
- House Committee: Members for Fannie Bay, Fong Lim and Casuarina
- Committee of Privileges: Members for Nelson, Barkly and Goyder
- Standing Committee on the ICAC: Members for Drysdale, Wanguri and Casuarina
- Legislative Scrutiny Committee: Members for Goyder, Wanguri and Drysdale.

I further report that the following crossbench members were appointed to committees on 18 October 2024:

- Committee of Privileges: Member for Mulka
- Public Accounts Committee: Member for Johnston
- Legal and Constitutional Affairs Committee: Member for Nightcliff
- Standing Committee on the ICAC: Member for Nightcliff
- Legislative Scrutiny Committee: Member for Johnston.

VISITORS
Nawarddeken Academy

Madam SPEAKER: Honourable members, I advise of the presence in the gallery of students and teachers from the Nawarddeken Academy who are visiting as part of their week at the Michael Long Learning and Leadership Centre. On behalf of honourable members, I extend a warm welcome.

Members: Hear, hear!

FIRST HOME OWNER GRANT AMENDMENT BILL
Serial 6

Mr YAN (Treasurer): Madam Speaker, I present a Bill titled First Home Owner Grant Amendment Bill 2024, Serial 6.

Bill read a first time.

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

This Bill enacts legislation to give effect to the HomeGrown Territory Grant announced in September as part of the broader HomeGrown Territory program. It acknowledges that enabling more people to enter the housing market increases the likelihood of them staying in the Northern Territory. The grant also reflects the government's commitment to first homebuyers in the Territory, fostering population growth by getting people into homes, supporting local jobs by stimulating residential construction and bringing much-needed housing supply into the market.

The HomeGrown Territory Grant commenced on 1 October 2024 under the existing First Home Owner Grant scheme, a scheme that was already integrated into lenders' normal business practices and is recognised as part of their assessments of applicants' borrowing capacity. This requires amendments to the *First Home*

Owner Grant Act 2000 under which the First Home Owner Grant operates. The grant has so far been administered since commencement on 1 October 2024 in expectation of the amendments, as set out in the Bill before you, being made.

The Bill increases the existing First Home Owner Grant from $10,000 to $50,000 for buying or building new homes and expands it to include $10,000 for buying established homes for transactions entered into between 1 October 2024 and 30 September 2025. It also sets out the eligibility criteria that must be met to receive the grant.

I turn to the first of these measures contained in this Bill.

The eligibility criteria for the grant is designed to ensure that support is directed towards homebuyers who are purchasing or building a home to live in rather than those acquiring property for other purposes such as investment. To this end the Bill amends section 12 of the *First Home Owner Grant Act 2000* to ensure that those successful applicants who receive the increased or expanded grant must occupy their homes as their principal place of residence for a continuous period of at least 12 months. This is an increase from the six months they were previously required to live in their homes and shows that buyers are genuinely buying a home to live in and not a temporary residence.

The 12-month occupancy period must begin within 12 months of the building being ready for occupation as a place of residence for applicants who build, or 12 months from becoming entitled to possession of the home and being registered on the title to the land for applicants who purchase a home.

The Bill next amends section 13 of the *First Home Owner Grant Act 2000* to limit applications for the HomeGrown Territory Grant to a 12-month period, only applying to those transactions commenced between 1 October 2024 and 30 September 2025 inclusive. The Bill ensures that the HomeGrown Territory Grant will end on 30 September 2025 with the First Home Owner Grant returning to pre-HomeGrown Territory Grant settings from 1 October 2025.

In line with this fixed 12-month period of operation, the Bill amends section 18 of the *First Home Owner Grant Act 2000* to increase the grant from $10,000 to $50,000 for transactions to build or buy a new home, and provides $10,000 for transactions to buy an established home, commenced between 1 October 2024 and 30 September 2025 inclusive. The grant then returns back to $10,000 for transactions to build or buy a new home commenced on or after 1 October 2025.

Finally, the Bill also contains transitional provisions under Part 5 to clarify that those who replace contracts made prior to the commencement of the HomeGrown Territory Grant on 1 October 2024 with new contracts for the same or similar home will be deemed to have commenced before 1 October 2024. As a result, they will remain subject to the provisions of the Act as in force at the time the first contract was made. This includes contracts made for homes for which an option was granted before 1 October 2024.

The Bill also inserts Division headings for past transitional provisions created under earlier amendments to the Act to improve the organisation of this Part.

I am pleased to commend this Bill to honourable members and table a copy of the explanatory statement.

Mr BROWN (Arafura): Madam Speaker, I move that the debate be adjourned.

Motion agreed; debate adjourned.

LIQUOR LEGISLATION FURTHER AMENDMENT BILL
Serial 3

Continued from 16 October 2024.

Ms UIBO (Opposition Leader): Madam Speaker, I also welcome the people from the Nawarddeken Academy. You travelled a long way yesterday and have a huge week ahead of you. Kabulwarnamyo is a beautiful part of the Northern Territory. The Nawarddeken Academy is an impressive part of Territory education, becoming an independent school only a couple of years ago.

It is great to see your school thriving and to see you at parliament. Think of this as a giant classroom. We have our schoolteacher at the front, which is Madam Speaker, who makes sure that we do things in the right way, just as your teachers do when you are at school. Enjoy your time at parliament. It is lovely to see you

here. Good luck for the rest of the week. You will have a great time in the big smoke of Darwin, our capital city. I wish you a safe journey home at the end of the week.

Please pass on my thanks. Some of your elders have spoken strongly in the past about your academy. Dean and all the crew do amazing work. The next generation like yourselves will be leaders in your own right. I hope you have a great opportunity in Darwin to see what your options are across the Territory. Welcome, Nawarddeken Academy.

I turn to the Bill. We want to ensure that our words and actions in this place have real consequences. By trivialising difficult subjects like health addictions, we are doing a disservice to fellow Territorians. As some members will be aware, we previously debated a Bill substantially similar to this in the Legislative Assembly. I will not attempt to repeat myself too much, but I do not believe that the reintroduction of monetary fines in the *Liquor Act* will have a meaningful impact on addressing problem drinking in public areas across the Northern Territory.

Since the 1970s all Australian jurisdictions have recognised that the criminalisation of public drunkenness is inappropriate and ineffective, and they have legislated to remove the offence from their statute books.

In 1991 the Royal Commission into Aboriginal Deaths in Custody was clear that criminalising public drunkenness had a disproportionate effect on the incarceration of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians. It recommended that the offence of public drinking should be decriminalised. It was not a recommendation by a woke leftie lawyer who knew nothing about the Northern Territory; the recommendation was made by James Muirhead, a former judge of the Northern Territory Supreme Court and Administrator of the Northern Territory appointed during the Marshall Perron CLP government era.

In passing this legislation the Territory will revert to something that did not work for a long time; it failed Territorians and our communities in the past.

Alcohol-related harm is one of the most pressing issues in the Northern Territory. We wish it was not true, but it is a reality. We never shied away from that. No government in the history of the Territory, including our previous Labor government, has ignored that. In government we worked on a suite of measures required to tackle alcohol-related harm across the Territory, looking at the health effects and impact on Territorians.

The old *Liquor Act* was first passed in 1978. It was confusing, disjointed and did not reflect contemporary practices across our communities. It did not properly regulate the consumption of liquor in the Northern Territory.

To fix this the former Labor government undertook the Riley review, the most comprehensive review of alcohol policy and alcohol legislation in the Northern Territory's history. Justice Trevor Riley, a respected judge who undertook the review, made 120 recommendations. Our former Labor government adopted 119 of these recommendations. The only recommendation that we did not adopt was to close bottle shops across the NT on Sundays. That was the only recommendation that we did not accept or agree to; we accepted the 119 others. We undertook the work to implement those recommendations.

In regard to public drinking, the Northern Territory Police submission to the review said that the old system was confusing to the community, tourists and law enforcement officers. We listened to our police and worked hard to fix the problem they faced, finding a solution in an evidence-based manner.

When we rewrote the *Liquor Act* we made sure that it was still against the law to drink in public in our major centres and within two kilometres of a licensed premises. We made sure that NT Police had a range of powers at its disposal to better tackle public drinking. These powers included:

- the ability to take people into custody if they appeared to be intoxicated and may be at risk of causing harm to themselves or someone else

- charging someone engaging in riotous, offensive, disorderly or indecent behaviour in public

- issuing banning notices for offences in high-risk areas to prevent or reduce the further occurrence of alcohol-related violence in the area.

It is Labor's view that alcohol misuse is a health issue. Fining people and throwing them in watch houses and prisons will not necessarily help address the underlying issues that a person may face with their health and alcohol.

The Bill will not serve as a deterrent to the misuse of alcohol in our communities. A person with multiple health issues, including addiction, will not be deterred by the threat of a monetary fine, which is what the CLP's amendments propose.

This is why the previous Labor government invested in community patrols to take a person to a suitable place of safety and sobering-up shelters to recover safely. It introduced connections to health services, such as nurses in watch houses and EDs when needed, and brief interventions and pathways to education, counselling and targeted treatment programs relating to alcohol-related harm.

There is a real risk that the Bill will lead to over-policing, over-punishment and over-incarceration of Aboriginal Territorians; an increased risk of a death in custody; and the sidelining of health and medical professionals in stepping out and working with an individual, a family or a group in regard to the harms of alcohol and providing them with professional care.

The only thing this Bill proves is that the CLP is all spin and no substance when it comes to protecting the community. We want investment into preventive matters and our health services that will target this type of behaviour and support an individual, their family or a community in understanding and stepping away from alcohol-related harm.

There is already a concerning trend by the new CLP government to ignore health and frontline professionals and expert advice. Last week more than 200 community leaders and representatives from health and Aboriginal research organisations across the Territory wrote to Chief Minister Lia Finocchiaro to call on the CLP government to keep in place measures that work to reduce alcohol-related harm.

It is unbelievable that just over 50 days into its term the CLP government is already telling people that it does not understand, respect or listen to the experts. In the same vein, it is unbelievable that people in our community are already telling the CLP to do its job properly. These are Territory doctors, nurses and frontline health experts who are pleading and writing to the CLP government to prioritise the health, wellbeing and safety of all families in Northern Territory communities.

Last week the new Member for Karama's first question was about the river of grog in his community. He is definitely in for a shock when the Member for Barkly, one of his CLP ministers, makes it even easier for problem drinkers to access cheaper grog. The CLP intends to scrap the minimum floor price for alcohol. This does not make sense. We honestly hope that the CLP government will listen to the 200-plus experts in the community and not scrap the minimum floor price. CLP members say that they recognise alcohol harm is one of the most alarming issues in the Territory, but on the other hand the CLP government says, 'Let's make cheap grog more accessible to the community'.

The CLP government will not listen to the Labor opposition, but I urge it to listen to the 200-plus experts in the community, particularly in the health sector, to make its decision based on evidence and expert advice, as opposed to what it thinks may or may not work. You do not need to know all the answers in government. That is what the experts, the public service and the health sector are for. Please listen to them.

Alcoholism is often tied to mental health issues and, unfortunately, domestic violence. We are seeing generations of young people with fetal alcohol spectrum disorder (FASD). Giving police the power to issue on-the-spot fines will do nothing to change that fact.

The CLP can no longer use the excuse of opposition for poorly written legislation and regulations because it has the experts at its beck and call. The CLP promised Territorians that it will deliver, but it will fail Territorians when it is not focused on robust and important legislative reform.

If it is just related to pride and ego, please drop that and listen to the experts in the Territory—those who have worked in the sector for decades. The CLP government says that it is solutions based and focused; however, it will be doomed by its own ego if it fails to lead the Territory into being a safer community and if it continues to provide conditions that are unsafe and does not support the work done in this space to strengthen it rather than weaken it.

Territorians deserve the best possible legislation. That is our job in this place. We want to ensure that legislation that goes through parliament serves to protect and govern the communities across our 25 electorates in the best possible way. It will not be an easy fix. I am sure that the CLP is learning that already. If it were simple, we would have done it years ago and it would be solved already.

The type of investment and perseverance required in an area like alcohol harm deserve to be treated in a serious manner. We want the CLP to take its commitments to reality, but the steps to fix this problem need to be led by experts in the Territory.

This legislation does not make the current situation in our public areas any better. Again, the CLP is failing to talk about or invest in prevention. It is always focused on the consequences and punitive measures. If we are ever to see a change in the Territory, the CLP government needs to continue the good work of the independent review on alcohol, led by Justice Trevor Riley, and ensure that all the measures are implemented—there are no quick fixes, and we know that—so that they have a positive impact on the community.

We can make the Territory better and safer together. We want the CLP government to do its job for Territorians, as it promised, and ensure that the legislation we debate in the House will actually make our community safer. We do not think that this is happening with this legislation. Territorians expect and deserve the best contemporary and modern legislation and regulations to ensure that the Territory is a better place. This Bill fails to do that.

Ms BOOTHBY (Attorney-General): Madam Speaker, it is interesting that the Leader of the Opposition lectures this parliament about the work Labor did to strengthen the laws and address problems when it is worse than it has ever been before. The Trevor Riley report was done in 2019; it is 2024, and things are worse. Labor had eight years to fix the problems and failed miserably. Now the Leader of the Opposition is pleading with us to change the laws to strengthen and not weaken them. It does not make sense.

The newly elected CLP government is delivering its commitment to Territorians to reduce crime by giving the police the powers they need to make the community safer. This legislation is part of a suite of new laws we have debated in parliament during our first sittings and addresses nuisance public drinking and problem drunks who cause antisocial behaviour and alcohol-fuelled harm.

The new nuisance public drinking offence will give police powers to fine, charge and arrest people in public places where alcohol is prohibited. Importantly, this will not stop Territorians from having a beer while enjoying our unique outdoor lifestyle at places like East Point. Community safety is our government's number one priority, and we are proud to deliver this reform as we promised.

Labor ignored police concerns when it watered down the power to deal with public drunkenness in 2019. These laws will restore that and give police even more power. Police have our full support to do their incredibly important job. These laws are about making our public spaces and parks safer and cleaner for everyone. These powers will allow police to intervene earlier to ensure we stop the scourge in public places when alcohol is prohibited. We want to reduce the harm being caused by alcohol in our community and enforce a higher community standard.

'Alcohol' has become such a dirty word in the Northern Territory. Territorians have spent the last eight years being told by Labor that alcohol is bad, yet it did not address the real issues that make alcohol bad. Labor focused only on the supply of alcohol and ignored the demand.

Territorians hear crime statistics that are broken down into crimes where alcohol is involved and crimes where it is not. On every measure of crimes where alcohol is involved, the numbers are nearly double of those where alcohol is not a factor.

The word 'alcohol' is used as the reason that crime occurs and people present to our hospitals—alcohol-related harm, alcohol-related hospital presentations and alcohol-related domestic violence. 'Alcohol' has become a dirty word because of the painstakingly obvious effect it can have on some people who consume it. Alcohol can be highly addictive. Too much alcohol can cause changes in behaviour and some people may perform acts not accepted by anyone's community standards.

In the Northern Territory we know that alcohol can be blamed for a lot of the crime we are experiencing and that people can abuse their bodies by consuming too much with no self-control. What has been missing from the conversations people have heard from Labor over the last eight years is 'personal responsibility'. If you cannot handle your grog, then it should be up to you and your family if you need help.

Australians everywhere else can enjoy an ale responsibly. Of course, there are times when someone who is intoxicated becomes a problem. The police in other jurisdictions have the powers to deal with it, ensuring that only the person responsible is forced to face the consequence. That is personal responsibility.

Territory Labor members do not believe in personal responsibility. They are always trying to blame everyone else for life's problems. Labor removed drinking in public as an offence, so police had fewer powers. It closed alcohol rehabs, so people with addictions had fewer opportunities to set themselves on a new path.

Labor imposed a raft of measures on suppliers, focusing wholly and solely on the supply of alcohol. Businesses owners who legally sell alcohol have been made to feel that they are doing the wrong thing. They were forced by Labor to lock away their products even while open, put additional bollards in front of shopfronts, open only on certain days for limited hours and sell only a certain amount per day or per month. They had to install technology to scan drivers' licences. They had to refuse service if a person could not give evidence of where they would be consuming their purchases.

Retailers are forced to apply a minimum price for alcohol, regardless of the purposes it is purchased for and whether it is ordered from interstate or locally, yet there is nothing they can do when the drunks are at their premises causing pain and destruction for their staff and customers.

Labor allowed those who consume alcohol irresponsibly to continue their drinking in public places for all to see, hear and experience. Nuisance drunks have shamefully become a part of life in the Territory. It is a negative, embarrassing showcase that was accepted by Labor over eight years. It has become so negative that visitors to the Territory or the local buying a six-pack of beer feel ashamed to purchase, carry and consume alcohol, even though 99% of these people are law-abiding citizens with every right to purchase alcohol from a law-abiding store.

It has become so obvious in the Territory that drunks can do whatever they like, wherever they like, that often we feature in online images and stories across the nation. Often the descriptions of such nuisance public drinking involve walking out into oncoming traffic, fights, domestic violence and screaming profanities at each other or at bystanders. Sometimes it escalates to more dangerous levels with glass bottles thrown and threats to or attacks on bystanders.

These drunks leave behind broken glass, bottles, cans and a huge amount of rubbish for someone else to clean. These drunks end up sleeping off the effects in our parks, on footpaths and, dangerously, on our roads. They become an out-of-control party of fury for all of us to be afraid of.

Drunks often move around using taxis and minibuses. Last year a minibus driver nearing his retirement was attacked by a drunk and left to undergo major surgery on his broken leg and jaw. That is one example of many when drunks have been left to their own devices to cause pain and suffering to Territorians.

The lack of action on the demand for alcohol is dangerous. It has been fatal on too many occasions. That is why we are delivering our election commitment to address nuisance public drinking and problem drunks who cause antisocial behaviour and alcohol-fuelled harm. We do not want to have these dangerous situations and fatalities. It must be stopped.

This is the first step in tackling alcohol demand and the harm it creates. As the minister responsible for the liquor regulator, along with my colleague the Minister for Health and Minister for Alcohol Policy, we have commenced extensive work on a number of key areas, including working with communities on developing social clubs with local control and scrapping the minimum floor price, which has not reduced alcohol harm but simply caused public drinkers to switch from cask wine to hard spirits. In addition, the Minister for Education and Training and the Minister for Children and Families have been working incredibly hard on addressing the root causes of crime through education and child protection.

The newly elected CLP government is delivering its commitment to Territorians to reduce crime by giving police the powers they need to make the community safer.

I commend this Bill to the House.

Mrs ZIO (Fannie Bay): Madam Speaker, I strongly support the proposed amendments to the *Liquor Act*, Liquor Regulations 2019, *Alcohol Harm Reduction Act 2017* and the Alcohol Harm Reduction Regulations. These changes represent a significant step forward in our ongoing efforts to address alcohol-related issues in the Northern Territory.

Whilst campaigning I spoke to many members of the Fannie Bay constituency. Time and again they raised their concerns about the ever-increasing levels of antisocial behaviour and crime specifically related to the level of intoxicated people in the area.

The Parap Village shopping precinct is a popular destination for locals, residents and tourists alike. After checking my phone records I can confirm that in the last week I called police eight times while at my electorate office to report and receive assistance with intoxicated persons in the precinct. These people were threatening the safety and wellbeing of people who live, work and play in that location. That is eight times, even though I was located in Parliament House for three of those days.

I have spoken to numerous business owners who advise that they have had to lock their doors due to the risk to their employees. Yesterday I spoke to a business owner who said that his employee had sauces thrown at them, and they have been assaulted in their own workplace. This is unacceptable. Nuisance drinking adversely affects the lifestyle of residents and the livelihood of business owners.

This targeted approach acknowledges unique challenges faced in the NT and demonstrates our commitment to creating safer communities. By implementing these restrictions we are taking decisive action to reduce alcohol-related crime and antisocial behaviour. These amendments are about not only restriction but also creating a safer, healthier Northern Territory. They strike a balance between supporting responsible businesses and protecting our communities from the harmful effects of alcohol misuse. They demonstrate our government's commitment to listening to the community and crafting effective policy. They confirm our support for NT Police to ensure they have clarity on what they can and cannot do when antisocial behaviour is related to public drinking.

To those who express concerns about the implementation, yes, there will be challenges, but we are investing in the long-term wellbeing of our communities. That is worth every effort.

I support these amendments; they represent a thoughtful, comprehensive approach to liquor regulation that will make a real difference in the lives of Territorians. By passing these amendments we are sending a clear message that we are serious about creating a safer, healthier community for everyone.

Mr GUYULA (Mulka): Madam Speaker, I begin by talking about an issue I have raised before because it is important for what we discuss today.

I previously talked about the Coroner's report into the death of Kumanjayi Langdon. He was a Warlpiri man and an elder, educator and artist. Sadly, he died in custody at the age of 59.

Kumanjayi Langdon was reported to have been drinking in a public place. He was issued with an infringement notice, which was a $74 fine, and taken into custody under section 133AB of the *Police Administration Act*, which empowers police to take someone into custody for infringement notice offences for up to four hours or longer if they are intoxicated. This is known as a paperless arrest. Despite promises by Labor to repeal it, it still exists.

These paperless arrest powers combined with this new Bill will allow for an infringement notice for a nuisance public drinker; this can lead to arrest, court and a maximum fine of more than $900. This creates great concerns that we will see many Aboriginal people being detained.

The Coroner, Mr Greg Cavanagh, outlined that at the time of Kumanjayi's arrest a police special operation known as Operation Ascari II was running. The mission statement of the operation was to reduce the number of alcohol-related and antisocial behaviour incidents throughout the Darwin and Casuarina regions. This resulted in many people being picked up in public parks, maybe all of whom were Aboriginal. The Coroner stated:

> *Kumanjayi Langdon, a sick middle aged Aboriginal man, was treated like a criminal and incarcerated like a criminal; he died in a police cell which was built to house criminals. He died in his sleep with strangers in this cold and concrete cell. He died of natural causes … but he was entitled to die in peace, in the comfort of family and friends. In my view, he was entitled to die as a free man.*

The Coroner also reflected on the inequity of the laws in relation to public drinking. He stated:

> *I agree with the submission of Counsel for Kumanjayi's family that he was an old man minding his own business, enjoying the company of family and friends in an early evening of the dry season. He had been drinking, but had done nothing to bring himself to the attention of police, beyond being with other Aboriginal people in a park in the Darwin CBD.*
>
> *…*

> *Located just one street away from Spillet Park, where Kumanjayi was enjoying a quiet drink with friends, are a host of pubs and bars extending down Mitchell Street in the Darwin CBD. Those establishments … have al fresco drinking areas that are popular with the non-indigenous locals and tourists, many of whom imbibe large amounts of alcohol …*
>
> *The new laws create a system where a large portion of the population drinks freely in pubs and taverns using sections of the public footpath that have been fenced off for outdoor drinking. Just one street away, Aboriginal people (some of whom have come in from remote communities that are … banning alcohol, and will choose to live outdoors in the long grass) are being detained for drinking in a designated public place, even if they are enjoying peaceful, quiet time with family and friends. That deprivation of liberty and the differential treatment it results in is unacceptable.*

Those words come from the 2015 Coroner's report, but they are just as important today for this Bill. The Bill talks about public nuisance, but the term 'public nuisance' is not defined. It makes me wonder: am I a public nuisance? Was the old man, Kumanjayi Langdon, in Spillett Park a public nuisance? Are we just public nuisances because of the colour of our skin?

Politicians use phrases like 'public nuisance' and 'antisocial behaviour'. It creates an anti-Aboriginal rhetoric that dehumanises people and turns them into the scapegoat for broader problems and collective anger. As this narrative spreads across the political spectrum, it creates dangerous consequences. It legitimises discrimination. It gives permission for the broader public to blame Aboriginal people for the problems they are experiencing.

The language we hear equates Aboriginal people with crime and creates an idea that we are all dangerous, out of control and destructive. This language does not encourage people to understand our perspective, our culture or our law; it creates division between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people. It is division that has been created by many governments, but these Bills contribute to and elevate the increasing division between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people in the NT.

Martin Luther King wrote about equality. He often outlined that many white people, even well-meaning people, think that equality means black people have to improve. This is not correct. We all need to eliminate systemic racism so that we all have equal opportunities and are treated fairly. We need to have two-ways institutions so that both cultures can exist side by side. Luther King said that white people:

> *… must begin to walk in the pathways of … black brothers and feel some of the pain and hurt that throb without letup in their daily lives.*

I do not think people in this Chamber on the government side understand the daily pain of Aboriginal people. I do. These five Bills that target Aboriginal people and reinforce and grow systemic racism in our communities show that they are willing to compound the problems and continue to jail generations of Aboriginal people instead of working with us. We are to become the scapegoats of systemic issues that many governments have chosen not to fix.

If I were to take non-Aboriginal children, put them in a classroom with a language they did not understand and tell them that they are failures when they cannot speak, read or write in that language, you might understand a small part of the frustration that we have felt and feel.

Today the government is introducing a fine for people who are troubled by alcohol abuse, which is a health and medical issue. This government wants to hand out fines for a medical disorder to people who are homeless. They are not homeless in terms of country; they are homeless because they do not have a home to go and sit inside and legally drink.

This is a disgrace. It makes me angry that people in this Chamber support these actions, knowing that it may cause considerable harm. Kumanjayi Langdon died in a jail cell. He was robbed of a dignified death. Despite knowing the failings of the Bills that the government passed last week and will pass this week, it continues to push ahead with no care for the welfare of Aboriginal people.

J DAVIS (Johnston): Madam Speaker, I agree that we cannot have any more deaths. I agree that alcohol causes major harm and trouble in our communities.

As stated by the Chief Minister in the media, this suite of amendments brought forth by the CLP government gives police the power to intervene early in nuisance public drinking, but this raises the critical question: why are we continuing to give police the responsibility to address what is fundamentally a public health issue?

We have heard in this Chamber that problematic drinking behaviour often stems from deeper issues, such as mental health conditions, trauma, poverty and social isolation. By framing the issue as a nuisance to be policed we are ignoring the complex health and social factors that drive individuals to drink in public spaces. As the Member for Mulka said, people have a right to drink in public places. Instead of providing the appropriate support systems, mental health services, addiction treatment and outreach programs, we are resorting to punitive measures that do little to address the root causes.

Addiction cannot always be a personal responsibility, Attorney-General. It is a public health issue, and we need to support Territorians through this. We need to look at claims that 'alcohol' is a dirty word, because it stems from the stigmatisation of a health issue. That stigmatisation will worsen with the passing of this legislation. It is stigmatisation that we, as members of this Assembly, have let get out of hand because we cannot acknowledge the root causes of this issue.

Alcohol-related harm has a significant impact on our communities. We are looking at increased levels of family, domestic and sexual violence. As we heard from the Leader of the Opposition, more than 200 community leaders and health professionals have urged the Chief Minister to consider how the CLP's proposed alcohol legislation will increase this violence. I highlight that the Chief Minister has not yet responded to this open letter.

Empowering police to intervene in these situations risks further criminalisation of vulnerable communities, particularly those that are already marginalised. People with addiction, people experiencing homelessness and First Nations communities are disproportionately affected by laws that treat public drinking as a criminal issue. It also increases the risk of serious harm and even death, as we heard in the case of Kumanjayi Langdon, described by the Member for Mulka. These amendments may give police more authority to intervene early, but what they will really do is entrench cycles of disadvantage and push those most in need of help further away from the services they require.

Addressing alcohol-related public behaviour through fines and policing does not provide long-term solutions. If we truly want to address public drinking and its impacts on the community, we must invest in health-based interventions not enforcement. This means prioritising harm reduction strategies, increasing funding for mental health and addiction services and ensuring that people have access to housing and other social supports. These are the measures that will lead to safer communities, not the expansion of police powers.

This government claims that it is rushing through all this legislation as a matter of urgency for the safety of all Territorians, but how is safety prioritised when this government could not bother with the necessary evaluation and consultation that safeguard our communities? There has been zero community consultation on this legislation; therefore, it seems that this government has no intention to understand the impacts and unintended consequences of it.

In the week that I have had to go through this legislation I made the time to consult with community experts and people in my electorate. I made time for this because I care about how the decisions we make in this Chamber will affect everyone outside it.

I will propose amendments to this Bill and will talk on them when we come to that.

Mx McNAMARA (Nightcliff): Madam Speaker, jurisdictions the world over recognise that the most effective way to tackle alcohol addiction is to treat it as a health issue, not a criminal one. Who will this new legislation target? It will target people experiencing homelessness and other complex needs. Where is the plan to address the underlying causes of public intoxication?

Minister Boothby, I find it disappointing that you are willing to dismiss as 'drunks' the Territorians who are clearly suffering addiction and immense difficulties in their lives. The label of drunks and the derision with which you spoke of them was shameful. I had hoped that in this place we, as representatives of the Territory, could debate these issues professionally and treat all Territorians with respect.

To me there is a concerning underlying tone. This amendment and entire debate is aimed at normalising drinking in white communities and criminalising drinking by Aboriginal people. Let us remind this House that historically, in the Territory, we drink more per capita than any other state or territory for both Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal populations. The difference is the addition of homelessness, poverty and intergenerational trauma in one section of our population.

We are seeing a public health issue being treated as a criminal one; this is another example of the CLP placing the ambulance at the bottom of the cliff. Alcohol is ripping apart our community and fuelling addiction, poverty and domestic violence. It is ruining people's lives.

Instead of addressing the roaring trade that the alcohol industry has from the misery around us, the CLP is going after those who are copping the brunt of it. Last week I asked the Chief Minister whether she could assure me that the appointment of a major alcohol lobbyist as her chief of staff would not skew the CLP's alcohol policy in favour of the alcohol industry and its sales. She did not directly answer the question.

The CLP is punishing public drunkenness while at the same time repealing minimum unit pricing; this is perverse logic. Raising the price of alcohol is the most effective and cost-effective way to reduce alcohol harms, and the alcohol lobby knows this. The research shows that by increasing the cost people, especially those with issues related to alcohol, tend to buy less. This in turn impacts the bottom line of alcohol and retail companies, which is why they have come out against it. It is clear to me that the alcohol industry needs to be locked out of the decision-making table as it has too much influence on our policies.

Research has shown that the introduction of a floor price resulted in a 14% reduction in alcohol-related assaults in the NT, a 21% reduction in alcohol-involved domestic and family violence assaults and a 19% reduction in alcohol-related emergency department attendances. The minimum floor price was not indexed to inflation, so over time the impact has been minimised and is not as effective as it could be. Keeping the minimum unit pricing and indexing this price will have ongoing positive impacts on alcohol-related outcomes, reducing violence and improving health outcomes in our community.

No single measure will solve this, especially as the underlying causes of poverty and disadvantage are not being considered, but why take away one measure that is actually showing a positive effect? Even if it is small, it is an improvement nonetheless. Instead, the CLP is taking away this effective measure and increasing access to cheap alcohol, while there is an undeniable public health issue related to alcohol. It is increasing access to alcohol and, at the same time, introducing a new fine for public drunkenness.

This is no more than a trap for vulnerable Territorians, which benefits the alcohol industry and is a detriment to Territorians. It is detrimental to Territorians who are struggling with alcohol addiction, suffering domestic, family and sexual violence and Territorians who work in the healthcare system. The CLP is committed to reducing crime, but there is good evidence that criminalising people with addictions, as well as making access to alcohol cheaper, will increase crime in the long term.

Like all the legislation the CLP is rushing through this parliament, this yet again is increasing people's contact with the police and the justice system and fuelling the cycles of incarceration and disadvantage. I again express my dismay at legislation such as this being rushed through parliament, as it will have real effects on our communities and individuals.

Mr HOWE (Drysdale): Madam Speaker, this Bill is particularly important to my electorate of Drysdale. It does not matter where you would go in Drysdale today, there would be public drinking.

In Gunn you see drunks out the front of the childcare centre. I am called almost daily by people at the childcare centre, asking for help with the drunks out the front. Young children going there every day are exposed to this kind of behaviour.

In Gray most of the parks have become camps and are filled with rum bottles and rubbish. Children cannot use the parks. That is the reality in Gray.

In Driver you see the same thing. There is horrendous violence, especially in Lorna Lim Terrace where shocking alcohol abuse is occurring and there is open violence in the street as a result.

Last week I spoke of knives in Gray. I want members to know that one of the knives I spoke about ended up in Janet, a senior lady living by herself in Gray, after she complained about the noise being made in a house. A long blade was thrown at her.

I now make the same warning about alcohol. Public drinking is tearing my community apart. I will tell a few stories.

At the first door I knocked in Driver was a senior lady who heartbreakingly told me that she no longer catches the bus. This means that she stays home. She no longer goes to the Palmerston Shopping Centre where she would have a weekly coffee with a friend because she feels too unsafe on the bus and in the shopping centre. Her adult son picks her up to take her to appointments. However, she feels guilty, as an 80-something-year-old

lady, for doing that. I am sure her son is happy to do it, but it shows she has become so disempowered as a senior person in our community that she is staying at home because of the threat of antisocial behaviour largely fuelled by alcohol.

I speak for Mel who lives in Gray near Essington Avenue. Those who know Palmerston know that Essington Avenue is notorious for drunken behaviour. It is on full display every day. Dunbar Park is a large open space. It should be a beautiful park, but it is covered in bottles. You regularly see a large group of people drinking there. It is hell for the residents. I cannot even describe the suffering that they go through every day.

A constituent who fled Africa came to my electorate office last week. He lives in Gray. He came to warn me that he is now seeing on the streets of Darwin and Palmerston the same violence that he fled in Africa. I find that moving. It is why you see me take such a staunch position in support of this Bill.

Trish and Roy in Driver suffer constantly from public drinking and fighting that has kept them up at night for years. Katie, who is a migrant, bought a house in Cornwallis Circuit. Not being a local, she thought she was buying a well-priced, nice house. As a single woman she is petrified of living there.

This weekend a constituent who has asked to remain anonymous contacted me. She is seven weeks sober, which is fantastic. However, the public drinking occurring out the front of her house is making her think of going back to the bottle. I told her to stay firm and that we are taking measures to help reduce the behaviour. That is the reality. We have someone who is trying to break their addiction. It is amazing that she has been sober for seven weeks. I applaud that; it is fantastic. I do not want the environment in a residential area to push people to relapse.

A few years ago, Tom Price Park in Gunn was a beautiful playground. It is a few hundred metres from my house. It cannot be used anymore; a youth burned it down at the start of the year, and it has now turned into a campsite. I went to that campsite, and about 40 people were there. I spent a good couple of hours talking to everyone and did a mobile office there. I put it on my Facebook. I spoke to everyone there, and only two of them were legitimately homeless. I spent about three hours trying to find them a place to stay, and there just is not anywhere.

Putting that aside, the others were not homeless. They stated that they had houses back in their communities. I asked whether they were good for food and money, which they were. They started drinking and built a fire, which required the fire department to come and put it out because it is dry at this time of year. The fire spread, and this is in a residential area. These are some of the real threats; once people start drinking—alcohol and fire are never a good mix.

Dunbar Park in Gray, as we speak, is as tip; you cannot take a child there. Essington Park in Gray is the same, as is the Harvest Corner Community Garden.

The Gray Community Hall has people drinking in public out the front. I regularly visit the 50+ Club, which is a seniors' club. The club members went to have a barbecue. When they arrived in the morning, faeces had been laid on top of the barbecue by the group who had been drinking there. Essington Park is the same.

I spoke last week about how amazing Gray Primary School is, but the walk around it is littered in broken Bundy rum bottles; it is everywhere. Regularly when children walk to school there are large groups of people still drinking in the street.

I will not stand in this Chamber and accept that happening in my community. I support this Bill for the children in Drysdale because they have the right to a normal, safe upbringing. They deserve to go to school and be safe.

At Palmerston College in Driver, we find empty bottles. The school has regular break-ins that are often led by people drinking alcohol.

I spoke of Lorna Lim Terrace. At times President Park is covered with alcohol bottles, along with Pretty Park and Goyder Square in the CBD.

You often see drunks at Coles, Oasis, the Palmerston Shopping Centre and even my electorate office at Gateway. The public drinking is so bad at Gateway that my electorate officers regularly need to get security to come to the office if they wish to go to the bathroom or walk to and from their cars. At Gateway the retail workers, particularly young women, feel unsafe walking back to their cars at the end of their shift, as groups of drunk men loiter in the car park and harass them.

I will not stand for that kind of behaviour. I will not accept that as normal.

We heard about DV. I would rather a drunk, violent man lose his liberty for a night as he sobers up in a cell than for him to go home and make a victim of his partner. I do not apologise for that.

I heard a disturbing story on the weekend. It might be apparent that there is a large and present alcohol issue in my electorate. A female constituent, who wishes to remain anonymous, contacted me and said that as she drove down Essington Avenue she saw a drunk man beating his female partner with a stick. She called police, but due to the demand on police she waited 20 minutes for the call to be answered. During that entire time the woman continued to be beaten.

Later that night the female was hit by a car. The husband of the woman who spoke to me went to the scene and rendered first aid to the female, and she stayed with the male. She said that he continued to cry out for his wife, wanting to see her. The reason he wanted to see her was so he could take the alcohol from her bag. Once he had the alcohol he wandered off; he left the scene. That is the real plight of what alcohol is doing to people in Drysdale. This is why I support the Bill.

I agree with the Member for Johnston on the causes of addiction. Yesterday for over an hour I met with a doctor in Palmerston who specialises in addiction, as I want to support people and advocate for this area. It is an important aspect for me, and anyone who knows my story would understand why. I want to help addicts. The Member for Johnston is not wrong in what drives people to drink. I acknowledge there is pain and suffering, but I will not let that addict cause harm to other people in the community. Their liberty ends when they encroach on other people's liberty, and that is what we are seeing. I am open to discussing how we can help address addiction in the Northern Territory, but I will not let it happen at the expense of one constituent of Drysdale. That is why I am pushing for this Bill to pass.

I have also spoken to Larrakia elders in my electorate, which has some longstanding Palmerston residents. I found this powerful because I cannot relate to it. I spoke to one woman who told me, 'Clint, you must clean up Palmerston. I am sick of feeling shame for what is happening on our streets.' That really hit me because I have not experienced that. I also support this Bill for her and her family so that she does not feel like the actions of others reflect on her. She has been a resident of Palmerston for 40 years and is a respected member of the community.

I warn the Chamber—we have heard it multiple times coming from the opposition and crossbench—that we cannot keep reducing every argument to race. Member for Mulka, you spoke well and brought up Martin Luther King, who I agree was a great man. He also spoke of judging people not by the colour of their skin but by the content of their character. None of these Bills are aimed at any race. I would die on a hill before we did that.

I aim to make it safer in the streets of Drysdale. We will do that this through this Bill.

Mr O'GALLAGHER (Karama): Madam Speaker, I support the Bill. The Member for Drysdale has pinched my script because the same issues that he has raised in his electorate are rampant in my electorate of Karama, but it is worth restating and being more specific. I will relay some of the experiences we have.

Like the Member for Drysdale's electorate, our parks have become unusable for the purposes for which they are designed. They were designed for families to use and enjoy themselves and for communities to get together and have nice barbecues, but people cannot do that. Why? Because a heap of nuisance drinking deters people from going anywhere near them. You cannot walk around because of the broken glass. Kids will be severely injured if they run around there. If they ride their bikes, their tyres will get punctures. No-one can use these parks for what they were designed for. That is shameful.

I draw attention to Holzerland Park in Malak and Robyn Lesley Park in Karama. I go there every day. Holzerland Park is directly across from the shops. It is littered with rubbish. People went there to play basketball, but they had to give that away because there is broken glass on the basketball courts. The nuisance drinking does not just stay in the park; it occurs outside of the park and destroys the lives of people living in the neighbouring houses. I am here to represent those people.

Robyn Lesley Park is opposite Karama shops. At certain times it is a hellhole for people. They look across at it and say, 'What on Earth will we do there?' Then the nuisance drinking escalates into violence, moves across to the shopping centre and destroys the lifestyle of everyone there. The litter is everywhere. I wish we could outsource our litter laws to Singapore because it would make a difference.

It goes on. We cannot use our bus stops. People say, ‘Go and use the bus’. You would not go near them. It is just another drinking spot for people. There is vomit and all the other stuff there. We have had enough of it.

I went to see a resident at 10.30 am on Sunday in Chambers Crescent in Malak. She called me because she wanted to talk about antisocial behaviour. I arrived there. Across the road where there are public housing tenancies, on the lawn near the footpath, there were 20 or 30 people starting to drink and playing music. It sounded okay at that stage because the music was there and it was like having a big party. This resident told me, ‘This happens all the time, Brian. It starts at 10 or 10.30. Look at what happens around 5 pm, 9 pm and 3 am. No-one can get to sleep.’

There is violence happening which is all fuelled by this nuisance drinking. People are fed up; they want their lives back. There is litter. Residents have sleep deprivation; they and their children cannot get to sleep. This happens on school nights as well.

These are the people and businesses I represent. I have to speak up for businesses like everyone else.

I took the Minister for Housing, Local Government and Community Government, who is also the Minister for Alcohol Policy, to the Malak service station. People there are frightened of the consequences of drunks coming into the shop and stealing. At that service station either youths or drunks—it is a mixture of both—walk in, steal and leave. The staff do not do anything because they are too scared. That business has lost two staff members and is finding it difficult to replace them. The owners of the service station think that they may have to operate its full opening hours from a little window so that no customers can go inside. They also said that if it continues they will shut the business. What will that do for the wider community? People will be unable to get their milk, bread, fuel or anything locally. We need to do something quickly.

I am interested in the Leader of the Opposition’s comments that we have failed Territorians. I am sorry, but if we do not do this we will fail Territorians. That is my message to the Leader of the Opposition.

I go back to our plan. I do this every time. This is our Bible. This is a plan signed by every one of us—a 17-strong united CLP team. This is our plan, and we went to Territorians with this plan. No disrespect to the members of the bush seats—I respect them, particularly the Member for Mulka—but the people of the Territory have spoken. We went to Darwin, Palmerston, Katherine and Alice Springs. All those people voted for us.

I have to say that we failed them a little bit. We said that in week 1 of parliament we would:

Give police powers to fine, charge and arrest people for public drinking in non-exempt areas

We are in week 2. The reason we are doing it in week two is that the out-of-touch Labor opposition members who are not connected with their communities continually brought on wasteful divisions when they did not need to. They delayed and wasted time. They do not want Territorians to be heard.

We will stand for Territorians; that is our role. A Larrakia elder came to me the other day and said, ‘Brian, we have to get rid of drunks’. Member for Nightcliff, that is the word the elder used, ‘drunks’. She has extended an invitation for anyone to sit in her yard at 8 pm and witness what she is putting up with.

On that note, I wish that we pass this Bill. We might be one week out, but we will deliver for Territorians because we are a united CLP team, unlike the out-of-touch Labor opposition members who are probably still in *Teletubbies* land. They are probably deciding who will be Tinky Winky, Dipsy, Laa-Laa and Po. My advice is: come back and be in touch with Territorians, listen to them and support this Bill.

Mr KERLE (Blain): Madam Speaker, I support this Bill. It should have been passed years ago. In fact, the former Labor government in the first place should never have removed police powers to keep our community safe from the scourge of nuisance drinking.

Following on from the Members for Drysdale and Karama, I will talk about the impact that public drinking has on my electorate. Antisocial behaviour—aka public drinking and the nuisance behaviour that follows it—is probably one of the biggest issues in my electorate.

Emery Avenue is next to the Sacred Heart Catholic Primary School. Once upon a time, that was a lovely street built around a Catholic primary school. Now that street is synonymous with broken glass, public drinking and terrible behaviour. For the poor students in that school who must come and go in the morning, catching buses, the language and behaviour they witness is intolerable.

During the campaign I was constantly on Emery Avenue chasing down broken glass. The poor City of Palmerston was constantly sending streetsweepers there trying to sweep it up. It was out of control. It would be swept up, but the next morning or even that night there would be broken glass there again.

I walked around and talked to people during the campaign, and I ran into some of the Member for Daly's constituents on Emery Avenue. There was what we could call a Jim Beam bush, because it was growing a large number of Jim Beam bottles. I posted it on Facebook at the time; I filled up about three garbage bags with beer stubbies and Jim Beam bottles. I was trying to do my best as a private citizen to stop the broken glass by removing the bottles before they got smashed. The residents of Emery Avenue are at their wits' end from the drinking that goes on all night.

Last week I was on Sibbald Crescent after the markets. It has some public housing. I will probably talk about this a bit in the House; I will keep coming back to it. We had visitors from out of town; the lawful tenant did not want them there but was culturally and physically unable to direct them to leave. Police attended, but they would scatter and come back later. They were drinking. They would go to Geoid Park to drink.

Bombax Street in Moulden is also covered in broken glass. When I doorknock in my electorate people say they cannot let their kids go out on the street for a few reasons, one being all the broken glass. You clean it up, and it comes back.

Why is there so much broken glass? I remember a time when we had goon bags and green cans around. I am not saying that is a good thing, but given that we have a large population of people with alcohol problems, if they are drinking from goon bags and green cans there is no broken glass. Unfortunately, the previous government's changes moved people from cask wine to heavy spirits, which get people a lot drunker a lot faster. Then, of course, there is a glass bottle, which can be a serious weapon.

Strawbridge Park in Moulden is lovely. It is next to the shops, but, unfortunately, it is used as either a highway or a drinking mecca, so it is useless for parents to take their kids to play there. It used to have a playground but does not anymore because it was burned down.

The Member for Drysdale spoke about Gray Community Hall and the wonderful seniors' group that meets there every Tuesday. I love going along, but you are always a bit nervous going to the hall because of the antisocial behaviour and drinking there. You always wonder whether the drinking will escalate into domestic violence and assaults in front of the door, requiring us to call the police and go outside to rescue someone.

I will talk about a sensitive topic, because it is kind of the dog that did not bark. I thank the Member for Mulka for bringing up Kumanjayi Langdon. I have read that coronial report several times and know it well. It is a sad story. The dog that did not bark is the significant health problems that Kumanjayi Langdon was suffering, which were likely a result of his drinking. The Coroner's report lists some of the health findings. It states:

> *2004: cardiomyopathy*
>
> *2010: diabetes*
>
> *October 2014: pulmonary oedema*
>
> *February 2015: congestive cardiac failure and congestive cardiomyopathy*
>
> *April 2015: cardiomegaly (enlarged heart)*
>
> *On 31 March 2015 an echo test report revealed severe pulmonary hypertension and dilated cardiomyopathy.*

This touches on—which the other side of the Chamber would agree—the severe health issues in our Indigenous population due to many causes, one of which is severe alcohol consumption. We can all agree that those health problems are a real problem, and we lose too many elders and wise people to the scourge of alcohol.

If Kumanjayi Langdon had not been taken into custody that night, it is likely he may have passed away, sadly, on the street in the Darwin CBD. If that had happened no-one would know his name outside of his family, and we would not be talking about him today. Sadly, when Indigenous people die due to health problems, which arguably could be of their own making, there is little noise made.

On election night, which should have been a happy night, two members of my Yolngu family passed away, and the next day I had to do sorry business. There was no violence involved. They were two separate incidents. They just lay down and died, likely due to heart issues. It happens a lot, and we need to address the health issues in our community, but the fact that we have people with fragile health conditions should not stop us from keeping our streets safe. If someone like Kumanjayi Langdon passes away in custody, there will be a coronial and quite a bit of attention. If he passes away on the street, he will not get any medical attention lying in the gutter. I would prefer people get medical attention, come to the attention of authorities and be seen to, cared for and looked after rather than being left alone to pass away.

This Bill is about activating police powers and allowing them to intervene in problem drinking before it becomes a problem later in the evening. In my electorate of Blain I have seen too many times the drinking circle of 12 to 3 pm becoming the domestic violence incident or aggravated assault at nine or 10 pm. The pathway from excessive drinking and intoxication to assaults and domestic violence is all too clear.

I am proud to be a part of a government that will be taking a health approach to the scourge of problem drinking when we introduce alcohol treatment plans in the future, but for now we need to keep our streets safe. We need to intervene in the drinking circles before they escalate for the sake of the Indigenous women in our electorates and in our communities.

As the Member for Drysdale said, I would much rather someone who is intoxicated and causing a nuisance in a public place have a safe place to sleep off his intoxication and come to the attention of the appropriate authorities, rather than—as I and the Members for Drysdale and Karama and many of us in the House have seen—continue to drink, which can result in violent behaviour and cause significant harm to a helpless victim later that evening.

I commend this Bill to the House.

VISITOR
Ian Gordon

Madam SPEAKER: Honourable members, I advise of the presence in the gallery of Larrakia elder and resident of Drysdale, Ian Gordon. Welcome to the Chamber.

Members: Hear, hear!

Dr RAHMAN (Fong Lim): Madam Speaker, nuisance drinking is a serious issue in the Territory and everyone has testified to its incidence and the extent to which it is a problem. My colleagues from Fannie Bay, Drysdale, Karama and Blain have provided ample, sad testimony to the state of our polity. It is impossible to ignore those stories. The challenge for us, as legislators, is to weigh those stories—that weight of evidence and testimony—against the need to protect civil liberties to ensure that we empower our citizens more generally, including our Indigenous citizenry.

I will not belabour the point in relation to specific instances of when these kinds of issues have taken place, but I cannot possibly ignore making mention of Bill Sullivan Park in Stuart Park. It has been an unusable space for a ridiculous amount of time because of problems associated with nuisance drinking. The fact of the matter is in a place where social services were being provided with the best will in the world, it still was unusable as a recreational space for families, children and our broader citizenry because police simply did not have the powers to police effectively in that area in relation to people who are intoxicated and—that 'and' is important, and I will come back to it in due course—causing a nuisance.

I spent some of my campaign time in and around the Westralia Street shopping complex. It gives me no joy to recount the anecdote that the first time I stood in front of those shops to meet future constituents, I was confronted with two people who were wildly intoxicated and causing a ruckus. The violence spilled over into the Westralia Street shops and affected the custom and workers of the Stuart Park corner shops. I mention it only because I could not believe that on my first outing in that space I had to be the one to call the police. To their credit the police came as promptly as they could, but, unfortunately, the response that I and other concerned citizens received was that there was not much they could do because the police did not have the powers vested in them to deal with intoxication and causing a nuisance under the same ambit.

We are seeking to provide a Bill to support a suite of legislation that is—I make no bones about saying this—tough on crime because we are in the middle of a crime crisis. We are in the middle of a social and economic

crisis in the Northern Territory. It is why I am in this Chamber. I believe it is why all of us, in one form or another, are in this Chamber. Unless we empower our police to deal with these issues, we cannot possibly expect to move forward on other issues.

This new public drinking offence has been created to give police more powers to fine, charge and arrest people who are nuisance public drinking in restricted public areas. The Member for Barkly was clear in his second reading speech about the scope of the legislation. Honestly, in some regards we are being unfair in conflating a range of issues associated with the Northern Territory more generally with the specific purpose and ambit of this legislation.

This legislation, as per the second reading speech, will address and deter antisocial behaviour and create additional pathways for things like the Banned Drinker Register. Notably, in new section 171A—which is what I am interested in—it creates a new public drinking offence such that we will now have an offence under the *Liquor Act* for drinking alcohol in a prohibited place if a person is also engaging in the act of causing a nuisance to other people in, or within the vicinity of, a public place. That is an important distinction because contrary to the insinuations that this Bill is targeting any one group of people, it is targeting people who are causing a nuisance no matter their race or background. The definition of a public place and the specifics of the fine are clearly articulated.

In relation to urgency, it is also clearly articulated that this measure will commence immediately after the legislation is passed. To the point made earlier questioning how this can be an urgent matter, it is; we expect it to take effect immediately. As part of a suite of legislation, it will have an overall cumulative deterrent effect.

Specifics matter, and that is why it is important to understand that we are not talking about the criminalisation of drinking but the criminalisation of nuisance whilst intoxicated. I am starting to tire of the lazy conflation of issues and the poor-quality reliance on data and evidence without any actual data and evidence other than lazy offhand remarks in relation to historic research that may or may not have relevance.

I am hopeful that we will behave better in this place and will all start relying on better information to make our decisions. I challenge those across the Chamber to provide the information on nuisance whilst intoxicated, which speaks to this matter. I have taken time to do the research, as have many of my colleagues, because I have shared it with them and we have had those discussions.

The Member for Mulka makes significant contributions to this House, and I respect the unique perspective from which he speaks. He pointed to the suggestion that nuisance is ill-defined, and it will be racially motivated or targeted and has no scope. I do not accept that.

To my understanding, and I am willing to be corrected, Part VII section 47 of the *Summary Offences Act 1923* is indicative of what defines nuisance. Non-exhaustively, the conduct intended to be captured under this legislation is consistent with that type of behaviour. It is not a case of us having not thought this out, thinking that any old thing can become a nuisance; it will be tested by the courts and mediated by our police in whom we have faith and trust. We are taking a leap of faith to entrust our police force to make the subjective decisions to define what constitutes a nuisance to restore public order at a time when there is clearly public disorder in innumerable electorates.

We are negligent in doing nothing. Moving forward we can only be guided by whatever data and evidence is at our disposal that we can sensibly apply within the context of our polity.

The former government speaks of its exhaustive attempts to address liquor legislation and harm reduction. It gives me no great pleasure to point to the controlled experiment that is the last 20 years of Labor governance which resulted in us having the domestic violence statistics that we do. It is possible to draw an empiric, causal and correlative relationship between those factors.

There is a number of people who have done great research to document what happened over the years. I note Sarah Clifford at Menzies School of Health Research is somebody who has been critical of a lot of the legislation and policy that has been enacted over time and has forensically documented it.

It is incumbent on everyone in this House to be across this stuff rather than lazily referring to a bit of the Banned Drinker Register, a bit of fetal alcohol syndrome, a bit of nuisance drinking and a bit of antisocial behaviour. Be specific; tell me why this is a bad law with reference to nuisance in this context. In the absence of that, I am compelled by the information I am provided by my colleagues and the literature that suggests we do not have a controlled experiment to determine whether there could be a deterrent effect by executing this suite of legislation collectively, which includes the connecting of nuisance and intoxication. This has not

been dealt with here previously. The suite of reform—if you can call it that—legislated by Labor over the last eight years specifically resulted in the suite of socioeconomic dysfunction that we have inherited. That is the reality.

Wide consultation has been taken in relation to this legislation, as with all the Bills we seek to pass. It is unfair to suggest that there has been no community consultation. I will tell you what also constitutes community consultation: every one of us having pounded the pavement to hear from constituents who provided us with real-world instances tied to a police report, a geographical location or a park. All of that constitutes testimony which has cumulative weight as well.

As an academic of sorts, I say that not all the answers can be found in the paperwork or the studies, but they can be indicative and provide instructive guidance. For example, the parliamentary librarian with the best will in the world provided us with references to research regarding the proximity of drinking establishments to fjords in Norway, which is not super useful in this context. However, there is a range of other materials that have been provided to us collectively as a legislature which everybody could have relied upon.

I brought some of it in for people to read casually in the lunchbreak if they want to be more informed of what people have to say in the real world in relation to regulating alcohol, evidence-based policy in social science, alcohol in relation to international evidence from the research and the public policy or even the Australian National Alcohol Strategy.

The reality is that lazy arguments are not winning me over. We have a thought-out considered package to try to deter and divert. We appreciate that will necessarily result in a potential increase in detention, which is why we also have an extremely well-considered plan for Corrections and correctional infrastructure. What I am drawing out is that it is easy for everyone to poke holes at problems; it is much more difficult to provide holistic solutions.

The last government had eight years to provide holistic solutions to a range of these issues. Sadly, for Territorians these were unable to get us any further than where we are now, which by many measures and accounts is a worse place than the Northern Territory was in some 20 years ago.

I do not want to conflate research that is not connected to the current debate, but an interesting bit I came across from Farmer, Miller and Taylor in 2024 is in relation to whether patron bans reduce crime, looking at assault offences in WA before and after empowering the police with the possibility of imposing barring notices. Let us be clear: this is an adjunct piece of research in a different polity, but there is something instructive there, because there is limited data about what can be done when we are connecting nuisance and intoxication. We are working specifically in the public space, not the private space. Notwithstanding, I quote from that paper:

> *There are a number of implications arising from this study and some notable limitations have been acknowledged. Nevertheless, the association between the introduction of barring notices and a reduction in alcohol-flagged violent offending appears to endorse the use of barring notices in WA.*

Show me the same research from eight years of a Labor-controlled experiment that suggests all or any of what was passed in the last eight years has had a discernibly positive effect on the socioeconomic prospects of anyone in the Northern Territory. I do not see it. I am extremely grateful for the handful of researchers who turn their attention to examining what happens in the Northern Territory, but whilst we do not have a litany of subject-specific books and journals to rely on, empiric testimony on the ground is what we do have to work with.

If you can point to the stories and testimony of the Members for Fannie Bay, Drysdale, Karama, Blain or anyone else as being facetious, fictitious or fallacious, by all means do so. However, we are not trading in hyperbole. We are not exaggerating the scale of the problem; we are drawing out the worst instances of problems that are endemic and have spiralled out of control in this polity, and we all know that to be the case.

There is a concerning trend where the CLP is being charged with overlooking expert evidence. That is simply not the case. I have drawn upon a small sample of materials to simply make the point. In this place conflating expert testimony is likewise becoming commonplace. When experts speak on a matter, we listen to them on that matter, but their testimony in respect of X is not always applicable in respect of Y.

Nuisance and conflation with antisocial behaviour terminology is also a dangerous business, noting that evaluation of the consequences of antisocial behaviour orders and legislation to that effect have happened exhaustively across the world, notably in the United Kingdom under its ASBO experiment. If you want a bit of light reading *ASBO Nation* is not a bad place to look for what works and what does not. Notably, the UK's

ASBO legislation was ultimately upscaled in the direction that we are taking to move things towards a more punitive system where we provide the police with the capacity to make more direct interventions.

The suite of legislation we are promoting has a cumulative goal of deterrence and diversion. The community consultation has not been zero; it has been exhaustive and notably drew extensively on our police force which is advising us with modern testimony as to what it requires to do its job to keep Territorians safer. The specific constituent cases matter, and specific locations testify to the weight of evidence we are providing.

I therefore commend this Bill to the House.

Debate suspended.

The Assembly suspended.

NOTICES

Mr GUYULA (Mulka): Madam Speaker, I give notice that on the next General Business day I will propose a motion that the Legislative Assembly recommits to and affirms the objectives of the Aboriginal Justice Agreement that by 2027 the NT Government will:

1. reduce offending and imprisonment of Aboriginal Territorians

2. engage and support Aboriginal leadership

3. improve justice responses and services for Aboriginal Territorians.

J DAVIS (Johnston): Madam Speaker, I give notice that on the next General Business day I shall move that the NT Legislative Assembly:

- acknowledges the important and extensive work of the Voluntary Assisted Dying Independent Expert Advisory Panel in producing the Report into Voluntary Assisted Dying in the Northern Territory

- recognises the right for Territorians to end their lives with dignity and the immense suffering that is caused for them and their families when this right is taken away from them

- recognises that the Northern Territory, the first jurisdiction in the world to legalise voluntary assisted dying, is now the last in Australia to pass this law

- urges the government to implement the 22 recommendations of the Report into Voluntary Assisted Dying in the Northern Territory, acknowledging that many Territorians from all political persuasions want the right to die with dignity in the Territory.

PETITION
Petition No 2 – Bus Driver Protection Screens

Mr PATEL (Casuarina)(by leave): Madam Speaker, I present a petition not conforming with standing orders from 109 petitioners calling for the immediate installation of driver protection screens in all Darwin buses. I move that the petition be read.

Motion agreed to; petition read:

> *We, the undersigned, call on Darwin Bus Network stakeholders—the Government, CDC and NT WorkSafe—to immediately install fit-for-purpose driver protection screens in all Darwin buses.*
>
> *Bus drivers and members of our community deserve to be safe on public transport.*

Mr PATEL (Casuarina): 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

CLP Election Commitments

Ms UIBO to CHIEF MINISTER

Before the election you promised Territorians that you would lead a transparent and open CLP government. In the last 50 days you have backflipped on your commitment to hold an inquiry into the police, broken a promise to release major details of a gas supply deal and increased the rents of government employee housing by 25%. We have also heard nothing about your promised lobbyist register.

When you were in opposition you demanded a high standard when it came to transparency and accountability. What will you do to live up to your own expectations and standards?

ANSWER

Madam Speaker, the Opposition Leader is right; we promised not to be like the previous Labor government which was sent a clear message by Territorians that its behaviour was unacceptable and its positioning went against what the community believed in.

In stark contrast to that we put forward a team and a plan to rebuild the Territory going forward. That plan centred on reducing crime, which is why in the parliament over the last week and a half we have seen strong deliverables by a CLP government which is backing Territorians who want to live in a safe community. That is why our reducing-crime package has been so significant and important over the last week and a half.

To go to the Opposition Leader's point about backing our police, on the first day, the Sunday after the election, I met with the Police Commissioner and told him that we unreservedly back our police and that we must do everything we can to make them feel supported and deliver on community safety.

It is interesting that the Opposition Leader would now try to seek to manipulate what the CLP did in opposition in calling for a police inquiry, when she and her government consistently voted us down in this parliament to stop that happening.

Let me be clear: from opposition we wanted an inquiry into our police force. We dragged Labor kicking and screaming to reluctantly and eventually do the Vince Kelly police review. That review was paid for by taxpayers, and it took months; it might have taken more than a year. It took a long time, there was significant consultation and a product was produced.

A report was revealed by the then Labor government, and the CLP opposition responded by supporting 15 of the 18 recommendations. Police have been implementing that review since Labor was in government. Therefore, to call another review on top of the reluctant review that Labor had would be a ridiculous duplication in process and cost, given we now have a police review—albeit years after the CLP asked for it.

This is a clear example of the opposition scrambling to find its relevance.

Ms UIBO: A point of order, Madam Speaker! Standing Order 110; relevance. The question also asked about the promised lobbyist register, which the Chief Minister has not yet answered.

Mrs FINOCCHIARO: I am happy to speak about the lobbyist register because we committed that we would deliver one. The work is underway, and we will implement the policy once that work has been completed, unlike Labor which refused to deliver a lobbyist register. The irony is not lost on Territorians that you are holding us to a different standard from that you held yourselves to.

CLP Commitments – Supplementary Question

Ms UIBO to CHIEF MINISTER

You also promised to release the details of a major gas supply deal when you came to government. You have backflipped on that. Can you explain it to Territorians?

ANSWER

Madam Speaker, the Opposition Leader was a government minister at the time that gas supply deals were done. The Labor government did not make that public. Perhaps, Opposition Leader, you can enlighten Territorians as to the cost of those deals. We made a clear commitment that if the information could be made public we would do so. Labor did a commercial-in-confidence deal whereby that information cannot be released. In the fullness of time we hope that we can put more into the public domain about this.

What is even worse is the fact that the reason we had to do these gas deals is that Labor dropped the ball on securing the Territory's energy supply. That is why we are in this crisis situation in the first place.

Crime Reduction Legislation – Update

Mr KERLE to CHIEF MINISTER

The CLP government delivered on its major election commitment last week, passing Declan's law and urgent crime legislation, which included the creation of new offences for ram raids and posting and boasting, as well as returning the age of criminal responsibility to 10 years. Can you update the Assembly on how the CLP's newly passed laws will help keep Territorians safe?

ANSWER

Madam Speaker, I know from being in the Member for Blain's community in Palmerston with him that people care deeply about community safety. People want safe lives. They want to have a safe environment for their children to grow up in. They want their kids to go to school safely and be able to go to the shops and not spend their lives dominated by wondering whether they parked in the right spot, whether they will come back to a car with a smashed window, whether everything will be okay and whether they will be broken into tonight. That is why we have almost finished delivering our reducing-crime package.

It started last week with Declan's law. Samara Laverty joined us in parliament for that momentous and historic occasion. Declan's law was a wide-scale reform of bail laws. It was about delivering more consequences for people who do the wrong thing and creating a stronger test for our judges to make sure that they are not putting people who present an ongoing risk to our community back out on the streets. It was about ensuring that we target repeat offenders—people who consistently and in an ongoing way refuse to abide by the laws of our community. It was also about knife crime, expanding police powers for wanding and making sure that they are flexibly applied so that our police can do that important proactive work.

We passed a law providing a standalone offence for ram raids. Since 1 July there have been 26 ram raids on commercial premises and six on police vehicles. That is abhorrent. We are proud to have delivered a standalone offence with which police can easily charge people so that we can hold those people accountable for these crimes.

Equally, there was the posting-and-boasting legislation. Some perpetrators of ram raids over the last few weeks posted those crimes on social media. That is another law to act as a deterrent to stop people committing crimes in the first place and deliver consequences for the offending.

Much has been said about lowering the age of criminal responsibility. Those opposite do not want to accept that under their approach these kids were almost certainly destined for an adult correctional facility later in life. They also ignore the fact that since 1 July—Member for Blain, your community will be interested in this data—there have been more than 104 instances involving youths aged 10 and 11 years old committing crimes.

We will not ignore people who do the wrong thing and destroy the lives of others; we will step in early and turn around their lives.

Capital Works Program

Mr YOUNG to TREASURER

Last Thursday you told the Chamber that you have a strong fiscal strategy while failing to be up-front with Territorians about the capital works being scrapped from the budget.

Madam Speaker, before I ask my question, I seek leave to table the Assessment of Country Liberal Party 2024 Election Commitments completed by the Department of Treasury and Finance.

Leave granted.

Mr YOUNG: Which capital commitments are you planning to scrap to meet your election commitments?

ANSWER

Madam Speaker, since coming into government we have been looking at the capital works program that was put in place by the Labor government. What is interesting about that program is the gaps and the unfunded liabilities for three and four years that were unfunded and which Labor was pushing ahead with. We are reprioritising the capital works program to deal with things that matter for Territorians and which will benefit everyone.

I will rattle off a few of the capital works that Labor managed over the last four years, such as the no-shade shade structure—how much it cost to build and the ongoing cost to maintain it. The Tiger Brennan Drive overpass was meant to cost $65m, then it increased to just over $100m and now it will cost $165m. Labor did not know how to manage the capital works program.

Labor stood up every year of the four years that I have been in this parliament and lauded its record spend on infrastructure. I have seen how the infrastructure program works and what Labor did. It was pie in the sky—a fairytale. The Labor government was putting up new projects year after year. According to Labor those projects were bigger and better, but they were not funded correctly. There was no cash to deliver these projects ongoing.

Labor members stood in this parliament, year after year …

Mr YOUNG: A point of order, Madam Speaker! Standing Order 110; relevance. The question was direct: which capital commitments are you planning to scrap?

Madam SPEAKER: He is answering the question.

Mr YAN: We are looking at all the capital commitments and the entire capital program to see what we can deliver for the money we actually have. Labor was spending money that it did not have. When you look at the capital works program and all the promises made across the board, you see that the money was not there to deliver them. That was putting the Territory fiscal position …

Ms Uibo: That is what a program is. You have cash against the program.

Madam SPEAKER: Stop interjecting, Opposition Leader.

Mr YAN: … in the spot that it was in. Labor was spending money that it did not have.

Labor was using federal grant money to prop up its budget. The money was coming in from the federal government and Labor was using it to cover the gaps, but then it could not deliver on the projects that were in the capital works program. The Labor government was doing this year after year …

Mr YOUNG: A point of order, Madam Speaker! Standing Order 110; relevance. The question was not about projects that Labor delivered. It was a direct question about what …

Madam SPEAKER: Yes, we know the question. He still has 23 seconds.

Mr YAN: In regard to Labor's fiscal responsibility, in just eight years it took us from $1.97bn in debt to $11bn in debt. That is off the back of its program. It is a 560% increase in the Territory's debt.

Ramraid Offences

Dr RAHMAN to CHIEF MINISTER

The CLP's new ramraid legislation passed the House last week. Over the weekend a stolen vehicle was used in an attempted ram raid of a business in my Fong Lim electorate in Bishop Street, Woolner. I understand that the business owner was onsite at the time and chased away the alleged offenders; however, the damage bill was significant. How will our new ramraid offence help prevent such incidents from occurring again?

ANSWER

Madam Speaker, people in our communities just want action. They are sick of the talk, daily struggle and concerns about law and order. They want the government of the day to provide an environment where they can operate their businesses in Woolner without having to worry about their fences being bowled down, their vehicles and trucks being stolen or their front windows and glass being smashed.

This is the expectation of people across the Territory, whether they are in Alice Springs, Tennant Creek, Katherine, Palmerston or Darwin. People want to go to work not waiting for that shocking phone call in the middle of the night from police to let them know that something has gone wrong. That is, unfortunately, what has happened in the Member for Fong Lim's electorate with that incident in Woolner.

Our standalone ramraid legislation has been supported by our police and industry. I think of the time we stood with Darlene Chin from Attitude for Men after her beautiful new shop on Smith Street with glass panes up to the ceiling was ramraided. The whole thing was crushed to the ground, shattering the dream of having this beautiful business in the heart of our CBD.

By backing people like our police and the Property Council, which called for ramraid legislation to come into effect, we could create a standalone offence for our police. Prior to last week police had to choose from a range of different offences to try to best fit the particular type of ram raid at the time. We have streamlined that process and made it easier for our police and courts—these types of matters can be heard in the Local Court and the Supreme Court—giving greater flexibility and access to justice.

A ramraid offence provision is one way in which we can make a meaningful difference in people's lives. It is a meaningful way in which we can support our police that acts as a deterrent. It sends a clear message about our community's expectations that this is not okay.

I mentioned that there have been 26 ram raids since 1 July, six being on police vehicles. The cost of this to our community and the trauma to the victims is too much to bear. We cannot continue as a community to accept the level of violation that we are experiencing.

On radio last week Senior Sergeant Dale Motter-Barnard from Strike Force Trident said that the damage bill for the spate of thefts with the school bus stolen from Adelaide River that came into Darwin was estimated at $300,000 and rising. That is a cost Territorians cannot afford and should not have to pay.

The Labor government ignored crime for far too long. Our actions speak louder than Labor's words ever did.

Corrections Infrastructure Master Plan

Mr PAECH to MINISTER for CORRECTIONS

You have repeatedly failed to answer questions about the cost of your prison plan. The Member for Karama even acknowledges that you, I quote, 'have failed a little bit'. When will you come clean to Territorians about how you will pay for your plan on top of the $280m that is already unbudgeted commitments?

ANSWER

Madam Speaker, everyone I speak to in relation to Corrections agrees that the Labor government left us with a correctional crisis across the Northern Territory. It does not matter where they live. If people are involved in the correctional system, they are in crisis. They may be a prisoner stuck in a cell with 15 or 16 other people or be unable to access rehabilitation programs or skills training because they are stuck in an overcrowded prison. They may be a prison officer guarding these people and putting their own life at risk with a serious chance of suffering an injury. We recently heard that Corrections officers are injured at work.

The Labor government failed Territorians and the correctional system, not to mention the police officers who have to deal with the overcrowding in the watch houses. These watch houses are designed to house criminals who have been picked up off the street and processed to work out whether they will be charged. They are dealing with up to 50 prisoners in those watch houses.

The Labor government created a correctional crisis across the Northern Territory. For eight years, the Labor government ignored the problem and chose to do nothing. It chose to let these prisoners rot in overcrowded cells and not have access to rehabilitation.

Ms Uibo: Rubbish! Ninety per cent of your plan is based on what we were doing.

Mr MALEY: Seventy-five per cent of people who are in jail go back into jail.

Ms Uibo: Your plan is based on Labor's plan.

Madam SPEAKER: Stop interjecting, please.

Mr MALEY: That is what caused one of the issues. The Labor government failed to acknowledge …

Mr PAECH: A point of order, Madam Speaker! Standing Order 110; minister, I have asked you a direct question. You made a public announcement to the community about your plan. We are asking how that will be paid for and what the cost will be, along with the $280m that you have been unable to tell Territorians where it is going or will you …

Madam SPEAKER: Member for Gwoja, he is answering the question.

Mr MALEY: I am getting to the question.

The Labor government failed Territorians. We have implemented a plan that will immediately relieve the overcrowded prison system in relation to the watch houses because they are there to keep Territorians safe. That is what the previous Labor government failed to do.

The CLP government is not embarrassed and does not apologise for these strong decisions we are making because the Labor government failed Territorians across …

Ms UIBO: A point of order, Madam Speaker! Standing Order 110; relevance. We do not want an apology; we want to know how much it will cost.

Mr MALEY: It is amazing how the opposition members do not want to apologise to the people they failed and put into cells and the people they failed to protect. That is probably why they are in opposition. They failed to listen and failed to protect Territorians across the board.

These costs will be absorbed inside the operating budget of the correctional system. This will not be extra money on top of it. Then we will build some prisons. We will do the standard operating procedure; we will build a business case and put it to Cabinet to make an informed decision.

The Labor government overspent in everything it did.

Corrections Infrastructure Master Plan

Mr O'GALLAGHER to MINISTER for CORRECTIONS

Thank you for your excellent answer to the previous question. Yesterday, after just a few weeks in office, you, along with the Corrections Commissioner and the Police Commissioner, unveiled the CLP's Corrections Infrastructure Master Plan to tackle overcrowding, focus on rehabilitation and give police their watch houses back. Can you outline the CLP's three-step approach to addressing the gammon Corrections crisis left by Labor in the short, medium and long term?

ANSWER

Madam Speaker, this issue is important to the Member for Karama because the Labor government failed the people in his electorate. Crime is rampant there and, in fact, across the Northern Territory, not to mention Alice Springs where crime seems to have become the norm. That is the problem. Crime is not the norm; you should be safe in your own home. Territorians deserve that there be consequences for anyone who breaks the law.

We on this side of the Chamber will make sure there are consequences if people break the law. We will build on the plan that we released yesterday to make sure those prisoners are held accountable for their actions and have access to rehabilitation and training and that the prisoner officers who look after them go to work and come home safely. This is not to mention the frontline police officers—I shout out to them because my father was a police officer, so I know how committed they are—who should come home safely. This is about the bigger picture, protecting Territorians at home and at work.

Dealing with Corrections is a big issue because it was failed so badly for so long under the Labor government. It failed to adequately provide for increasing prisoner numbers. It put prison officers and, more importantly, prisoners at risk. Prisoners cannot access rehabilitation, training, 'sentenced to a skill' and prison industries because the prisons are overcrowded. Prisoners are stuck in little cells that are not designed for that many people. This is because the Labor government dropped the ball and did not protect them and allow them to come out of custody as better citizens who can get a job, go back to family life and make a normal and happy contribution to our community.

Our plan talks about immediately converting the old Don Dale into a 50-bed low open facility for adult males and to move young offenders into a purpose-built brand-new facility to allow them to have rehabilitation and training.

We are already two years late and about $60m over budget for that new youth justice facility. Labor talks about cutting spending, but it spent $60m more than it should have, and that was only on one facility. That is not to mention the overspend at the youth justice facility in Alice Springs, which was about $13m to start with and will now cost up to $32m.

We will expand the Alice Springs Correctional Centre with a new 96-bed modular block. We will create work camps in Katherine and Darwin. We will construct a 150-bed women's prison in Holtze. We will …

Madam SPEAKER: Minister, your time has expired.

Public Sector – Executive Contracts

Mr PAECH to MINISTER for PUBLIC SERVICE

Your government's first act was to create a top-heavy public sector with six new government CEOs.

Members interjecting.

Mr PAECH: I pick up on the interjections, because they clearly think it is funny.

On top of your $280m worth of unfunded and unbudgeted commitments, which agencies have had their funding cut to pay for new executive contracts, and what have you cut to create more government CEOs?

ANSWER

Madam Speaker, given that we have not been in office for long, I can guarantee you that no-one's position is being cut and no services will be cut. The agencies are smaller; most agencies have one minister. They are not big agencies like the previous government had. That makes these agencies a lot more agile. There is a huge focus on the technical expertise in these departments.

I will leave it there, basically, but I will let you know that these agencies …

Mr PAECH: A point of order, Madam Speaker! The question was direct. If you are not doing it, where is the money coming from to pay for the additional public servants?

Madam SPEAKER: The minister is 50 seconds into her answer.

Mrs HERSEY: There will be no cuts. We are reprioritising funding. The agencies are smaller, and there will be a focus on the technical expertise in these departments. They will be far more agile.

After listening to you for the last four years in government, we will not be taking any advice from you. After 19 of the last 23 years, we are now dealing with the crime crisis that we have across every department because of the …

Mr PAECH: A point of order, Madam Speaker! Standing Order 110; this was a direct question about public servants. I know the only issue that …

Madam SPEAKER: Sit down, Member for Gwoja. You are adding more information …

Mr PAECH: … one-trick pony can speak about is crime, but we want to know about the public service.

Madam SPEAKER: That is disorderly. Take your seat!

Minister, you have the call and you have one-and-a-half minutes—half your time—to go.

Mr Paech: She is struggling.

Mrs HERSEY: I can assure you, Member for Gwoja, I am 100% not struggling.

We will not take any information or advice from the opposition. We are supportive of our public service and we …

Ms Uibo: We want to know how you will pay for the millions of dollars' worth of changes.

Madam SPEAKER: Opposition Leader, you are pushing it. Tone it down, please; give the minister some respect.

Mrs HERSEY: I have one minute remaining to answer the question. We have small agencies, making them more agile and focused on their technical expertise. I am proud of the CEOs in all our departments who work extremely hard and all the public servants.

There will be no cuts. We are happy to have reshaped the public service to build on our priorities, which are reducing crime, rebuilding the economy and restoring our lifestyle. There will be no cuts across any of these departments. We will continue to work with the CEOs of departments to bring our initiatives to the people of the Territory.

Bus Drivers – Safety

Mr PATEL to MINISTER for LOGISTICS and INFRASTRUCTURE

Our bus drivers and their union report that a number of dangerous attacks have occurred while they are driving buses. Can you update the Assembly on the actions that the government is taking to make our bus drivers safe at work?

ANSWER

Madam Speaker, this is important in the Member for Casuarina's electorate, plus some of the electorates in Palmerston. The Member for Casuarina today tabled a petition from the bus drivers who have been suffering this crime issue for a number of years.

The bus drivers and the TWU went to Territory Labor in 2022 with this issue. They raised the issue of crime, antisocial behaviour and safety on buses. It took until the start of 2024 before Territory Labor decided to take action. When it did, it was pretty slow action. Not much took place between January 2024 and June 2024. I believe that only 17 screens were fitted in that time. Since we came to government in August that has jumped from 17 to 37.

Over the last few weeks I have had members of the TWU in my office. I spoke to those members and Bimal, the driver—people have probably seen it—who was subjected to the person who climbed over the screen and kicked him in the head while he was driving the bus down the highway at 80 kilometres an hour with people on it. That had the opportunity to be so tragic that it is not funny. I commend Bimal and his efforts to keep that bus straight and on the road and not crash with all those passengers on board or run off the road and run into somebody else.

We listened to Bimal and the TWU. We immediately, as a government, spoke to CDC and asked it to expedite the installation of those screens. Since we spoke to CDC, we saw an immediate pickup in those screens being put in buses, but sadly another incident occurred last week when a person climbed over a screen and tried to stab a driver. Luckily he was stopped at a bus stop at the time. I ask everyone in this Chamber to put themselves in that person's shoes. They were trying to do their job, and someone climbed over the screen with a knife and tried to stab them.

Since then, we have found alternative materials. We are working with the department, and it has been proactive in sourcing contractors to help CDC install screens. We put security guards on the buses without screens to protect drivers and the community.

Music NT – Support

Mr YOUNG to MINISTER for ARTS

In the lead-up to the election, the Chief Minister made a commitment to Music NT to provide financial support to NT musicians to perform and showcase their talent at festivals, events and venues across Australia and abroad. What are the details of your commitment and when will you deliver on it, or have you turned your back on musicians across the Territory?

ANSWER

Madam Speaker, there is no plan from the CLP at this stage to make changes to the previous arrangements. We look forward—it is our commitment—to supporting musicians and people from an arts background to have an opportunity to showcase their talents. We will continue to come up with options to support them.

Mr YOUNG: A point of order, Madam Speaker!

Madam SPEAKER: There is no point of order. He has been on his feet for 30 seconds. Please let the minister continue.

Mr CHARLS: When it comes to the Arts portfolio, there is a range of things we are doing to support Territorians to showcase their talents. Talented artists from across the Territory will have the opportunity to demonstrate that.

Recently I attended the first Northern Territory Art Award. It was great to see artists from across the Territory coming together and showcasing their talents.

Mr Paech: What is the new commitment? That is what we are asking.

Madam SPEAKER: Member for Gwoja, please stop the interjections.

Mr CHARLS: The previous Labor government is so interested in the CLP's commitments and plans because it did not do anything in the last few years. It is looking for new ideas that we are coming up with.

Mr Paech: You copied our commitments.

Mr YOUNG: A point of order, Madam Speaker! Standing Order 110; relevance. The question was direct. It was asking about the details of the CLP's commitment.

Madam SPEAKER: Minister, you have a minute and a half—plenty of time—to answer the question.

Mr CHARLS: Musicians were struggling under Labor's failed economy; they were not getting the opportunity to perform. We are looking at improving the economy to attract more people to the Territory and have better venues for musicians to perform at.

We are working on a plan. When it is the right time, we will announce it and present it to other members of this Chamber. It is about the commitment from the CLP …

Mr YOUNG: A point of order, Madam Speaker!

Madam SPEAKER: The minister is making relevant comments in response to your question. If this is about relevance, sit down before you even ask.

Mr YOUNG: He is not; he is talking about a plan, but we are asking for the detail of those commitments, which he has not outlined.

Madam SPEAKER: Take your seat, Member for Daly.

Mr CHARLS: I do not know how we can come out with a plan when we are still working on that plan.

Members interjecting.

Mr CHARLS: The previous Labor government was good at that, and that is the reason its numbers in this Chamber have been reduced to four.

We are working on that plan; when the CLP government feels it is the right time, it will be announced.

We are looking at the suite of things we have announced for crime and safety. Now we are moving on to the economy and lifestyle. Labor will see our plans, which will be well supported by Territorians, similar to what we are seeing across social media and from the people. They are supporting the CLP.

Police – Community Presence

Mr HOWE to CHIEF MINISTER

The CLP was elected on a platform of reducing crime and ensuring the safety of Territorians. Can you outline the immediate action the CLP government has taken to strengthen police presence on the streets, including the streets of Drysdale, and make police more visible to the community?

ANSWER

Madam Speaker, I thank the Member for Drysdale and my assistant minister for Police for this important question, because I know more than anyone that he backs the men and women in blue to be doing their job. He is a former serviceman, having served our nation in the Army. His respect for our frontline police officers is profound and for good reason because they are exceptional.

When I met with the Police Commissioner the first day of our government I told him that we back them. We will give police the powers they need to make the Territory a safer place to live, work, visit and invest. As a result of the change of government and the support for our police, there are more police on the streets than we saw under Labor, because they are supported to do their job. I am pleased to give your community, Member for Drysdale, and all Territorians an update.

In two short months there are now 63 police officers in uniform back on the front line. That is on top of the recruitment we are doing. An additional three police vehicles that were unmarked are now marked, meaning more visibility on our roads, greater deterrence and more opportunity for our police. Our police are even utilising magnets on police cars so that when they are covert, they can remove the magnets and when they are not, they are out so that the community knows our police are there.

Changes like these make a big difference. Just three weeks into our government a member of the Palmerston community came to me and said that for years she had not felt safe to drive at night. She would make her adult children drive her anywhere she had to go at night-time—dinner with friends, a movie—for the simplest of things. She said, 'Tonight I am driving myself to the city for the first time in years because I have my life back. I feel confident. I have seen so many police on the street.' She is living her life how she deserves to. That is something as simple as backing the blue to be able to do their job.

Under Labor we were on track for 199,000 calls to the emergency centre. It is little wonder why our police felt like Labor had turned its back on them. Nearly 300 police were assaulted from 1 July last year to 31 March this year. Overtime was up by 7%. Under the CLP our police know where they stand with our government, and that is number one because community safety is our first priority.

Youth Detention Centres – Disability Support

Mx McNAMARA to MINISTER for DISABILITY

We heard last week that your government is moving the children in detention in Alice Springs to Darwin. We know from the latest report from the NT Children's Commissioner that 77% of young people in detention have mental health needs or a diagnosed cognitive disability. Are any of those children being moved engaged with NDIS services in Alice Springs, and, if so, how are you ensuring their access to those supports continues in Darwin without interruption?

ANSWER

Madam Speaker, there are systems in place to do the assessments for children who are currently in detention centres. Without making a decision like moving any children—I am not sure exactly where the Member for Nightcliff got this information. When the plan is fully revealed and if there is a scenario where the children from

the youth detention centre need to be moved, there will be mechanisms in place to make sure their current assessment will be thoroughly looked at and the supports they need are in place if they are to be moved to a new location. There will be assessments done for what supports can be provided to these children.

I strongly agree with the Member for Nightcliff that there are children in these facilities who require ongoing support. There are children with FASD and other comorbid mental health conditions. We will be looking at how we will support these children to be rehabilitated and diagnosed. We will provide support when needed. It will not be like the previous government with continuous lockdowns in the youth detention centre and limited resources, looking at what it called expert advice.

It comes down to listening to expert advice, getting specialists for the assessment, having a treatment and care plan in place and working with youth workers. This is under the Department of Corrections now, which means less burden for Territory Families to make sure it can support the children who are outside the correctional facilities. The new Corrections department will be able to provide that support right through from the time the children go into detention to when they come out. There will be an exit plan where the youth support workers will identify the needs of and support for children leaving the youth detention facility.

If there is a need to move children from one facility to another, there are current plans about how they will look into it. There will be new measures that we will implement that will support the children to help with their rehabilitation.

Mx McNAMARA: A point of order, Madam Speaker! I am not sure whether I can use Standing Order 110 to ask for clarification. I want to understand if they are on current NDIS support, is it a new assessment that will happen in Darwin or …

Madam SPEAKER: Member for Nightcliff, you cannot ask another question.

Mx McNAMARA: It is the same one; I am trying to clarify the answer.

Madam SPEAKER: Let the minister continue.

Mr CHARLS: Many people do not understand that for people with disability, it is a journey. In that journey there will be new, additional, information coming to them. If there is opportunity for a new assessment and the clinical team decide they need a new one, that will be added. We will support those children throughout their journey.

Harrison Dam Conservation Area

Mr MACKAY to MINISTER for AGRICULTURE and FISHERIES

Minister, my electorate, as is yours and many others across the Territory, is home to many keen hunters. Before the election the CLP committed to expand access to the Harrison Dam Conservation Area and help restore the Territory lifestyle by providing greater access and hunting opportunities. Can you outline to the Assembly what has been announced, what is happening and how it is being achieved?

ANSWER

Madam Speaker, we all know that this is a question dear to my heart. I have been to Harrison Dam on many occasions; in fact, I have stayed overnight and spent many hours there.

Before I get to that I will talk about our CLP plan in general. We want to make sure that the Territory is safe. We want to rebuild our economy and restore our lifestyle. On this occasion, we are restoring our lifestyle. We cannot do that until it is a safe place to live. We cannot afford to spend money and do our recreational activities because we may come back to our home or business having been broken into.

I am saying this because we are a tourism town and lots of people come to the Northern Territory for the outback adventure and goose hunting. At Harrison Dam they also go pig hunting. We want to keep the Territory a safe place and rebuild our economy. I mention this because these tourists spend a lot of money in our economy. We know the Labor government failed Territorians in blowing out our economy and squandering taxpayers' money on pet projects. We want to make sure that Territory businesses—the mums and dads who operate tourism businesses—have an opportunity to access the people who come here to spend their money. They will not come here if it is an unsafe place.

Harrison Dam is a great area south of Darwin on the plains of Adelaide River. At the moment, the dam wall is where people go hunting, and off to the right is Beatrice Lagoon. There are arms that go off the billabong which stop access to a lot of the southern side of the reserve. People cannot walk through waist-deep water as they may not come out the other side or they will lose a leg.

We will restore that lifestyle by making the access to the reserve bigger and better for not only recreational hunters but also land management and weed control of the area. Our rangers, who do a great job, cannot go there to spray weeds, control feral animals and look after the environment. That work is vital for recreational hunting because no-one wants to go there and see a mess. No-one wants to see weeds growing too tall because the birds do not even go there when that happens. We want to ensure that the whole of Harrison Dam is ready to go, and we will increase access to recreational hunting.

Youth Detention Facilities

J DAVIS to MINISTER for CORRECTIONS

We understand that all the children and young people held in Alice Springs are being transferred to Darwin. Is it correct that in the future there will be no youth detention centre in Alice Springs and all children and young people will be held in the Top End? What is in place to ensure that these children get appropriate access to legal support and there are not even more extended times on remand? What measures are being put in place to ensure that these children and young people can remain connected to family and country?

ANSWER

Madam Speaker, I will clarify one thing: the media reported that young offenders will be transferred to the old Don Dale, which is not correct. The young offenders will be transferred to the brand-new state-of-the-art facility that will open in November. The young offenders from Alice Springs will not go into Don Dale.

Don Dale will be closed as a youth detention facility. Low-rated men will go there. We will use it only on a temporary basis. That is because the Labor government dropped the ball for the last eight years, and we cannot pop up a prison overnight. We need to spend taxpayers' money wisely. For eight years the Labor government ignored all the problems, so now we are cleaning up the mess. We are making the strong decisions to fix the correctional crisis to make the Territory a safer place.

The young offenders will come to Darwin. There will be a facility in Alice Springs, the Paperbark facility, which will have a remand centre. Young offenders who are arrested in Alice Springs will go to that facility and then they can go to court immediately. For any significant amount of time, they will be transferred to Darwin. Importantly, there will also be boot camps and youth justice facilities where there will be more alternatives for the courts to put these children into rehabilitation programs.

We are focused on making sure that these children come out the other side as a better person. As the Chief Minister said, under Labor these children were destined to go into adult jails. We want to give young offenders an opportunity to make better decisions and become better people. We want them to have access to rehabilitation, training and the care they need, which my colleague just spoke about, having a centralised …

J DAVIS: A point of order, Madam Speaker! Standing Order 110; relevance. Thank you for answering some of the question, but what will be put in place to ensure that the young people who are transferred to Darwin can remain connected to their family and to country?

Ms Uibo: Didn't you say they were all neglected anyway, minister?

Madam SPEAKER: It was not your point of order, Opposition Leader.

Mr MALEY: There are some myths about this in relation to family, and I have asked questions about it. For the last four months, there have been only four unassisted family visits to the young offenders in Alice Springs. That means there is one per month. The Country Liberal Party wants to make sure these young offenders have better access to their family by providing electronic means such as tablets, social media and FaceTime. I understand there are about 6,000 phone calls a month from the children to their families. We want to make that easier, so they have better connections to their family.

The Labor government neglected these children. Its policy was just to lock them up.

Veterans – Support

Mrs ZIO to MINISTER for VETERANS

In my electorate of Fannie Bay, we are constantly reminded of how important protecting our country is. Fannie Bay is host to the heritage-listed areas that contain World War II fortifications and the Darwin Military Museum, which we are proud of. It is a harrowing reminder of our serving Defence members and what they went through to protect our nation.

What is the CLP government doing to support Northern Territory veterans to ensure we honour their service and restore their lifestyle?

ANSWER

Madam Speaker, it is a fact that every year we witness multiple military exercises, like Pitch Black, where the sound of more than 100 fighter jets stream across our city, with 20 participating nations from all over the world. The reality of what it feels like in real combat is known only by those who have served to protect us—our veterans, similar to our Member for Drysdale.

Veterans deserve to be honoured because without their sacrifice and service we would not be afforded the freedoms we have today. There is no greater honour than to serve your country so that our children and our children's children can have the rights of a democratic and free society.

The Country Liberal government deeply honours our veterans and is committed to supporting their wellbeing. As the Minister for Veterans, I will be honoured to attend my first Remembrance Day this year, on 11 November, to honour those who died in battle, talk with our veterans about what we are doing to support them and listen to what we can do better.

We have commenced the Veterans Community Health and Wellbeing Grant, with a budget of $120,000. It is designed to empower veterans' organisations and community groups to deliver vital services and activities.

Operation Thrive, a comprehensive initiative aimed at improving outcomes for veterans in the Territory, is a continued testament to our recognition of the unique needs of veterans and their families. Operation Thrive focuses on three key areas. The first key area is transition, providing support and resources to facilitate a smooth transition from military to civilian life. The second key area is education and employment, offering opportunities for veterans to enhance their skills and pursue meaningful careers. The third key area is health and wellbeing, ensuring access to quality healthcare, mental health support and recognition for their service.

Significant investment is being made in specialist GP training for veteran health, mental health initiatives such as the #CheckYourMates suicide prevention campaign and employment programs like the partnership with Soldier On in Darwin.

I have arranged meetings with the Minister for Veterans' Affairs and the shadow minister to discuss the report of the Royal Commission into Defence and Veteran Suicide and to explore what we can do better to ensure our veterans are supported in a meaningful way.

The CLP has concrete actions and substantial financial investments and is working in collaborative partnerships with a genuine commitment to ensure that veterans receive the respect, support and opportunities they deserve. The CLP government understands that Defence life can be challenging, and we are dedicated to providing the necessary supports for the veteran community. Through these ongoing efforts, the Northern Territory is striving to create an environment where veterans can thrive and continue to make valuable contributions to society.

Corrections – Northcrest

Mr PAECH to MINISTER for CORRECTIONS

You have promised Territorians that the adult prisoners you are moving to the old Don Dale facility will be there for a maximum of two years. Will you guarantee the residents of Northcrest that these prisoners will be moved from their backyard by October 2026 into new and upgraded facilities elsewhere?

ANSWER

Madam Speaker, the Labor government left us with a Corrections crisis throughout the Northern Territory. For eight years it failed Territorians. It failed to do anything about prison overcrowding and prisoners overflowing into our watch houses, which has affected the frontline officers who are working day-in, day-out to protect us.

We have a plan to make sure that the Territory is a safer place. We will rebuild our economy and restore our lifestyle. Our plan talks about having 200 men in that facility for two years. Our overall plan is to have Holtze as our correctional precinct. We will move all the prisons to that area and have our boot camps and rehabilitation services there. Unlike the Labor government, we want to focus on rehabilitation and make sure the prisoners come out as better people going into our community and not to reoffend and go back into prison. Under Labor 75% of people reoffended. Our plan is to deliver a correctional precinct at Holtze which includes moving the 200 men at the temporary Don Dale facility in two years' time.

Beetaloo Sub-basin

Mr MACKAY to MINISTER for MINING and ENERGY

Can you update the Assembly on the critically important developments in the Beetaloo Sub-basin and what this could mean to the NT economy?

ANSWER

Madam Speaker, I can assure the House that we are committed and focused on rebuilding our economy and providing jobs and opportunities across the Northern Territory.

The people in this Chamber have friends and partners who have benefited from those jobs. It is about rebuilding our economy and providing jobs, jobs, jobs. Have you heard that before? That is what it is about. We want to make sure that the Territory is a better place to live and work.

We have introduced legislation for our home builders. We want homegrown people. We want to give people who come to the Northern Territory the most competitive advantage to build a home here. We know that if they build a home or meet a partner here they are likely to stay. Once they build a house here it is hard to leave that house. It makes sure our tradies have jobs so that they and their partners can stay here and their children go to school. The flow-on effect of the Beetaloo is jobs across the Northern Territory.

Rebuilding our economy is crucial if the Territory is to continue. The Chief Minister and I were born here, as were lots of people. The Territory is a place worth fighting for. That is one of the reasons I am here; I want the Territory to be the land of opportunity that it was and should be.

The jobs and money that come out of the Beetaloo are crucial to that plan. There could be an additional 13,000 direct and indirect jobs over a 25-year period from that. There will be an additional $17.5bn of real output and an extra $3.7bn in taxation to the Territory government over the 25-year period.

Ask yourselves: who pays for the police officers, the hospitals and the frontline people protecting us? It is the taxpayer through revenue raising through royalties. That $3.7bn is direct Territory own-source revenue. This is not federal funding; it is onshore gas paying into the Treasurer's pockets so that he can make the Territory a safer place to be, which makes him happy. That is what gas is all about. Gas will provide jobs, open up the hospitals and make the Territory a safer place.

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

LIQUOR LEGISLATION FURTHER AMENDMENT BILL
Serial 3

Continued from earlier this day.

Mr BURGOYNE (Lands, Planning and Environment): Madam Speaker, I support the Liquor Legislation Further Amendment Bill 2024.

For too long people across the Northern Territory have been negatively impacted by the former Labor government's ideology-driven policy direction when it comes to alcohol. Nowhere has this been seen more clearly than in my home town of Alice Springs. I will never forget the ideology-driven policies that led to a breakdown in social cohesion and to an outbreak of domestic and family violence as a direct result of failed policies.

If those opposite need a history lesson, they need only to think back to a couple of years ago to remember the impact the cessation of the Stronger Futures legislation had and the legislation that was passed in this parliament that led to increased crime, antisocial behaviour and violence towards women, the likes of which we had never before seen in the Northern Territory.

A figure that will always stick in my mind was how many domestic violence-related call-outs police responded to in the first week after the Stronger Futures measures lapsed; there were 179 domestic violence-related call-outs. The poor legislation that the previous Labor government put in place …

Ms Uibo: By the federal Liberal government. Shame on them.

Madam SPEAKER: Stop the interjections, please.

Mr BURGOYNE: Shortly after—I say shortly, but it was six months—the Prime Minister of Australia, Anthony Albanese, came to Alice Springs. He had to tell the then Labor government how wrong its decisions were in allowing that to lapse and putting in legislation that we passed in this parliament. It was something that I will never forget. It affected our community in a way that we had never seen before. I will not be taking advice on alcohol policy from those opposite.

Those opposite may not realise that one of the key roles of PALIs or police on bottle shops is to enforce the restricted areas policy that is now back in place. When the Stronger Futures policy lapsed and Labor brought in its new laws, the PALIs were null and void. Violence at bottle shops increased, with workers reporting violent incidents when refusing service to intoxicated or banned drinkers, and huge increases in sales occurred. I still remember someone from a local IGA speaking with local radio in Alice Springs, reporting a 300% increase in sales for the day shortly after the legislation lapsed. When those opposite talk about the facts and figures they should remember what occurred under their watch with alcohol policy in the Northern Territory.

This Bill seeks to ensure that police have additional powers and that, once again, there is a penalty for drinking in public. Many times I will walk into this place and hear those opposite talk about how the two-kilometre law was still in place and how it never went anywhere. What is the point of having a law in place if there is no penalty attached to the offence? It would be like telling people not to speed but if they did, send them a letter saying, 'Please slow down next time'.

The deterrent of fines for speeding and the deterrent for not drinking in public causing a nuisance are the same. We want to ensure that people do not drink in public and if there are those who seek to break the law, there is a penalty in place that acts as a deterrent.

The Bill seeks to create a new strict liability offence if a person consumes liquor in a public place and engages in conduct that causes a nuisance to other people in, or within the vicinity of, a public place. These new laws will have a maximum penalty of five penalty units or $925.

Beyond fines and this legislation, we have long spoken about mandatory alcohol treatment for those who are addicted to alcohol. This will make up a key part of our government's plans moving forward. Under Labor the former IWAS (Integrated Withdrawal and Assessment Service) in Alice Springs was shut down, leaving those addicted to alcohol and seeking specialist help having to once again attend Alice Springs Hospital.

Specialised treatment services are important. We will undo the wrongs that have occurred in the past and ensure, along with strong deterrents, there are rehabilitation services in place that will work with those who find themselves addicted to alcohol and need assistance to break the cycle of alcoholism and return their lives to some form of normality.

Although this law change does not deal with the minimum unit price, commonly known as the alcohol floor price, it came up in debate today. I highlight the failure of the floor price in protecting people across the Northern Territory when the Stronger Futures legislation ceased. If this policy had any real effect when the Stronger Futures legislation ceased and PALIs were removed, the minimum floor price, which remained, would have protected us all. It simply did not. It failed to achieve its outcome, and people suffered.

This government supports income management. If you really support reducing the amount of alcohol people can purchase with their disposable income, rather than increasing the price of alcohol and putting more money into the pockets of the liquor outlets you should support the people who need to reduce the amount of money they spend on grog by referring them for income management. This can be done through Children and Families, recommending these people to the federal government. Our government will work through this to reduce harm caused by those who spend much of their welfare money on alcohol instead of food for their families or on gambling instead of clothes for their children.

It is through these simple steps we can achieve the same outcomes that the minimum floor price sought whilst not affecting the entire population of the Northern Territory. It is through targeted approaches like these ones that we will see real changes in our community. Alcohol treatment, recommending people for income management and working with communities for better outcomes will be how we achieve our outcome of a safer and stronger community for all.

The previous Labor government failed in its role when it came to alcohol, and people suffered. You failed to listen, and now you stand in this parliament accusing us of the same. You are hypocrites, the lot of you.

We will work to improve the lives of many in our community whilst getting rid of pointless laws that did nothing to protect the most vulnerable. I am proud to stand as a part of the Finocchiaro-led government that is listening to Territorians. We will continue to deliver our promise of a safer, stronger and more resilient Territory for all.

Mr PATEL (Casuarina): Madam Speaker, I strongly support the Liquor Legislation Further Amendment Bill 2024 and emphasise its potential to address a pressing issue in our community—the rise of crime and antisocial behaviour in Casuarina, particularly around Casuarina Square. This Bill provides us with critical tools to tackle the challenges we are facing and restore the safety and vibrancy of our community, particularly for small businesses that are struggling as a direct result of these problems.

Casuarina Square was once a thriving commercial hub, especially on Friday nights when stores remained open until nine, giving families and residents the opportunity to enjoy late evening dining and shopping. However, over recent years business owners, including me in my previous role, had a significant decline in foot traffic after 5 pm because of the growing threat of crime and antisocial behaviour due to nuisance drinking in public areas like car parks. People drink in car parks and damage public property. Families are no longer comfortable shopping late, and businesses are closing earlier, losing the critical hours of trade that once contributed heavily to their revenue.

This is not an isolated issue; it is happening every day. Small businesses in Casuarina are losing an estimated three hours of trade each day because of the fear and uncertainty caused by public drinking, vandalism and even violent altercations. For many of these businesses, those lost hours are the difference between thriving and barely surviving.

The Liquor Legislation Further Amendment Bill 2024 provides real solutions to these issues by giving police and authorities the power they need to act swiftly and decisively in handling public drinking and antisocial behaviour. One of the major strengths of this Bill is the creation of strict liability offences for individuals who consume alcohol in public places and engage in conduct that causes a nuisance to others.

In areas like Casuarina Square public drinking is a constant issue, contributing to the disruptive behaviour that drives people away from the shops. This Bill allows the police to issue on-the-spot fines for such behaviour, enabling them to act immediately and deter further disturbances.

Currently, police have limited options when dealing with offenders involved in public drinking. However, under this Bill they will be empowered to issue infringement notices for violations occurring in interim alcohol protected areas. These areas, which include public spaces like Casuarina, will be subject to stricter controls. The Bill's provision for fines of up to two penalty units will provide a stronger deterrent for those engaging in harmful behaviour.

The Banned Drinker Register (BDR) is another critical aspect of the Bill that will benefit my electorate of Casuarina. Offenders who receive alcohol-related infringement notices will automatically be added to the BDR, preventing them from purchasing alcohol for a specified period. This is important for dealing with repeat offenders, many of whom contribute to the ongoing cycle of crime and disruption. By keeping these individuals off the streets, we can restore order to our public spaces.

Casuarina Square management repeatedly raised concerns with the previous Labor government about the daily challenges they face in maintaining safety for all residents who shop at Casuarina Square, yet these pleas often went unheard. The Liquor Legislation Further Amendment Bill 2024 responds directly to these concerns by ensuring that police have the power to intervene in not just extreme cases but also everyday incidents of public drinking and nuisance behaviour. This will make a significant difference in restoring confidence among shoppers and businesses alike.

Small businesses are the backbone of our community, and their survival depends on consistent trade and customer flow. When shops close earlier due to safety concerns it affects not only the businesses but also their employees, the families they support and the overall economy of our region.

By curbing antisocial behaviour and public drinking, this Bill will help bring back customers to our shopping centres, allowing businesses to stay open later and provide the services and products our community needs. This is not just about law enforcement; it is about creating a safe, thriving environment where families feel comfortable, businesses can operate freely and people in our community can come together without the constant threat of crime.

It is shocking to see how the Labor government ignored the ongoing issues in Casuarina and the Northern Territory despite repeated calls for action. The management of Casuarina Square provided clear evidence of the problems people face on a daily basis. Labor's inaction allowed these issues to fester, and small businesses are paying the price.

The Liquor Legislation Further Amendment Bill 2024 gives us a real opportunity to turn the tide. By empowering law enforcement, restricting public drinking and expanding the Banned Drinker Register this Bill tackles the core issues at play in Casuarina. It is a vital step forward, ensuring that Friday evenings can once again be a time of bustling activity, not empty streets and closed shops.

I strongly urge my fellow members to support the Liquor Legislation Further Amendment Bill 2024. Our small businesses deserve better, our families deserve to feel safe and our community deserves to thrive. This Bill gives us the tools to achieve that. I believe it will make a significant difference in Casuarina and throughout the Northern Territory.

Mrs FINOCCHIARO (Chief Minister): Madam Speaker, I am proud to contribute to this debate as part of my team who have a clear plan to reduce crime for the Northern Territory. Today's legislation targets nuisance public drinking by giving police better powers to deal with nuisance public drinking and problem drunks. It is part of a suite of reforms—our reducing-crime package—that we have delivered through parliament over the last week and a half as fulfilment of our commitments to Territorians in the first sittings of parliament to immediately strengthen the laws.

It has been eight weeks of tireless work and pushing to get this done. I thank the entire public service who has dealt with the machinery-of-government changes and the refocus on our three key pillars of reducing crime, rebuilding the economy and restoring our lifestyle. I also thank the many people who worked hard to deliver this legislation in support of our election commitments to Territorians.

Today we have another opportunity to provide more tools for our police, greater safety for our community and, importantly, deliver on community expectation regarding what the rules of our community should be. That is lost on Labor members. They seek to blame everyone but themselves for the situation that the Territory is in. They have not looked backwards and reflected on how we got to this point in the first place.

The reality is we have seen an erosion of police powers and a systematic weakening of laws over many years, with tiny changes here and there, all adding up to be a crime crisis where we are set to hit 199,000 calls to the call centre this year, totally overburdening our police and destroying people's confidence to invest, visit and continue to live here.

I am proud to be a part of a team who believes that the Territory can be a safe place to live and who believe that there should be rules that meet community expectation. One of those rules is that you should not be a nuisance drinker in a public place. It is a simple rule for people to adhere to.

Labor members continue to pretend that they had not changed the public drinking laws, but we know that they gutted them. They delivered no consequences other than for our police to tip out grog. When police officers are overworked because they have calls coming in faster than they can respond, there has not been adequate police recruitment or a focus on law and order—police were flung to the fourth and fifth level

ministers, being an unimportant irrelevance to the previous Labor government—it is ridiculous to then expect our police to prioritise tipping out grog over an 81% increase in family and domestic violence.

Giving police the proper powers they need to do their job and recognising that by intervening earlier we can stop crime happening later is an important part of proactive policing and the community-based policing that we used to see back in the Member for Barkly's day when he was a copper. Getting in there early, being proactive, having a chat to people and dealing with issues before they start is how to reduce crime long term and protect innocent people. It is how you protect people with a propensity to get into trouble from getting into trouble.

Everyone wins with this legislation because if you are a nuisance public drinker and the police put you in the back of the paddy wagon and take you to sober up at the watch house, they have done you and the community a favour because you have not got into trouble and someone has not been a victim of crime, and we have continued to make sure the Territory is a safe place to live and enjoy our beautiful lifestyle.

I am proud of this legislation. It not only gives police a range of tools from fining someone to arrest but also enables the intensive work they can do regarding outstanding warrants, breach of bail or family and domestic violence orders in place. There is a range of inquiries our police can make, which is simpler and means that things can be picked up sooner. Police discretion is important, and that is built into this legislation. They are out on the road dealing with the issues in our community, and they are the best people to deliver on that.

Alcohol policy was a failure under the Labor government. It sought to only limit supply and did not do enough to address demand. Even when it came to supply, there were fractures within the Labor team which led to tragic decision-making such as the ending of Stronger Futures. For the opposition to blame a previous federal government for this truly shows that it has not reflected for a moment on the catastrophe it caused for seven months when it let the rivers of grog flow freely without a plan in place.

Those opposite profess to constantly listen to the experts and evidence, which they love to talk about, but were they listening when the police, Aboriginal-controlled organisations, health professionals and members of the community were screaming from the rooftops, 'Please stop this madness'? It took seven months during which the statistics blew through the roof before the Labor members walked into this parliament to right that wrong.

This was under the watch of the Members for Arnhem, Gwoja, Daly and Arafura. They were part of the group who made the decision to allow grog to flow freely across the Territory without any plans in place. They perpetuated that misery, despite the experts and the evidence pointing to the contrary for seven long months. This is the same four people, now in opposition, who ignored the fact that the Banned Drinker Register is well overdue for a review on capability; the minimum floor price for grog has done little other than to put more money in the pockets of bottle shops and turn people to hard spirits; they closed alcohol rehabilitation facilities to build prisons; and they stand as hypocrites with no alternatives to offer.

Eight weeks ago they were in government. The statistics we talk about, the anguish in our community that we feel acutely because we are a part of our community, the feedback we get from everyday Territorians and the election result is all the evidence from the expert Territorians that the opposition needs to know about. Actions speak louder than words and for too long—under eight years of a Labor government and, to take a broader look, for 19 of the last 23 years—there has been systematic failure in this space.

These measures are one way in which we can deal with the issue, but we know that there is a lot of work to be done. We are proud to be a government that will consult the community mandatory alcohol treatment, the new ways in which we can deliver broad-based alcohol rehabilitation services across the Territory and how we can look at that for young people. During our visits to the bush the Member for Barkly and I heard horror stories about young people being rejected from alcohol and addictive substance rehabilitation.

There is much work to do. These laws deal with a part of it. I wish it could be the whole answer, but it cannot be because we have had such a long period of ingrained dysfunction across policy and government. It is a leap in the right direction, and that is important because under a CLP government we are moving forwards. For the first time in a long time, the Territory is going forwards not backwards. We are proud of that because Territorians will judge us on our actions. That is exactly what we want them to do because the actions speak for themselves.

This law strikes the right balance, with the right amount of police discretion, the right amount of enforcement, the broad enough range of tools to take proactive action and the right amount of consequences for people

doing the wrong thing, including a seven-day banned drinker order. It balances the rights of people who are doing the right thing to have quiet enjoyment of their beautiful Territory lifestyle, which is equally important.

Labor loves to punish everyone. Those opposite cannot bring themselves to deal with offenders. They have to treat everyone the same. Territorians doing the right thing should be allowed to continue to do the right thing; people who do the wrong thing should face the consequences. It is fairly simple. This strikes that all important balance, which is incredibly important to our government.

I am proud to be a part of the team delivering these nuisance public drinking laws as part of our reducing-crime package, which we have been working through systematically over the last week and a half and will continue to deliver to the end of this week. By the end of the week the CLP will have delivered on what it committed to pass in the first sittings of parliament, correcting and righting a wrong that Labor imposed on Territorians for far too long.

It sends a message to our community that we are listening and acting. It sends a message to our police that we will act on what we say. We will not just tell them we back them; we will show them with meaningful police powers. We will be a government that responds to the community's concern, as we promised.

I am proud of the contributions made by my team. It shows how deeply they understand this issue; the broad perspectives they bring to parliament; and the diversity of our team in experience, background and history. They have fresh eyes. It has been truly wonderful to watch my team give their all to this parliament and the people of the Northern Territory in just one-and-a-half weeks.

People are feeling extremely confident about the road ahead under a CLP government, having watched us tirelessly deliver on our commitments over the last two weeks and, indeed, the entire eight weeks since we were elected.

I wholeheartedly endorse this Bill to the Assembly. There is much work to be done, but this is the start of the work that must be done in order to deliver a safer Territory, as promised, and reduce crime by backing police with better laws.

Mr MALEY (Agriculture and Fisheries): Madam Speaker, I pick up on what the Chief Minister said about getting the balance right, backing police and the community and allowing Territorians to enjoy their lifestyle no matter where they live, in Alice Springs, Tennant Creek, Katherine or wherever they want to be. The Territory is about lifestyle, being safe and the economy. The CLP will make the community safe, rebuild our economy and restore our lifestyle.

This Bill backs police to show them we have their backs, because they do an important job. The Member for Barkly has been there and done it. Police protect Territorians at home, at work, on their boats and at Harrison Dam. Police are the members of the community who run towards danger. They look after us, so we need to support them.

This is just one piece of legislation; we are also amending legislation to ensure there is mandatory sentencing, so if you assault a police officer or a frontline worker there will be consequences. That is what we do on this side of the Chamber; we back police and Territorians, because they deserve to life safely in a strong economy with a good lifestyle.

For eight years the Labor government's policies failed Territorians. Crime rates have gone through the roof. I will give members the breakdown of statistics to reflect on so that they can think about how badly the Labor government failed Territorians. For the year to June this year across the Territory robberies were up by 343%; house break-ins were up by 106%; domestic violence assaults were up by 82%; and alcohol-related assaults were up by 38%. This shows that the Labor government failed the Territory.

I will further break it down into regions and towns to give you a bit of the flavour and a feel for what it was like in various parts of the Northern Territory when the Labor government failed residents so badly. In Palmerston alcohol-related assaults were up by 159% and domestic violence assaults were up by 182%. I am not making up these figures; this is beyond a joke.

House break-ins in Alice Springs were up by 241%, and alcohol-related assaults were up by 7%. You might think that is reasonable, but this is up; it is not going down or staying steady. This is a result of the inaction and failed policies of the Labor government which caused the Territory to become an unsafe place. Then people want to leave. We have all heard stories of, 'Hey, I am out of here; I am gone'; 'I am closing my business and leaving'; and 'I will give up my job and leave because the Territory is not a safe place'.

This is a small step to make the Territory a safer place. We will not grow the population and the economy and restore our lifestyle if there is no-one here to help us.

I spoke in Question Time about the future projections for onshore gas royalties of $3.7bn that will be paid into the economy. That is a lot of money which will help us rebuild our economy. However, those people will not bring their workers and business here if it remains unsafe.

These laws are about allowing the police to be proactive and go into groups where there is potential for DVO breaches. We know that there are all sorts of domestic violence orders. There is a form of order that says that a person can be with their partner provided they are not drinking because history shows that once they start drinking domestic and family violence occurs.

When the previous Labor government took away the power from police, I heard stories of the police being the ones in handcuffs. They are the ones who could not act to protect Territorians because the Labor government chose to take away their power.

I wonder what the Labor members would say to these people who are in a family relationship which is okay when someone is not on the grog, but when someone starts drinking a person gets hurt. Generally it is the female but sometimes the male. How does it feel for that person? I wonder whether the people on the other side would say to those people, 'We changed the law and took away the power from police. You are injured because of a decision we made.'

The Labor government failed Territorians in relation to crime, safety and the economy across the board. It directly caused family and domestic violence to go up by 82% over eight years. Reflect upon that. How would you feel if you knew someone in this House made a decision that allowed your mother, brother or sister to be injured, because they failed you? They failed Territorians and badly; it was not just a little—82%, 330%, 350% and 182%—these figures went through the roof.

In Tennant Creek domestic violence was up by 101%. Robbery in Katherine—get this one—had a 1,100% increase. In Katherine alcohol-related assaults increased by 90% and domestic violence assaults went up by 135%.

For eight years the Labor government talked about how it would listen to Territorians, protect them and make the Territory a safer place. As the Chief Minister said, members of the previous government say, 'What about the evidence? Listen to the experts.' The evidence is here. They chose to ignore it, not listen to it and make decisions which resulted in the facts and figures I just highlighted. People are getting injured. Never forget that the police are the ones who run into the danger, yet the Labor government took away their power and handcuffed them because they could not do their job to protect Territorians.

We need to make sure that we deal with this correctly. Reducing alcohol-related harm across the Territory is a part of our crime reduction plan. I mentioned alcohol-related harm because I want to move on to what happens when there is no plan and the river of grog can just flow into a particular path. We all know what we are talking about. Stronger Futures fell away. The Labor government did not have a plan to protect Territorians from the river of grog. The statistics went through the roof, but I will not go through them because it is horrifying.

The Member for Braitling spoke about his home town. He was born there and knows what happened. It must have been embarrassing for members of the previous government to make a decision, have no action and then have the Prime Minister of Australia come to Darwin to tell them how to do their job after seven months of misery.

The shadow Attorney-General made money out of that misery. He had shares in a takeaway alcohol company while the river of grog was flowing through Alice Springs. It was shameful. That is a fact because he spoke about it. Just imagine the perception of that. He actively made the decision to buy shares in a takeaway alcohol company, then made laws that allowed more grog to flow into that town. It was shameful, not to mention the damage it did in relation to the rates of crime and homelessness going up. That was all because the Labor government failed to protect Territorians and to give the police the power they need to be proactive and do their job.

We are talking nuisance public drinking. If a person causes a nuisance, they deserve to face a consequence for their actions. That is what the public expects. The silent majority who voted for 17 CLP members want consequences and action, so if a crime is committed there will be a consequence for that.

We strengthened bail laws and the presumption against and for bail. This is not rocket science. Not everyone will be remanded in custody because there is a presumption; a person can rebut that presumption. They need an ankle bracelet. This is about real consequences and a deterrence from breaking into houses and businesses.

The Chief Minister spoke about the $300,000 cost of a school bus being stolen and used to break into businesses. That is a cost to the community through not only the vehicles that were stolen and the damage to the school and the school bus, but also those businesses that need to fix the glass plate windows and their front and back doors—wherever they have been broken in. That all affects those businesses. The Country Liberal Party wants to make sure that it gets the balance right and allows the police to do their job.

It is important that the police feel supported because, as the Chief Minister said, if this is a low priority and they just tip out the grog, knowing that domestic violence has gone through the roof, it sends the message to these people, 'It is okay to drink. We are too busy.' This is because the previous Labor government's policy, rules and laws were watered down so much that there are no consequences.

We have all seen the result of that. I am sure that most people in this Chamber either have been a victim of crime or know someone who has been a victim of crime, maybe a friend or a family member. Some people in this Chamber may know people who have left the Northern Territory, the place where I grew up and I love, because crime is out of control and the police cannot do their job. The Labor government gave away police powers a bit at a time, and the end result was that the police could not do their job.

We need to make sure that we get the balance right because we are talking about the community members who have the right to enjoy their lifestyle, whether it is at Harrison Dam, another public place or in their house next to a public place.

The Member for Karama mentioned that you may be in your home—your castle—and someone could be sitting 20 metres away drinking in a public place and the police are powerless to act. That creates drama all night and sometimes the next day. I went to a community meeting with the Member for Karama where there were 25 people there who told me stories of waves of people coming all day and all night to go to parties—parties is a loose term—next door to their home. They had to put up with the effect of the event from the evening through the next day and night; it was one big antisocial behaviour event. The police were powerless. People were out the front drinking, and the police could only tip out the alcohol.

This law gives police the power to be proactive and check whether there are breaches of bail and arrest warrants, when previously police could not ask people for their names. It is about getting the balance right because people deserve to live in their homes without the nuisance put up by people who behave antisocially. We will make sure that this government gets the balance right and gives the police the power to do their job. This will balance your right to have a drink with your right to live in the community in safety.

We want to focus on rebuilding the Territory. We promised to reduce crime, and the opposition said that it will hold us to account. We will reduce crime to make the Territory safer, rebuild the economy and restore our lifestyle. If we get those three pillars right, the Territory will be a great place and people will work, live and stay here. Our local businesses will get a boost from money coming in the door and the tourism businesses will flourish. This coupled with our other reforms to payroll tax and the home builder scheme will work together to make the Territory a better place.

I commend this Bill to the House. I fully support it and look forward to living in a safer place where our lifestyle is paramount.

Mr YOUNG (Daly): Madam Speaker, the CLP's Liquor Legislation Further Amendment Bill 2024 proposes to further regulate the sale and consumption of alcohol and is apparently aimed at improving public safety and reducing harm. However, we must assess the implications of such legislation, particularly the notion that criminalising individuals for alcohol-related issues will lead to a safer community.

The Country Liberal Party has introduced a Bill that is all optics to look like it is getting on top of its tough-on-crime agenda. Health experts warn that this legislation will target marginalised community groups and trivialise those with an addiction.

The Northern Territory has faced ongoing challenges related to alcohol abuse, particularly among vulnerable people. I understand the desire to address these issues and make our community safe, but we must ask: does criminalisation generally lead to safety or does it perpetuate cycles of disadvantage and marginalisation leading to further harm? Criminalising individuals for alcohol-related offences leads to more harm than good.

Instead of addressing the root causes of alcohol misuse, such as poverty and a lack of access to healthcare, this Bill risks creating a punitive system that alienates and stigmatises those already in crisis.

Evidence from various regions indicates that criminal records will create barriers to employment, housing and community reintegration. Instead of fostering safer environments we will be driving individuals further into isolation and despair, increasing the likelihood of reoffending and perpetuating a cycle of harm.

This legislation is another example of the CLP's blatant disregard for those on the front line who fight against the social harms caused by individuals who have an addiction to alcohol. In an unprecedented move, we had a coalition of frontline experts and the Foundation for Alcohol Research and Education write to the Chief Minister to urge her to put the health, wellbeing and safety of Territorians first by keeping in place measures that work to reduce harms from alcohol and to prioritise the health, wellbeing and safety of families and communities.

These people are not political commentators; they are champions of our community, including Dr Donna Ah Chee, Chief Executive Officer of Central Australian Aboriginal Congress; Dr John Paterson, Chief Executive Officer, Aboriginal Medical Services Alliance Northern Territory; Rob McPhee, Chief Executive Officer, Danila Dilba Health Service; Stephanie Holmes, Executive Officer, Association of Alcohol and Other Drugs Agencies Northern Territory; Michael Rotumah, Chief Executive Officer, Larrakia Nation; and Dr Brad Treloar, Director of the Intensive Care Unit, Alice Springs. It is a disgrace that so many people who roll up their sleeves every day to make the Territory better are being ignored for a cheap political stunt by the CLP government. You know this will not work.

It is essential to consider the difference between a public health approach and a criminal justice approach to alcohol-related issues. The government should be emphasising prevention, education and support, focusing on the underlying social determinants of health rather than the measures that have been proposed. By investing in community programs, rehabilitation services and harm reduction strategies we can create safer environments without resorting to criminalisation of vulnerable Territorians.

Our efforts should be focused on the initiatives such as alcohol education programs and support services for individuals struggling with addiction. These approaches have proven effective in reducing harm and promoting healthier choices. In contrast increasing penalties for alcohol-related offences does not yield significant changes in behaviour or community safety.

The 1991 Royal Commission into Aboriginal Deaths in Custody found that offences for public intoxication had disproportionately led to greater criminalisation of Aboriginal people and recommended abolishing these offences. We acted on this and made the changes after the most comprehensive review into liquor in the Northern Territory's history.

Alcohol-related harm is damaging to the Northern Territory, which is why public health approaches to public intoxication should be evidence based. This is why the previous government invested in community patrols to take the person to a suitable place of safety; sobering-up shelters to ensure people are safe and that health services such as nurses are available; and pathways to education, counselling and targeted treatment programs. The CLP's approach will lead to over-policing, over-punishment and over-incarceration of Aboriginal people; increased risk of a death in custody; and the sideling of health and medical professionals.

If our goal is to enhance community safety we must explore alternatives that do not involve criminalisation, such as community-led initiatives, partnerships with health providers and local support networks to empower individuals to make healthier choices. Furthermore, we must engage with our First Nations community and other affected populations to ensure that their voices are heard in shaping policies that impact their lives. Collaborative approaches that respect cultural context and lived experience are vital for effective and meaningful change.

Although the Liquor Legislation Further Amendment Bill may be well intended, we must critically evaluate the assumptions underlining it. Criminalising individuals for alcohol-related issues does not create safer communities; instead, it will perpetuate cycles of harm and disadvantage. These amendments are not good for Territorians, and they deserve better from the government. Frontline experts deserve to be listened to, and the CLP owes it to Territorians to bring real solutions to the debate.

Mrs CARLSON (Wanguri): Mr Deputy Speaker, I support these amendments to the *Liquor Act* because we need our police to have better powers to deal with public drinking, which can often lead to crime. It was clear when doorknocking before the August election that crime was a major issue, but close behind it was antisocial behaviour that stems from the large consumption of alcohol and causes a nuisance to people in, or within

the vicinity of, a public place. When a person is causing an inconvenience or annoyance to the community that is not acceptable. It has got to the point where harm to the community occurs on a regular basis.

This Bill's amendments are welcomed in my community, as this issue has been an ongoing concern for those living close to many retail shops, including the Casuarina shopping centre. The centre has suffered due to the increase in alcohol-related crime incidents. The retail industry has declined as many shoppers no longer wish to shop there due to the nuisance behaviour stemming from the increased consumption of alcohol.

A number of schools are within the prescribed areas in this Bill. I do not accept that children and families should have to see, on a daily basis, the antisocial and nuisance behaviour that stems from alcohol consumption. Each morning before the children arrive janitors must comb the schoolyards for the broken bottles, cans and rubbish that have been left behind.

I have had many conversations with parents who have concerns for the safety of their children. Over the last few years this has converted into increased pressure in the school pickup zones as parents no longer want to risk their children being harmed or seeing the antisocial behaviour around these public places. This used to be a safe place for children to walk and ride to school, but now this is a rare occurrence. My child could walk to my office from his school many years ago, but there is no way I would let any child be subjected to the risk of danger from or visibility to antisocial behaviour in these public spaces.

This morning the Member for Drysdale mentioned that his electorate has a number of parks which are no longer safe. Strele Park is across the road from the Holy Spirit Catholic Primary School and on a daily basis it is used as a public drinking space by a small minority causing a nuisance.

I witnessed groups of drinkers while doorknocking. They would hide alcohol in a resident's garden beds, and this went on to cause a nuisance in the afternoon. I brought it to the attention of the owner of the property, and he said that it was a daily issue. How is it okay that residents near public spaces have to put up with this nuisance behaviour from excessive consumption of alcohol?

Grasslands Park in Leanyer is supposed to provide a wonderful green space in the community, amongst high-density living behind the Hibiscus Shoppingtown. This park can no longer be used as a green space because a group continues to use it as a place to drink and cause a nuisance.

We want our green spaces to be community space, which is the way they are intended to be used. I doorknocked a residence directly behind the park, and the resident witnessed a group that were clearly intoxicated. They were moved to this park from another public space so that they would not be a nuisance there. They continue to drink, make noise and harass residents who, in their right, walk through to the shops at Hibiscus. They leave a mess on a frequent basis. It is the same group doing this regularly. How is it fair for the residents to live amongst this nightmare?

There is a bus stop on Vanderlin Drive outside the Hibiscus shopping centre. The increased drinking at this bus stop is an ongoing daily issue. A business owner came to my office only a few weeks ago to inform me that shoppers and staff at his shop are harassed on a daily basis. He told me that one of his staff was injured by an alcohol-fuelled person when they threw a bottle at him as he declined their request. This injured person was just trying to get to work after parking his car in the space in front of that bus stop.

The residents of Wanguri want to send their kids to school safely and not have to worry about the antisocial behaviour that surrounds these schools. Workers want to get to work without worrying about the antisocial behaviour that surrounds their workplace. Residents want to use their parks in the community safely.

The government has a responsibility to keep the community safe from alcohol-fuelled harm, and this is what people voted for in the August election. In fact, residents in the northern suburbs this time voted for the CLP policies, which the Member for Karama pointed out. One of the policies in our plan was to give police powers to fine, charge and arrest for public drinking in non-exempt areas.

I support this Bill as it aims to address harm caused by the consumption of alcohol in prohibited public spaces. It will address public safety issues for the benefit of the entire community.

I commend this Bill to the House, as it ensures problem drinkers get the help they need for their addiction, or before it becomes an addition.

Mr PAECH (Gwoja): Mr Deputy Speaker, I acknowledge all members' contributions to this Bill. I continue to have concerns about the proposed legislation and the impacts it will have on members of our community.

It is important to remind all members of this House that we are talking about our fellow Territorians, and language matters. Today we have heard in contributions, ‘Them, they, those people’. They are us; they are our fellow Territorians. We should not be looking at this through a lens that they are in any way, shape or form a lesser person than we are.

This legislation says that we know there is a problem, we know it is failing and we know more needs to be done, but the first step is to criminalise that level of behaviour.

We heard members talk about the need to have programs, and I support the notion that programs are important. I acknowledge from the get-go that one government member has always spoken about the need for programs—that is, the sponsoring minister, the Member for Barkly.

For honourable members who do not know, the Northern Territory had a fantastic program many years ago, the Northern Territory Living With Alcohol Program. It ran from 1996 to 2002. It was a great program because it acknowledged that prohibition does not work and that we need to work with people to overcome those challenges.

I am a bush member, and I acknowledge that there is a huge portion of people in the bush who do not support alcohol in their community, but there is a portion who have advocated for a long time for alcohol management plans, whether that is in a homeland, community or town camp. It is important to listen to people in our remote communities. When alcohol management plans are being drafted, I have always said that it is paramount that women and children are prioritised to have a say in that. If it was to be invoked, children should be able to participate in having a say in those affairs in their community because it is important.

When we talk about these systems we need to look at prevention and the cycle. I am the first person on this side of the Chamber—it will be no surprise to the Members for Barkly and Araluen—who was on the record saying that aspects of the mandatory alcohol treatment program worked. I have never hidden that because when it was in—I do not agree with the mandatory component—a lot of Aboriginal people were able to get chronic health conditions acknowledged and checked. I acknowledge that; I will not say that it did not exist.

Today we are in a position where we are leaving a lot of ambiguity. The definition of ‘nuisance’ is broad and open to interpretation. A lot of people are worried about how that will be applied across the Northern Territory. What does ‘a nuisance’ mean? That is important because we need to understand it.

It is important to clarify that alcohol does not cause domestic and family violence. Anyone who suggests that takes a coward’s approach. Alcohol exacerbates domestic and family violence. The behaviours and attitudes in relation to domestic and family violence are already there and alcohol exacerbates them. It is a cowardly response for people to try to hide behind alcohol as the reason why they did it. Those attitudes and behaviours need to be changed and addressed because they are always there.

I acknowledge that members talked about a number of things. I am concerned that removing the floor price will make alcohol cheaper for our Territorians who need help overcoming alcoholism and their substance abuse relationship with alcohol.

Income management is not about penalising families who are already in the Commonwealth’s income management system; it is about utilising the relationships and the amazing stakeholders in the community who have been talking about this.

I accept that the government does not accept the floor price, but there are interesting statistics about it. Since the floor price was introduced the relevant shelter organisations and sectors said that they noticed a decrease of 14% in alcohol-related assaults in the Northern Territory; an 11% reduction in domestic and family violence; a 21% reduction in alcohol-related domestic, family and sexual violence; and a 19% reduction in alcohol-related emergency department visits.

I am not here to compete with anyone’s views. The legislation will be debated and will pass; however, it is important to remind us that we should not talk about people as though they are any less than us. These are our people; they are Territorians who need our help.

The new government has taken this as its response, but when it comes to overcoming alcohol in the Territory, there are many pieces to the puzzle. People choose different pieces at different times to respond to our community, and that is important.

We have heard a lot of people talk about particular areas and parts of the Northern Territory. If people have anything to say about the Warlpiri nation, I will organise for you to go out there and talk to them yourself about their health outcomes and lifestyle choices. Do not hide in parliament. If you want to talk to the Warlpiri, I will take you out to my family and you can have a direct conversation with them.

We often forget the people we talk about in this Chamber. You talk about consultation with Aboriginal people, and that is important. If we want to talk about nations in here, get out and talk to those people about the changes happening in this place. I acknowledge the work being done in the alcohol space is taking a different direction from where we were, but a range of important reforms are still to happen as a part of this.

I stress that ensuring the people living in those communities have a say is incredibly important. I have been critical of organisations that did not consult, because those people got to go home every night and pour themselves a glass of wine, when there are people in this parliament who come from remote communities and are denied that opportunity. There are people in town camps who are denied that opportunity.

Alcohol management plans are important. I acknowledge the work being done by the government in that regard. I think you called them social clubs, or wet canteens, as they were known as back in the day. There are good examples in the Territory. Oenpelli and Kalkarindji have a social club where people serve only low or mid-strength alcohol. They breath-test you when you come in and leave. They have a courtesy bus which takes family around.

I am not saying that every community will support that. I acknowledge my deadly crew from the southern area of Gwoja who worked with local alcohol outlets to ban local community mob from accessing alcohol from those communities, but they had a say in it. I encourage women and children to be heavily involved in having a say to shape what alcohol policy looks like in a town camp, a homeland, an outstation and other parts of the Northern Territory, because this is important.

People have differing opinions about the Banned Drinker Register. I support it because of my family. Member for Barkly, we have discussed this. There are members of my family who are on the Banned Drinker Register and other members who have put themselves on the register so that they do not get humbugged by family. It can mitigate the pressure to buy alcohol or the pressures in regard to elder abuse.

We need to understand what it is about the Banned Drinker Register that people want to reform. If vulnerable women, elders or people living with particular conditions need help to say no, there is an active mechanism of the register that allows them to voluntarily put themselves on it so that they can tell people, ‘I’m on the Banned Drinker Register, so I can’t buy alcohol’.

I have long been an advocate that if there are police at the front of the bottle shops, they need to check everybody for ID not just people who come from remote areas. That is an important point to stress.

I acknowledge the many pieces of the puzzle when it comes to alcohol reform. The government is moving its pieces around and putting them into place. The Territory will be on this journey for a long time.

I stress for those members who have never seen it that there is a paper on the evaluation of the Living With Alcohol program. I acknowledge that program started under the former, former, former, former CLP. It was an important and powerful program. That is the type of stuff I am looking at and willing to work with everyone in this Assembly on addressing.

Mr CHARLS (People, Sport and Culture): Madam Speaker, I support the Liquor Legislation Further Amendment Bill 2024, which amends existing legislation related to alcohol consumption and public order. The primary objective of the Bill is to enhance police powers in addressing alcohol-related antisocial behaviour.

The CLP took to the election a suite of changes that it would introduce in the first week of parliament to reduce crime. Today we address another one of our commitments to give police the powers to fine, charge and arrest people for public drinking in non-exempt areas.

Labor irresponsibly did not attend to thoroughly addressing alcohol-related harm as it was obliged to do so by the Commonwealth and, of course, Territorians. Despite having 10 years to prepare for the cessation of the national partnership of the federal emergency response under the Commonwealth *Stronger Futures in the Northern Territory Act 2012*—that was nationally recognised as an emergency—Territorians have continue to suffer the consequences of alcohol-related harm.

As a former registered nurse employed in the CLP's alcohol mandatory treatment program, I saw firsthand Labor's effort in addressing alcohol harm when it scrapped the alcohol mandatory treatment program in 2017, despite the many positive outcomes that the program delivered.

I have been checking the stats from NT Government websites. Domestic violence-related assaults in the Darwin and Palmerston region increased from 586 in 2016 to 1,277 in 2024. Alcohol-related emergency department presentations in the Darwin and Palmerston region increased from 2,313 in 2016 to 4,522 in 2017 and 5,441 in 2023. I included the 2017 data for alcohol-related emergency department presentations because that was when alcohol mandatory treatment was revoked. There was an almost doubled spike in ED presentations from 2,313 to 4,522.

Many members mentioned that they want to support the hospital system and the doctors and nurses, but this is what happened when one program was revoked. It had an impact on the hospital system. In 2017 it impacted Royal Darwin Hospital and then started to impact the Palmerston hospital as well.

Amendments in this Bill address the following matters:

- antisocial behaviour associated with public alcohol consumption—the Bill creates a new offence that will allow police to better address nuisance behaviour in public places where alcohol is consumed.

- the current lack of clarity regarding police powers to issue infringement notices in interim alcohol protected areas—this Bill clarifies that police have the authority to issue infringement notices for certain alcohol-related offences in these designated areas.

- the need for a comprehensive definition of 'alcohol-related infringement notice'—the Bill broadens the existing definition to include the new offence relating to nuisance behaviour and any other provisions specified by regulation. This ensures consistency in handling various alcohol-related offences.

The Bill ensures appropriate enforcement mechanisms for alcohol-related regulations in interim protected areas. The Bill designates an offence under section 170B(1) of the *Liquor Act* as an alcohol-related infringement notice, thereby strengthening enforcement efforts.

The Bill introduces a new offence for the consumption of liquor in prohibited public places. A significant change introduced by the Bill is the creation of a new offence related to the consumption of liquor in public places. The Bill inserts section 171A into the *Liquor Act 2019* which makes it an offence for a person to consume alcohol in a public place and engage in conduct that causes a nuisance to others. The provision specifies that the offence carries a maximum penalty of five penalty units. This new offence is intended to provide police with an additional tool to address destructive behaviour associated with public drinking.

This Bill provides clarification to strengthen police powers regarding infringement notices for interim alcohol protected areas. Clause 6 of the Bill inserts regulation 119 into the Liquor Regulations 2019, explicitly stating that an offence under section 170B(1) of the *Liquor Act* is an infringement notice offence. This provision carries a prescribed penalty of two penalty units. The amendment empowers police officers and inspectors to issue infringement notices to individuals believed to have violated section 170B(1), which relates to alcohol consumption in designated protected areas.

Further amendments are proposed to the *Alcohol Harm Reduction Act 2017* and its associated regulations. Clause 9 of the Bill expands the definition of 'alcohol-related infringement notice' in section 4 of the *Alcohol Harm Reduction Act 2017*. The amendment includes infringement notices issued for offences under section 171A(1) of the *Liquor Act* and any other provision prescribed by regulation. This broader definition ensures that the new offence relating to nuisance behaviour in public places is covered under the existing framework for alcohol-related infringements.

To further support the enforcement of alcohol-related infringement notices, clause 11 of the Bill inserts regulation 4 into the Alcohol Harm Reduction Regulations 2017. This new regulation designates an offence under section 170B(1) of the *Liquor Act* as an alcohol-related infringement notice. This ensures consistency in the application of infringement notices across various alcohol-related offences.

In addition to the issues of public nuisance, alcohol consumption places a significant burden on various aspects of society. Alcohol-related harm affects individuals and families. This includes domestic violence, fetal alcohol syndrome, homelessness, harmful behaviours, crime, car accidents and school attendance for children. Alcohol-related harm and unhealthy levels of consumption can lead to chronic health issues, death, social disharmony and helplessness.

For instance, a July 2024 report by the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare revealed that in the quarter ending March 2023 the Northern Territory recorded the highest rate of alcohol-related ambulance attendances in all Australian jurisdictions. Notably, this rate was 5.8 times higher than that of Victoria.

This increase in ambulance attendances due to alcohol consumption has a direct impact on hospital presentations. Patients affected by alcohol often exhibit a wide range of cognitive impairments, affecting their rational behaviour and decision-making capacity. This unpredictability in patient behaviour, particularly those displaying symptoms of alcohol intoxication, necessitates additional resources for triage and treatment in emergency departments. Consequently, this diverts valuable healthcare resources from other potential emergencies and adds to the existing workplace pressures faced by frontline healthcare professionals.

The Liquor Legislation Further Amendment Bill 2024 represents a concerted effort by the CLP government to strengthen the legislative framework to address alcohol-related antisocial behaviour. By creating a new offence, clarifying infringement notice powers and expanding the scope of alcohol-related infringements, the Bill seeks to provide law enforcement agencies with more effective tools to maintain public order.

I support this Bill.

Mr EDGINGTON (Alcohol Policy)(in reply): Madam Speaker, I thank all the honourable members for their contribution to the debate on the Liquor Legislation Further Amendment Bill 2024.

This Bill provides for the reinstatement of laws to deal with nuisance public drinking. The government is delivering on its commitment to Territorians to reduce crime by giving police the powers they need to make the community safer.

The Bill creates a new public drinking causing nuisance offence to provide an additional tool to police to address and deter antisocial behaviour associated with alcohol misuse. Nuisance public drinking causes antisocial behaviour and alcohol-fuelled harm. The new nuisance public drinking offence will give police powers to fine, charge and arrest in public places where alcohol is prohibited as well as issuing the same people a seven-day banned drinker order. The offence is when a person consumes liquor in a public place or in a vehicle in a public place and engages in conduct that causes a nuisance to other people in, or within the vicinity of, a public place.

The nuisance public drinking offence will give police the power to issue a fine and seven-day banned drinker order as well as searching a person to seize and dispose of liquor. This offence reinstates the nuisance public drinking offence repealed by the previous government.

Community safety is the CLP government's number one priority. We are proud to deliver this reform as promised and return the powers to the police. Unless an exception is made by local councils, you cannot drink in public in these major towns: Alice Springs; Darwin; Katherine; Palmerston; Tennant Creek; the Darwin Waterfront; and any public place within two kilometres of licensed premises.

Existing local council exemptions that allow people to consume alcohol at specific exclusion times remain in place. Details of these places are published online. The new nuisance public drinking offence will not apply in these areas during the specific exclusion times; however, there are existing laws to manage antisocial behaviour and they will remain in place. A person will not be charged with this offence if it is clear that they are permitted to consume alcohol in that public place.

Police maintain the power to fine, arrest and charge any person under the *Summary Offences Act 1923* at any time for conduct such as disturbing the public peace, offensive behaviour and using obscene language, amongst other things.

Under the new offence, someone is a nuisance when their conduct generally causes a substantial, unreasonable or ongoing interference with the use or enjoyment of a public area by other people. The main factor in being a public nuisance is whether someone is interfering with other people's use or enjoyment of a public area. We have heard a number of examples of that. I will get to those as I work through this.

An infringement notice under this offence is one penalty unit, which is $185. If a person is arrested and charged under the offence the maximum penalty is five penalty units, which equates to a $925 fine. The new offence provides police with a range of powers to address and deter antisocial behaviour, which often is present where alcohol is consumed. Under the new offence, police powers include issuing an on-the-spot infringement notice for a total of $185. They can also give out a minimum seven-day banned drinker order and confiscate and tip out the alcohol.

Consuming liquor in a public place without permission is already unlawful. If a person is caught consuming alcohol in a prohibited public place under section 171 of the *Liquor Act*, police can search a person, seize and dispose of liquor and issue a BDO for a minimum period of seven days.

If a person is issued with a BDO, they are placed on the Banned Drinker Register and prohibited from purchasing, possessing or consuming alcohol for the period in which the order is in force.

If a person is issued with an infringement, police must issue a seven-day banned drinker order. If they are already on the BDR, a BDO extension order or a three-month police BDO can be issued.

If a person is arrested and charged, summonsed or served with a notice to appear before a court for this offence, they will be issued with a three-month police banned drinker order.

If you are on the Banned Drinker Register you are not allowed to purchase, possess or consume alcohol in the Northern Territory for the duration of the ban. This includes takeaway alcohol.

If a person is on a BDO issued by police or the registrar, there are provisions whereby that person can apply to the BDR registrar to reduce or revoke the remaining period of the ban. This gives people an opportunity to show proof that they have completed an appropriate therapeutic support program to be eligible for reduction. Putting someone on a BDO provides that person the opportunity to participate in rehabilitation and apply to the registrar to get off the banned drinker order. That provision benefits the individual because it is an opportunity for them to seek the appropriate support to deal with addiction and be provided education and rehabilitation.

I will go through some facts. Under the former Labor government crime in the Northern Territory clearly was out of control; it still is. The former Labor government members, who are now in opposition, tried to tell us that it was only perception that crime was out of control. They berated us when we were in opposition for running down the Territory. We have the crime statistics. The Deputy Opposition Leader went through some of those statistics and, of course, they only confirm that crime is not perception or gossip; it is a reality for many Territorians.

Over the eight years since Labor came into power crime across the Territory went up. The evidence is there. Domestic violence assaults across the Territory are up by 81.83% and alcohol-related assaults are up by 37.91%.

We heard from the Members for Drysdale, Blain and Brennan, along with the Chief Minister, that over the last eight years the crime stats in Palmerston have exploded. Domestic violence assaults are up by a whopping 182.22% and alcohol-related assaults are up by an outstanding 59.26%.

It is important that we consider nuisance public drinking is not just in Darwin; it is everywhere in the Territory, and it is one thing that has contributed to crime. Katherine has suffered over the last eight years. Domestic violence assaults are up by 135.85% and alcohol-related assaults are up by 97.45%. These are incredible statistics, and it highlights that something needs to be done.

Labor members on the other side can complain and provide reasons why this legislation should not be in place, but the fact is that what they did over the last eight years clearly has not worked. In my electorate alone, domestic violence assaults were up by 101% in Tennant Creek. I have been talking about this for a number of years. While I talked about it, those who are now on the opposition side did little to tackle these issues. Alcohol-related assaults in Tennant Creek are up by 57.62%.

I could go on about these statistics. We have heard about assaults and break-ins in other areas, but the reality is that crime across the Northern Territory is up and no matter who you speak to, they have either been affected by crime or know someone who has. That is the seriousness of the crime issue we are facing.

The Leader of the Opposition warned us that we would fail Territorians if we did not focus on robust legislative changes. Guess what? We are focusing on robust legislation. The Leader of the Opposition advised us that it will not be an easy fix, claiming that if it was easy Labor would have fixed it when it was in power. It clearly was not up to the task, as Labor watered down laws and fuelled the crime crisis. I have just rattled off the statistics, and it is clear to me that the Labor government had no idea and no plan in place to tackle crime.

I was surprised when the Leader of the Opposition raised the Riley report. I will touch on some of the issues in the Riley report. It was commissioned by the Labor government and presented in October 2017. One of the most comprehensive reviews of legislation and alcohol issues in the Northern Territory was presented to the Labor government seven years ago this month.

I will remind people of a few things in the Riley report because members talked about Stronger Futures. The Riley report made statements, commentary and recommendations on dealing with the Stronger Futures legislation. I do not have the report in front of me, so I cannot quote it verbatim, but it said that the government needed to start preparing for the cessation of Stronger Futures in October 2017. There were no surprises that the Stronger Futures legislation would sunset in July 2022, and it was written into the Riley report that the government should start preparing for the cessation of the Stronger Futures legislation.

Some of the key recommendations made were that government should talk to the people in the Alice Springs town camps and the people in the bush about putting in place alcohol management plans to deal with the cessation of Stronger Futures. There are a lot of other recommendations in the report if you want to pick it up and look at it. However, the key thing is that the Labor government was warned about the cessation of Stronger Futures.

What did Labor members do? They had nearly five years' notice that Stronger Futures would cease on 16 July 2022. They did nothing and allowed the Stronger Futures legislation to lapse.

Mr Maley: They bought some shares.

Mr EDGINGTON: That is right. The only plan they made was to invest in shares when Stronger Futures was about to lapse in July 2022.

Some of the worst crimes and alcohol-related offences were committed over a seven-month period in Alice Springs and across the Territory until the Prime Minister had to travel to Alice Springs to instruct the Labor government to bring in new legislation to bring back those restrictions. It is disgraceful that it took seven months and a visit from the Prime Minister to instruct the Labor government to bring back those laws. We are in this situation because the former Labor government took a hands-off approach to tackling alcohol-related issues in the Northern Territory.

A couple of people spoke about rehabilitation. The Member for Gwoja spoke about some of the positive aspects of mandatory rehabilitation. Anyone listening to Labor members today would think that they were committed to doing something about alcohol issues in the Northern Territory, just as I thought they were when they promised in July 2018 to build a new alcohol rehabilitation centre in Tennant Creek. Guess what? Here we are in October 2024, six years later, and not one shovel has hit the ground, despite all the rhetoric you heard from those on the other side of the Chamber about how keen they are to deal with alcohol issues and how they support rehabilitation.

Minister Boothby articulated that under the former Labor government alcohol became a dirty word. Labor closed alcohol rehab services and remained focused on alcohol supply, imposing rules and regulations across the board. As I said, and I think the Member for Gwoja said it as well, prohibition will never work. I have said it many times, but that seemed to be the only focus and angle that the Labor Party pursued over its eight years in government. You can imagine the mess Labor left us as we have come into government.

The Finocchiaro government supports personal responsibility, and we will do whatever we can to raise our community standards. The Territory deserves to hold itself in high esteem, not be shamed for the community standards those opposite let slip beyond recognition.

I heard the honourable Member for Mulka call this legislative amendment racist and claim that it would target Aboriginal people and increase racial divide. I heard the Member for Mulka's concern about public nuisance not being defined, but I assure the member that public nuisance is neither racially motivated nor racially targeted; it is targeted at those causing a nuisance in a public place, clearly disrupting order in that area. Nuisance is a public disorder and well recognised by police under the *Summary Offences Act*. The application of this Bill will no doubt eventually be tested in the courts, but our laws apply equally to everybody. If people are not doing the wrong thing, they have nothing to worry about.

We make no apologies for introducing laws to make the Territory a safer place. This is what Territorians voted for in the 2024 election. We said that we would reduce crime, rebuild the economy and restore the Territory lifestyle. That is what we are doing.

The Members for Johnston and Nightcliff identified alcohol addiction as a public health issue, and rightly so. It is. As I said, there were plenty of opportunities for Labor to tackle this issue over the last eight years. The promise of a rehabilitation centre in Tennant Creek is a clear example of that, but not one shovel has hit the ground since 2018. What a disgrace.

The Members for Johnston and Nightcliff called for a focus on health interventions, including rehabilitation, mental health and addiction services. That is what I want.

This should not be seen in isolation, as there are more issues regarding alcohol policy, and there is more policy to come. This is the start of a suite of changes that the CLP intends to make. I have spoken about alcohol management plans and the BDR previously.

This is only the second week of the 15th Assembly, but we have already passed some laws to make our community safer. However, the reality is that there is a lot more to follow. The CLP has a plan, and we are delivering on that plan with an action-packed first sittings, but there is more to come. As Health minister, I am excited that our government will bring further legislative changes to address the scourge of crime across the Northern Territory.

The CLP is committed to delivering alcohol mandatory treatment services and programs to Territorians—and we certainly need it. Sobering-up shelters alone do not meet the need. As of August 2024 the Darwin sobering-up shelter had an average of 94% capacity and Alice Springs was at 70%. On many nights the sobering-up shelters had to close early due to having no capacity and people were turned away. It is not good enough; the CLP will do better.

The Member for Johnston indicated that we failed to consult. As we said, we went to the polls with our plan outlining our focus on making the Territory safe again.

Ms Uibo: The election is not consultation.

Mr EDGINGTON: I will spell it out for the Leader of the Opposition: there are 25 electorates in the Northern Territory, with roughly 6,000 voters in each …

Ms Uibo: When did you come to the Arnhem electorate and consult?

Madam SPEAKER: Stop the interjections, please.

Mr EDGINGTON: Without using the former Treasurer's calculator, the basic calculation is that about 150,000 people were consulted on our plan going to the election. There were 150,000 voters in the Northern Territory who were consulted about our plan to reduce crime, rebuild the economy and restore the Territory lifestyle.

Members interjecting.

Madam SPEAKER: Order!

Mr EDGINGTON: We only ever hear from members opposite when they do not like what we are saying or we are telling the truth. It is mainly when we are telling the truth that upsets them.

Members interjecting.

Madam SPEAKER: That is enough.

Ms Uibo: That is not true.

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

Mr EDGINGTON: The fact remains that Territorians overwhelmingly agreed with us and let their vote talk.

The Members for Drysdale and Karama lamented over horrific stories from the communities they represent. Those stories are not uncommon across the Northern Territory. The Member for Karama spoke about our plan, commitment and united CLP team to deliver for Territorians. I heard from the Members for Drysdale, Blain, Fong Lim and others the examples that people cannot even use parks for their families to have a day out with a barbecue and enjoy life because the parks are being overtaken by people drinking in public places, breaking the law and causing public nuisance in those areas. The new law is designed to get rid of that and restore the Territory lifestyle for people in Palmerston, Stuart Park, Katherine, Tennant Creek, Alice Springs and across the Northern Territory. We make no apologies for that.

There were a number of speakers. The Member for Daly spoke about investing in programs. Labor had 19 of the last 23 years to invest in programs to get rid of the problem that we are trying to reduce today. Labor members had 19 years to make a difference, but what did they do? They made a number of promises, wasted a lot of money and failed to tackle the issues that matter most to Territorians. They were happy to build shade structures on Cavenagh Street, spend $100m on a bridge in Darwin and $40,000 to advertise Boundless Possible on a rocket launched out of Queensland, but they did not spend any money on rehabilitation, education and treatment for those affected by alcohol. That would have made a difference to this situation. There were plenty of opportunities to do it, and that is why Labor is not in government.

I looked at the proposed amendment put forward by the Member for Johnston. It is clear to me that the court already has discretion to determine whether a conviction should be made. The court should have the discretion to determine how to sentence an offender who is before the court, whether it is the first time or the fifth time or whether there is a number of other offences, including causing nuisance while drinking within two kilometres. The CLP will not support the amendment.

I thank all the members who contributed to the debate.

I commend this Bill to the House.

Motion agreed to; Bill read a second time.

Consideration in detail

Clause 1, by leave, agreed to.

Clause 2:

Ms UIBO: Can you outline to the Assembly when this will commence?

Mr EDGINGTON: The Administrator's assent will be sought at the conclusion of the October 2024 sittings.

Clause 2 agreed to.

Clause 3, by leave, agreed to.

Clause 4:

J DAVIS: Mr Deputy Speaker, I move the amendment to insert proposed subsection (3), which states:

Despite anything to the contrary in Part 3, Division 1, of the Sentencing Act 1995*:*

(a) a conviction must not be recorded against a person who is found guilty of an offence against subsection (1); and

(b) a sentencing order mentioned in section 7(c),(d),(f), (fa), (g) or (h) of that Act must not be made in relation to a person who is found guilty of an offence against subsection (1); and

(c) sections 8(3)(b)(iii) and (iv) of that Act do not apply in relation in to a finding of guilt for an offence against subsection (1).

The purpose of this amendment is to ensure—in line with what I have heard is the CLP's intention for this legislation, which is addressing public safety—no person will be criminalised as a result of this Bill. My amendment comes as a safety measure to protect people stuck in cycles of disadvantage. These public nuisance fines will make a clear pathway for discretionary enforcement and although they may not constitute a criminal offence in a direct nature, we know that avenues for criminalisation will be possible. This is exactly what we need to protect Territorians from.

I am not arguing for doing nothing; I am again arguing for doing what works. I agree wholeheartedly that we are facing an alcohol crisis and that we need to keep our whole community safe as a matter of urgency. We cannot shy away from the issue; however, we need to adopt strategies that address the root causes of alcohol-related harm and violence and are grounded in evidence, compassion and long-term thinking. Evidence works, and I cannot keep standing by when this government chooses to abandon it.

In the time that has been available to me I have consulted on this Bill. I have relied on the evidence of many people and organisations. I based this amendment on that research and community consultation. Like other people in this Chamber, I have spoken with many members of my electorate who have experienced firsthand the harm caused by alcohol in public and private places. I understand the harm this is causing our community. These are experiences that cut across communities and affect all of us.

Every person I have spoken to agrees that we need to address this harm and that punitive reactive measures like fines and policing do not work in isolation. A holistic approach is needed—prevention, early intervention and rehabilitation, not just punishment. I urge this Chamber to consider the real impacts of criminalising public drinking through the mechanism of fines. If we create a system that punishes those who are already disadvantaged, we will only widen the gaps in our society. Pathways are needed to help people out of the cycles of disadvantage, not more roadblocks. That is what I heard the Member for Barkly talk about.

The people in our communities who are struggling with alcohol issues need support, treatment and community-based solutions, not the heavy hand of law enforcement. It is not an either/or situation; we can keep our community safe while we care for the people who are most vulnerable. Alcohol-related harm is a public health issue. If the CLP is truly determined to address the causes of alcohol-related violence and harm in order to keep our community safe, it will support this amendment.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: The question is that the amendment be agreed to.

The Assembly divided:

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

Amendment not agreed to.

Clause 4 agreed to.

Remainder of the Bill, by leave, taken as a whole and agreed to.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: The question is that the Bill be agreed to.

The Assembly divided:

Ayes 17	Noes 7
Ms Boothby	Mr Brown
Mr Burgoyne	J Davis
Ms Cahill	Mr Guyula
Mrs Carlson	Mx McNamara
Mr Charls	Mr Paech
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

Bill agreed to.

Mr EDGINGTON (Alcohol Policy): Mr Deputy Speaker, I move that the Bill be now read a third time.

The Assembly divided:

Ayes 17	Noes 7
Ms Boothby	Mr Brown
Mr Burgoyne	J Davis
Ms Cahill	Mr Guyula
Mrs Carlson	Mx McNamara
Mr Charls	Mr Paech
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; Bill read a third time.

PAPER TABLED
Report into Voluntary Assisted Dying in the Northern Territory – Final Report 2024

Mx McNAMARA (Nightcliff)(by leave): Madam Speaker, I table the Report into Voluntary Assisted Dying in the Northern Territory – Final Report 2024.

MATTER OF PUBLIC IMPORTANCE
Domestic, Family and Sexual Violence

Madam SPEAKER: Honourable members, I have received correspondence from the Member for Arnhem as follows:

I propose for discussion this day the following definite matter of public importance:

Domestic, family and sexual violence is claiming the lives of too many Northern Territory women and tearing families apart; we need a strong bipartisan approach to address it.

The letter is signed by the Member for Arnhem. Is discussion supported? Discussion is supported.

Ms UIBO (Opposition Leader): Madam Speaker, too many Territory women and children live under the shadow of violence and abuse perpetrated by a close family member or an intimate partner. Every year too many Territory families are forced to bury a loved one who has lost their life to domestic, family or sexual violence.

The statistics make for an incredibly distressing read, but more than just reading there are often stories of people we know in our community or, indeed, are related to. Since 2000 at least 90 women in the Territory have been killed as a result of domestic violence. That includes 11 women killed in horrific circumstances since June this year, in the space of just a few months. Countless more have ended up in hospital. Countless more Territory women have endured violence and abuse within the confines of their own home without ever reporting it.

Domestic, family and sexual violence across the Territory is a whole-of-community issue that impacts people of all ages from all cultures, ethnic groups, socioeconomic backgrounds, languages, religions and sexuality. In the Territory, unfortunately, this high statistic disproportionately affects Aboriginal women and children in our community. It is a terrible by-product of poverty, disadvantage, overcrowded housing, substance abuse and myriad other social and economic challenges faced by our communities.

Of the women who have lost their lives to domestic violence in the Territory 90%—that is nine out of 10—are Aboriginal women. This is horrifying. Almost half of women in the Territory—46%—have experienced physical and/or sexual violence since the age of 15 years. One in three women have experienced violence, emotional abuse or economic abuse by a live-in partner. Again, a vast majority of these women are Aboriginal Territorians.

Putting these figures into a broader context, partner homicide in the Northern Territory is seven times the national average. Endemic, a scourge and a crisis—many labels have been put on this tragic situation and they are all fitting descriptions. It is, without a doubt, one of the most urgent issues facing the Northern Territory and one that I ask the parliament to unite on.

Last week was a dark time for many Territorians. There was passage of regressive and punitive legislation by the CLP government that will see more children, as young as 10, locked away in our prison system. I know the community has had enough of children and young people engaging in criminal activity and people want to see consequences. I know that many families have had their houses and cars broken into and their privacy violated.

However, even the CLP last week acknowledged during debate that youth offending does not happen in a vacuum. Often the young people who are engaging in criminal and antisocial behaviour have been raised in households—or maybe they do not have a house—where domestic and family violence is an everyday occurrence in their lives. Home is not necessarily a safe place for some of these kids, which pushes them into the child protection or youth justice system. It is important that we establish the strong links between domestic violence and youth offending because if this parliament is truly serious about improving community safety and reducing the rate of crime across our communities, we must maintain a focus on tackling domestic, family and sexual violence in the Territory in order to build a safe home for all and a strong community for everybody.

We cannot afford to dismiss it as something that impacts only those immediately involved. This is simply not the case. The ripple effects of domestic violence are felt throughout our whole Territory community.

Reducing domestic violence is an issue that requires a concerted bipartisan approach. That is what this matter of public importance is about. Our Territory Labor opposition wants to see the CLP government and the crossbench working together to tackle and address family, domestic and sexual violence and ensuring that we have strong police, schools, community sectors, Aboriginal community-controlled organisations, traditional owners and families working together to turn the tide on what is a life and death matter for many Territory women.

Our Labor opposition strongly urges the CLP government to fast-track the rollout of Labor's $180m additional investment, which the CLP also committed to delivering, and put this money directly into the frontline specialist services that need it. The Labor opposition puts hand on heart to say that we will do everything we can to support this rollout, but it must be done urgently.

We ask the CLP government to accept our offer of bipartisan support—place this on the record today—for the next four years, to ensure that we all advocate for Commonwealth funding that is needs-based to combat domestic, family and sexual violence across the Territory. We did this for eight years as a Labor government, and we will continue to do it for the next four years as the Labor opposition. I am sure that members of the crossbench will be happy to join in this collective approach, should they choose to represent and be bipartisan on all accounts for such a critical matter—one that truly transcends any political differences we may have in this House.

We know what we have seen so far. The CLP government has a narrow focus on only punitive measures and consequences in response when it comes to community safety. We offer this as an opportunity to tell the public how we will bind together to ensure that future laws passed by the Northern Territory parliament will be aimed at reducing and preventing crime, including that important and critical crisis area of family, domestic and sexual violence across the Territory.

Punitive measures are important and they can, but not always, be a deterrent. However, they cannot be the whole story when it comes to community safety. We implore the government members to ensure they go into their new role with open eyes and an open heart to tackle the causes of crime in our community and ensure there is a focus on survivors and victims of domestic, family and sexual violence.

We want to ensure there are early prevention, intervention and rehabilitation measures. The experts in the family, domestic and sexual violence sector have been calling for this for many years. We know that about half the men in Territory prisons are there as a result of domestic violence offences.

The stark statistics in the sorry domestic violence story across the Territory are distressing, but together we can turn this around. Violence against women is preventable, but only if we all work together.

The former Territory Labor government laid the foundation for a strong and sustainable response for domestic, family and sexual violence prevention in the Northern Territory. It will not be fixed over eight years, four years or, indeed, the next 10 years, but it can start now with the new government's willingness to work together to ensure what has already been laid continues to be a path for all.

From coming into government in 2016 until the August 2024 election, Territory Labor invested over a quarter of a billion dollars into preventing and responding to family, domestic and sexual violence in the Northern Territory. The annual investment grew from $17m in 2016 to $70m in Budget 2024, with a commitment to continue to increase funding to better respond to the unfortunate need across our communities. This investment has supported and continues to support important initiatives in health, justice, policing, Corrections, men's behaviour change programs and reducing the impacts of violence on victim–survivors, including Territory kids.

The former Labor government's investment was underpinned by a number of evidence-based strategies that we urge the CLP to continue, and we will support it to do so.

The 10-year Safe, Respected and Free From Violence reduction framework is an allied action plan that underpins and coordinates the efforts of government bodies, non-government organisations and community stakeholders until 2028. It offers a shared vision for keeping women and children safe and supporting Territory families to be strong. The strategy articulated that turning the tide of domestic, family and sexual violence in the Territory will take a concerted and sustained long-term effort through shared responsibility and partnerships.

Territory Labor asks Chief Minister Lia Finocchiaro to ensure we continue to work together on this issue. We have seen one public statement on this by the Chief Minister, and we welcome many more. On behalf of the Territory Labor opposition, I place on the record that we will walk next to the Chief Minister, hand in hand with the CLP government, every step of the way to Canberra and back to ensure our Territory frontline services have everything they need to continue the work to combat this terrible scourge. We cannot afford to shift our focus from this crisis. We need to stay strong and work together until Territory women and Territory kids are safe from violence.

Territory Labor rolled out Action Plans 1 and 2 under the Safe, Respected and Free From Violence framework, which was backed up with critical investment. The family safety framework was a key initiative from Action Plan 1, which includes an evidence-based risk assessment process, better support for victim–survivors and ongoing funding for a specialist domestic, family and sexual violence court in Alice Springs, where we have seen success.

This was an important step in providing safer, less traumatic court experiences for victim–survivors of domestic violence and their family members, who now have their own entrance and waiting area in the court so that they do not come face to face with the alleged perpetrator in their lives. The courtroom, as you would know, Madam Speaker, is also set up so that they cannot be seen or heard by the defendant, causing further trauma with that experience. At the time, Larissa Ellis, the CEO of Women's Safety Services of Central Australia, said:

The new facilities will provide a significant improvement in the court experience for survivors and victims of family violence and will hopefully empower more vulnerable victims to follow matters through the courts.

That was one of a number of key initiatives that were implemented under Action Plan 1.

Another was the release of the dedicated Sexual Violence Prevention and Response Framework. That strategy focuses on combating the significant harm that is sexual violence, which often goes hand in hand with physical assault and abuse, but remains largely under-reported in our community.

I spoke earlier of the CLP's narrow and punitive-based approach to community safety. It is disappointing that it has taken only a narrow approach to this issue as well, with the appointment of a Minister for Prevention of Domestic Violence, leaving out any reference to family violence and sexual violence. This fails to recognise the full extent and weight of what is being experienced and the impact of violence on families, particularly children, young people and women in our community.

Our former Labor government released a second action plan in August 2023, building on the progress towards generational change and safer communities.

A new domestic, family and sexual violence co-responder model was introduced in Alice Springs, which the sector had been calling for. This model sees police and victim–survivor support organisations responding to domestic, family and sexual violence incidents in a partnership arrangement to ensure an appropriate and effective response.

Action Plan 2 also saw the establishment of an Aboriginal-led DFSV prevention initiative fund, which expanded domestic and family violence programs in prisons and invested in counselling services for women in custody.

Men's behaviour change programs in the community were expanded and the specialist DFSV court in Alice Springs was strengthened with additional legal supports. It also included strengthened support for specialist services for child victim–survivors.

Importantly, each initiative implemented under the Safe, Respected and Free From Violence framework had been informed by data analysis, research, consultation and expert advice from across the DFSV sector.

It is worth putting on the record that an expert is someone with broad competence, knowledge and skills acquired through research, education, experience and practice in the particular field. When it comes to understanding and responding to domestic, family and sexual violence—in fact, any complex social or economic challenge in the Territory—our Territory Labor opposition will always listen to and take guidance from subject matter experts because we know that these people have, in many cases, dedicated their lives to researching and understanding a particular issue to offer their expertise for solutions. When this knowledge is applied to policies, programs, regulations and initiatives, we have better informed, targeted and effective outcomes for the benefit of all the communities we represent.

Amplifying Voices is one of the programs our former Labor government invested in. It was co-designed by women with lived experience of domestic, family and sexual violence, working alongside experts in the field. It is a training program that prepares victim–survivors to become advocates through exercising their lived experience to help influence system reforms so that services, programs and policies from government and the services sector better reflect the needs and experience of victim–survivors.

For too long domestic violence was a taboo subject and victim–survivors were largely voiceless. If we are to stem the prevalence of domestic violence in our community, it is important that victim–survivors are given a strong voice and are empowered to speak up and speak out through programs such as Amplifying Voices. We need to allow the light to shine on the darkest corners of our community if we are to fully address domestic violence.

Yesterday I met with the Chief Executive Officer of Bagala Aboriginal Corporation, Mr Steve Smith. Bagala is the representative of the TO group in Barunga and Wugularr community in the Arnhem electorate. It won an extensive and resourced grant to facilitate a community-led men's wellness centre program. The program aims to address in a culturally responsive and holistic way the range of complex issues facing men in those communities, including mental health concerns, substance abuse, family violence and cultural disconnection. Bagala received funding of $4.4m to embed this program over the next three years. It will deliver cultural

healing and social programs on country, healing events, workshops, substance abuse workshops and family violence prevention and mentorship programs.

These types of programs will ensure we see more Aboriginal organisations across the Territory taking on that responsibility to better support mental, emotional and cultural wellbeing for men in the community, strengthening community and cultural ties, developing leadership skills and reducing the rates of substance abuse and family violence.

If we are to truly reduce the rates of family, domestic and sexual violence in the community we need to all do our bit. Community-driven programs implemented within a local cultural context, like the one that Bagala is putting in place, play a critical role in turning around behaviour and supporting stronger communities and stronger families by setting clear standards of what is acceptable behaviour.

As I outlined, during Labor's time in power it continued to increase the focus on investment in domestic, family and sexual violence. We need to do this as a concerted effort in close partnership to ensure our frontline services—Aboriginal organisations, non-Aboriginal organisations, all our community-controlled organisations, the legal sector, victim–survivors and other community members—deliver programs and initiatives that are evidence based and responsive in a way that our communities deserve.

The fight for needs-based funding continues and is as urgent as ever. We need leadership from Chief Minister Lia Finocchiaro. We will continue to support her and advocate for this when she attends National Cabinet in Canberra or wherever across the country. We are a united Northern Territory, and we will continue to address family, domestic and sexual violence.

Ms CAHILL (Prevention of Domestic Violence): Madam Speaker, domestic, family and sexual violence is insidious and impacts thousands of Territorians directly and indirectly. Each day perpetrators terrorise their victims who most often are known to them.

Our community and the country as a whole were appalled when in 2023 Northern Territory Coroner Elisabeth Armitage reported that at least three women lost their lives to domestic violence in the NT each year. Since June this year, nine women have lost their lives to domestic violence. Families have lost a child, a sibling, a cousin and children have lost their mum.

Domestic, family and sexual violence is the main driver of homelessness in the Northern Territory. It is often the trigger that results in a child being placed in care. It tears families apart. The tentacles of the scourge that is domestic, family and sexual violence creep across all aspects of our community. There is no question that domestic, family and sexual violence is having a significant impact on our community.

There is equally no question that the processes implemented by the previous Labor government to address the issues of domestic, family and sexual violence are not working. Why do I say this? Because over the eight years when those on the other side had an opportunity to make real change and take real action to protect the victims of domestic, family and sexual violence and make our community safer by addressing the horrendous impact of domestic, family and sexual violence, the incidence of domestic violence assaults across the Territory increased by 82%. For some regions, the incidence of domestic, family and sexual violence doubled—in Tennant Creek by 101%. In others it more than doubled—Katherine by 135% and Palmerston by 180%.

Most violent crime in the Northern Territory is domestic violence related, and more than one-third of the offenders before the court have had a domestic violence-related offence. The financial cost of domestic, family and sexual violence to our community is more than $606m per year.

The system that has been in place for quite some time is clearly broken. A new approach is urgently needed. It is incredibly reassuring to hear that those on the other side are prepared to take a bipartisan approach to this issue because that is what our community will expect as steps are taken to address this crisis. I look forward to those on the other side supporting an approach focused on measurable deliverable outcomes and supporting programs designed to deliver a reduction in domestic violence assaults—not the damning increase in the incidence of domestic violence that we have seen in recent years—programs that are not couched in vague motherhood statements but have clear actionable deliverables.

To that end, an audit of the Domestic, Family & Sexual Violence Reduction Framework 2018–2028 will be undertaken to ensure programs are achieving measurable outcomes. We will consult with communities and service providers on the ground to understand what they need. We will listen to frontline workers on what works and what does not. We will fight for the Territory to receive the necessary funding to deliver these

programs based on need, as the need is great. The only acceptable measure of the success of these programs will be a reduction in domestic violence-related assaults.

There is a great deal to be done if we are to stem the tide of domestic, family and sexual violence in our community. It cannot be more of the same; the approach needs to be different. This is what our government will do.

I am reassured to hear the Leader of the Opposition observe that to make any inroads in reducing the incidence of domestic, family and sexual violence a bipartisan approach is needed because that tells me that those on the other side know that change, innovation and development of what is required on the ground—when we hear from those on the ground—is needed.

Mr GUYULA (Mulka): Madam Speaker, I thank the Leader of the Opposition for bringing this MPI to the Chamber. This is an important issue.

I extend my condolences to those families who have experienced loss at the hands of a perpetrator of family violence. I also extend my sympathy to those who are survivors of violence and those who are currently surviving violence. We must fix this issue for all of you.

I encourage everyone to stand strongly against violence. If you know someone is being harmed, speak out. We must stand strong to intervene and protect those who need it. We must do our job as leaders to protect our communities.

The Galiwinku Women's Space is a community-led project that many strong elders in Galiwinku have supported and worked hard to achieve. I acknowledge my *gurrung* Bettina Danganbarr, who was part of fighting for a safe space for women and children in Galiwinku. She was awarded the Order of Australia medal earlier this year.

Sadly, the infrastructure that the government provided for the women's space has considerable problems because the contractors repurposed old dongas that already needed considerable maintenance. I believe there are still roof leaks, among other problems.

Apart from these problems, it is important that there is a women's space that has ownership by Yolngu women leaders of our community and is underpinned by Yolngu Indigenous culture and law.

In the same way, there is a need for a men's space and resources to run programs for young men so that male elders can run programs in our communities to address the issue of building respectful relationships and teaching young men how to behave and become strong family men and community leaders.

In the 13th Assembly Minister Wakefield came to Galiwinku and met with community members about having women's and men's spaces. This is appropriate for the Yolngu community, as we often have men's and women's spaces where our elders hold authority in those spaces and work to manage and lead our communities.

The main message I bring is that we must have a strong bipartisan approach to dealing with the issues of domestic, family and sexual violence. More importantly, we must work in partnership with our First Nations people. All members of this House—the government, opposition and crossbench—and all organisations must work with the elders and leaders of First Nations communities if we are to have successful outcomes.

Community-led solutions must drive the change. We must see resources that empower our people to bring programs that are culturally appropriate and draw on our cultural strengths.

To be clear: family violence is not lawful according to our law, Yolngu *rom*. Our way and our law do not condone violence. There are clear laws about looking after family that are in step with the balanda laws.

To get the most successful outcomes resourcing community-led solutions and those organisations that are directed by our leaders and elders will be critical to bringing change.

Mr PAECH (Gwoja): Madam Speaker, I acknowledge the members who have contributed to the debate so far. It is an important discussion to have before the Assembly, because domestic, family and sexual violence is affecting our communities in every corner of the Northern Territory and the nation. Domestic violence is insidious. It is an epidemic that is tearing apart families and communities and is causing great unrest and conflict across the Northern Territory.

I am not here to say who should have done what, what should be done or what did not get done. I acknowledge that everyone in this Assembly who contributed last week and will probably contribute tonight has a genuine passion and commitment to change the Northern Territory and overcome the challenges that many of our own families face in the domestic and family violence space. The reform work that needs to be done is hard.

We acknowledge the initiatives that have been delivered. The specialist DV court in Alice Springs is a fantastic initiative. The men's behaviour change programs rolled out across the Northern Territory, delivered by organisations like the Tangentyere Women's Family Safety Group in Alice Springs and CatholicCare in the Top End, are important.

I acknowledge the incredible work of what was then called ICRO, which was a coordinated response of government to look at what it would take to address domestic and family violence. It was an incredible piece of work. It is important to acknowledge all the officials who came from various departments—Territory Families, the Attorney-General's Department, Chief Minister and Cabinet, and Police—to work through what needed to be done. It paved a way for the future in understanding some of the costs.

Needs-based funding is by far the biggest matter we need to overcome in the Northern Territory. It is important that we stick together as a parliament to address this and call for needs-based funding. I said in this Chamber last week that I am prepared to jump on an aeroplane with the Chief Minister in a true mark of bipartisanship and march the halls in Canberra, knocking on doors and talking to anyone who will listen to us about the need for needs-based funding in the Northern Territory.

The 15th Assembly has an exciting opportunity to work together and put this matter above politics. I genuinely feel that we can do this. This is not about what has happened, what should happen or how it can happen. This is a matter that we should all come together on because I do not think there is a member in this parliament who has not experienced domestic and family violence or had a loved one experience it. We owe it to all our communities, families, friends and constituents to work together on this issue.

Needs-based funding will be critical to overcoming those challenges. When we talk to people who run amazing organisations on the front line they tell us about the critical need for an increase in funding, whether they are running a crisis shelter or accommodation facility such as WoSSCA in Alice Springs, Dawn House in the Top End or one of our other community services which does the important work of responding to domestic, family and sexual violence.

Needs-based funding will increase the number of people seeking those services. The statistics will rise, which is not a bad thing because it means that vulnerable people feel comfortable enough to say, 'I feel there is so much support out there for me and my family that I can finally leave and remove myself from a toxic relationship where I feel disempowered and unable to play a role in shaping my future and destiny'. We need to be clear with Canberra that needs-based funding will increase the statistics because people will be comfortable in seeking support. It is important that we acknowledge this.

There are great organisations across the Territory and I have spoken about them in general, but we have a problem in this country when our own DV activists are killed by their partners. I acknowledge my good friend Kumarn Rubuntja who was killed by her partner out the front of Alice Springs Hospital. She had reached out for help so many times and was ignored, not by one agency but multiple agencies. There is a problem. I will not blame anyone tonight because there is a problem with the system, and we need to work together to change the system which is above politics.

I commend Chief Minister Lia Finocchiaro for the $180m commitment. It is a fantastic step forward. That money needs to be at the front line for women's shelters and to provide support.

As we talk about this matter of public importance, we have already lost seven women in the Northern Territory to domestic and family violence. My own cousin from Lajamanu was the seventh person who lost her life. Again, it was to her own partner. Now my family has to tell my little families that they do not have a mum, an aunty, a grandmother or a cousin.

As we talk about this matter of public importance, there are two women in the ICU at Royal Darwin Hospital. There is another woman in the ICU in Adelaide because of domestic and family violence.

When will it stop? The only way it will stop is by this Assembly coming together and calling for needs-based funding and improving the services and conditions of the safe houses in remote communities, women's

shelters, crisis accommodation and behaviour change programs. That is how we change. That is how we get people on the straight and narrow.

There are people who think it is weak to call out domestic and family violence. There are people who think you are less of a man if you stand with people to call out domestic and family violence. It is not weak. You are more of a man when you stand up and call out domestic and family violence. You are more of a worthy person when you stand with important movements and call that out.

I am a proud Aboriginal person. I know my culture and our law, and I respect it. Domestic and family violence has no role in Aboriginal culture—never has, never will. There are elements of our culture that seem brutal, and they are. We inflict pain when we lose a loved one sometimes to help as part of the grieving process and as a mark of respect. However, domestic and family violence and the abuse of women and children has no place in Aboriginal culture and never will.

There is work on how we empower families to take control of their lives. This is done through support and by establishing positive relationships. Men's behaviour change programs and campaigns like Girls Can Boys Can are an important step because we need to break down gender norms. As a country we have to come to terms with the fact that we have developed a rough and brutal attitude that needs to be dismantled. We need to honour and respect our women and children and provide a world where they can live free from violence and are empowered to live their best lives. That is the role of every one of us.

We also need to call out people who stand up at 'No More' rallies when they have a history of domestic and family violence themselves. We need to—I will borrow the words from the Member for Drysdale—have the courage to call out bad behaviour when we see it. When people are standing there who we know have a history and have not attended a program to address that behaviour and change, we have an important role to say that is not okay.

That is not to dismiss people who have gone through a program. There are amazing people in my home in Central Australia. I have seen people who were a part of the men's behaviour change program finishing it and continuing—driving more than 200 kilometres per week—to participate in the program to support other men to stand strong and change behaviours and attitudes. It is heartening to see that.

We have to get over this thinking of, 'I'm not an abuser, and it's not all men'. No-one has ever said that it is all men. We are saying that most of the time it is men who are doing it to a wife, a girlfriend, a mother, a daughter, a cousin, an aunty or just women in general. It is important that we call out that behaviour.

There are amazing campaigns that we should all get behind. This parliament has done important reform over many years to contemporise the domestic and family violence legislation. I recommit to the fact that where there is good legislation that protects victims and victim–survivors of domestic and family violence, I will support it. It is important that people in our community are protected and supported. We have seen the implications of this for our families.

I leave the offer that I am willing to do whatever it takes—move motions or a remonstrance of the parliament to Canberra—to call on needs-based funding for this important matter. Domestic and family violence has no place in the Northern Territory or the country. We all need to continue to stand together to address this.

It is important to remember—I need to be mindful, I need to learn and I must do better—that our language matters. We should not be saying that we are fighting against it or tackling it; we need to be overcoming it. We need not to use aggressive language when we are talking about domestic and family violence because for some people that can be alarming and upsetting. It can lead to people reliving their trauma. That is the last thing I ever want to be a part of.

We are all here to do good and we will do good. This is an important issue, and I commend this matter of public importance to the Assembly.

J DAVIS (Johnston): Madam Speaker, before I speak on the matter of public importance, I ask the Chamber whether we can have a minute's silence for the women who have been killed in the Territory. Since June seven women have been killed.

Madam SPEAKER: Does the Chamber support this? It is supported.

Members stood for one minute's silence as a sign of respect.

J DAVIS: In Jewish culture when someone dies we say, 'Every life is a universe' and we say to the survivors, 'We wish you long life'. I cannot imagine the pain of having someone you love—your sister, mother, daughter or friend—killed by the man who is supposed to love her the most.

I can hardly comprehend the size of this problem nationally, where one woman is killed every four to five days. As we know, in the NT it is worse. Seven women have been killed since June and three women are in intensive care. That is seven universes. The domestic homicide rate in the Northern Territory is seven times higher than the national average, and the majority of these women are Aboriginal women.

I acknowledge the women who have been killed and the courage and dignity of those who stand against domestic, family and sexual violence, who take action to challenge that violence and who hold people who use violence accountable. I acknowledge the people and organisations who work tirelessly every day in the Northern Territory to prevent and respond to domestic, family and sexual violence. Their commitment, skill, experience and wisdom underpin work that is of core value to our communities.

Domestic, family and sexual violence is overwhelming, but it is not an insurmountable problem. Every expert says the same thing: domestic, family and sexual violence is preventable, it is not inevitable and when it occurs its impacts can be reduced. The evidence tells us that to prevent, reduce and ultimately end domestic, family and sexual violence we must address the underlying drivers that cause it. The drivers are gender inequality, rigid gender stereotypes and, for Aboriginal communities, the ongoing impacts of dispossession, poverty, colonisation and intergenerational trauma.

Comprehensive research and work has been done in the Northern Territory, which the Member for Gwoja referred to, and it is publicly available. It tells us:

- The Northern Territory has the highest rates of domestic and family violence-related assault, sexual assault and homicide in Australia.
- Our rates and numbers are increasing year on year.
- Aboriginal women make up the majority of victim–survivors.
- The vast majority of people committing domestic, family and sexual violence are men.
- The largest number of reported offences are in remote areas of the NT, followed by Alice Springs and Darwin.
- The highest rates of reported domestic, family and sexual violence are seen in Tennant Creek, Katherine and Alice Springs.

Less than 10% of domestic, family and sexual violence is reported to police. Although the rates are high, the actual prevalence is far higher. We all want the rates to decrease, but this will happen only in the long term. As the Member for Gwoja said, it may seem counterintuitive but reported domestic, family and sexual violence will increase in the medium term as a result of improved responses and prevention efforts.

I know that we are not sitting by and doing nothing, and we have high-standard plans in place and experts who have worked tirelessly to address these issues and strong safety mechanisms. We all genuinely want change, and there is a strong commitment across this Chamber that we create that change together. But what are we missing? What else do we need? This is a complex problem, and there is no quick fix. It is one of the most complex problems confronting our government and our community.

I have listened to people working in services and spoken to experts. To me it is clear what we need to do. We need to increase prevention to stop violence before it starts. We need to build community understanding of domestic, family and sexual violence and shift attitudes and behaviours. We need to work with our children and educate them about safe, healthy and respectful relationships from their earliest years. We need more Aboriginal communities and strong elders to be supported to stand up against violence.

We need to focus on men's violence. Stopping domestic, family and sexual violence is not possible without interventions with people who are using it. We need to expand men's behaviour change programs. We need men to step up. Men have an important role to play in challenging attitudes and behaviours that condone inequality and domestic, family and sexual violence. Stopping violence against women is not possible without men.

We need more early intervention programs that work with young men who are starting to use violence, especially sexual violence in their intimate relationships. We need to improve crisis accommodation, longer-term housing, counselling and support for victim–survivors to reduce the impact of domestic, family and sexual violence. We need a strong system response that prioritises safety, respect, compassion and support for victim–survivors, including children. We need more safe places for women and children to go, especially in remote communities, and more transitional and secure housing for victim–survivors to rebuild their lives. We need healing programs for victim–survivors. We need specialist responses to children who have seen and heard things that they never should have.

We need to support specialist services and frontline responders who are faced with the most unimaginable scenes every day. They need training, support and retention systems. We need to grow our skilled workforce. They need secure funding that keeps pace with the growing demand so that they do not have to spend half their time fighting for their next funding agreement instead of focusing on their clients.

We need much more resourcing, as we have heard, and it needs to be ongoing funding based on the actual need. We need this from both the Northern Territory and the Commonwealth. Services have told me that because of the lack of real indexation, their funding has been reduced in real terms by up to 20%. They have also told me they get short-term one-off contracts rather than sustainable funding. This needs to stop. Drip-feeding our services with stop–start trickles of funding does not work.

We need a peak body for domestic, family and sexual violence services. We need to support and grow the good things we already have. We have heard in this Chamber about some of these things. There is the Family Safety Framework in Alice Springs, Darwin, Katherine, Yuendumu, Tennant Creek and Nhulunbuy where services come together to make risk management plans for victim–survivors at serious risk. The risk assessment and management framework guides all workers in a shared practice to help them work together to keep people who commit domestic, family and sexual violence in view and keep victim–survivors safe using evidence-based tools. There are our hardworking stretched women's crisis services and men's behaviour change programs.

We need to address harmful alcohol use. To be clear: on its own alcohol does not cause violence because violence occurs when alcohol is not involved and many people who consume alcohol are never violent. However, across Australia, for Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people, alcohol can weaken people's capacity for positive and respectful behaviour and can contribute to the likelihood and severity of violence.

We need leadership—which is what we are hearing in this room—and a true long-term commitment to domestic, family and sexual violence not being treated as a party political issue. We need long-term investment across election cycles. This is especially important because domestic, family and sexual violence reform requires generational change.

We need to listen to and respect the research and evidence, the specialist expertise and the lived experience of those who have courageously and generously shared their personal stories. We need to learn from the tragic stories of the women and children who have suffered and died in the Northern Territory as a result of domestic, family and sexual violence. We need a systematic domestic and family violence death review process as other jurisdictions have.

The evidence base for domestic, family and sexual violence reform is a fast-growing one, with new research being released every day. Five years ago no-one knew what coercive control was, and now it is a household term. This is helping women all over the world understand that just because he did not hit you does not mean it is not domestic violence.

Most importantly, as we are hearing in this Chamber, we need to work together. A coordinated response is essential because of the serious risk that domestic, family and sexual violence may be exacerbated by a siloed approach. We need to do this together—with parties working together, government working across government, agency working with agency, sector with sector and service with service—because domestic, family and sexual violence brings people, children and families into contact with multiple parts of the service system, including domestic, family and sexual violence services; police; justice; housing; children and families services; child protection; and health. If these systems work in a fragmented way our work will be ineffective. If we are not coordinated we are creating more opportunities for victim–survivors to be seriously injured or killed and for perpetrators to fall through the cracks.

If we want to solve the crime problem we need to pour everything into addressing domestic, family and sexual violence because police report that two-thirds of the assaults in the Northern Territory are domestic and family violence related.

If we want to solve homelessness we need to address domestic, family and sexual violence because this is the main reason that women and children leave their homes and the most common reason for seeking assistance from homelessness services in the Northern Territory.

If we want to reduce our prisoner numbers we need to address this because two-thirds of prisoners are held for domestic and family violence-related offences.

If we want to reduce the strain on our police officers we need to address this because police respond to more than 100 domestic, family and sexual violence incidents every day.

If we want to stop youth crime we need to address this because domestic and family violence is also a strong indicator for children entering the criminal justice system.

If we want to fix our economy we need to address this because domestic and family violence costs $21.7bn in Australia every year. The cost of domestic, family and sexual violence in the Northern Territory has been calculated at close to $600m a year. These are the costs of our police, prison system, courts, hospitals and children protection system which are spending most of their time responding to domestic, family and sexual violence.

If we want to close the gap we need to address this because it is the leading cause of Aboriginal children being placed in out-of-home care nationally.

I am heartened to hear the bipartisan commitment across this Chamber to address this issue that affects every one of us. Every life is a universe. Every woman killed is a universe lost to her friends, family and community. We cannot afford to ignore this.

Dr RAHMAN (Fong Lim): Mr Deputy Speaker, I welcome the raising of this matter of public importance by the Leader of the Opposition. Domestic, family and sexual violence are matters of deep public importance across all electorates, including my electorate of Fong Lim.

I thank the Minister for Prevention of Domestic Violence for her contribution to this debate on behalf of the government and for clearly explaining the scope of the issues. There is a cost in every way to society, of course, but to the victims in the first instance when we are talking about these issues. As has been raised by other members, the social and economic costs are innumerable.

Our government is clearly committed to reduction and prevention. I thank the minister for articulating clearly in her statement that we acknowledge the scope of this problem, do not seek in any way to diminish it and are committed to the prevention of domestic violence.

This is a serendipitous and timely matter of public importance, given our discussions on alcohol policy today and the suite of legislation we are considering in this parliamentary sitting, last week and this week.

The proposer for this matter of public importance seeks a strong bipartisan approach to addressing these issues, a commitment reaffirmed by our minister and echoed by every voice in this Chamber in respect of the contributions that have been made to this debate. It is in that spirit that I am also participating in this debate to share with all of you as colleagues a small portion of what I learned in preparing for debate on the Bills under recent or current consideration.

You have all heard me raise the need to be mindful of expert evidence with specificity and not just motherhood statements or sweeping generalisations. I draw your attention to a couple of pieces of work that are salient to the debate and informative for everybody going forward. One is from the *International Journal of Drug Policy*; another is from *Drug and Alcohol Review*.

What is noticeable about these pieces of research is that they are both academic journal papers published this year; they are geographically specific to considering issues in the 25 electorates we represent; and their contributing authors are people invested in the Northern Territory and allied and associated to bodies like the Menzies School of Health Research. They are rigorous pieces of work that should inform why there is a connection between what we are seeking to do this week and the aspiration to reduce and, indeed, prevent domestic, family and sexual violence.

I will not cherrypick data from these works. That has happened in lots of forms in this Chamber in recent years, but I am pleased to say less so in the first few days that I have been here. I do not want to distort the totality of the work, and I encourage people to make their own inquiries, but I will speak to the broad

parameters of these studies and their conclusions because they inform what everybody is calling for, which is evidence-based strategy.

Clifford, Wright, Miller, Coomber, Griffiths, Smith and Livingston produced a paper on the impacts of alcohol supply reduction measures on police-recorded adult domestic and family violence in the Northern Territory. Their work essentially looked at the Banned Drinker Register, the minimum unit price, police auxiliary liquor inspectors and daily purchase opening hours, examining data from January 2014 until February 2020.

I will quote specifically, so as not to distort their findings or put my own spin on it in any way. Their summary conclusion is as follows:

> *PALIs and DPOH were associated with some reductions in DFV; the BDR was associated with some increases. The upward trend commences prior to the BDR, so it is also plausible that the BDR had no effect on DFV outcomes. Although MUP was associated with reductions in the NT-wide model, there were no changes in sites without cooccurring PALIs.*

This is rigorous, independent, academic research and is the kind of work we should be paying mind to. The conclusion of this body of work is:

> *This study provided evidence that two of the four alcohol policies assessed were associated with some reductions in DFV (PALIs and DPOH). It appears that MUP did not affect DFV outcomes. The BDR was associated with some increases, which could represent an actual increase or artificial increase. Given that the upward trend appears to commence prior to the BDR and continue after BDR, it is also possible that the BDR simply had no effect on population-level DFV outcomes. Future research should consider the impact of the BDR, as an individual ban, on individual outcomes rather than at the population level. Exploration of the impact of these policies on other alcohol-related harms would provide a more robust picture of the extent of the policies' impacts.*

You can draw your own conclusions, but the most contemporaneous research produced by the people who are examining our polity suggests that there is a strong correlation between alcohol and this matter of public importance. That is why it is worth raising, not in the interest of politicising the debate but to provide context to the debate so that we are doing more than issuing motherhood statements and statements of lament and sadness.

I turn to the paper on police-recorded adult sexual assault in the Northern Territory involving alcohol and alcohol policy effects. A study done by Clifford et al examining data from 2014 to 2020 concluded:

> *The rate of adult sexual assaults in the NT is extremely high and many involve alcohol. Neither the Banned Drinker Register or Minimum Unit Price were associated with changes in police-recorded adult sexual assault in Greater Darwin or across the NT.*

We have heard a range of statistics. These statistics are robust:

> *From January 2014 to December 2020 most police-recorded sexual assault victims were female (92%). Half (50%) were non-Aboriginal, 41% were Aboriginal and 9% were recorded as unknown. A large proportion of victims were assaulted by strangers (38%), followed by acquaintances (27%). Almost 1 in 4 adult sexual assaults (23%) included a domestic and family violence flag.*

Drawing this back to where we are today:

> *Alcohol was involved in 40% of adult sexual assaults, including use by offenders, victims or both.*

You cannot ignore the nexus between what we are trying to achieve and this matter of public importance.

This secondary piece of research also aimed to assess whether the introduction of two recent alcohol policies was associated with changes in police-recorded sexual assaults and concluded that neither the BDR nor MUP were associated with changes in police-recorded adult sexual assault across the NT or in greater Darwin.

The study's authors acknowledge the same limitations that have been acknowledged by others in relation to sexual assault being chronically under-reported, not least in the context of the additional challenges of remote and rural areas and alcohol being involved et cetera. They note:

> *While the underreporting of sexual assault is a significant limitation, provided a willingness to report has remained stable, the trends in this data will broadly represent the underlying trends in the incidence of sexual assault.*

The sum of this is to carry weight in the debate that we are having more broadly. It states:

> *Despite the low counts, the rate of 105 adult sexual assaults per 100,000 people in the NT is extremely high, and even lower bound estimates of alcohol-involvement indicate that it is a notable factor.*

Evidence-based strategies, if that is what we aspire to, will require us to acknowledge—with some degree of humility and calm—that what has been done in the last eight years in this space clearly does not have a strong evidentiary basis to support going forward in a similar direction, no matter what our intuitive or anecdotal feeling might be.

Labor raised the point, 'What will it take to address DV?' Addressing alcohol policy in new ways will do that, and that is precisely what this government is seeking to do in this first parliamentary sitting.

I have said a lot in defence of qualitative data collection and the body of collected testimony presented by members of this government in defence of the cohesive package we are providing to reduce crime. I have said far less about the weight of analysis of this kind.

The Member for Johnston asked, 'What more do we need to be doing?' We need to be paying attention to academic research. I have a small understanding of what it takes to produce content like this and the rigour that goes into this process. This work deserves to be read by everyone in this Chamber. It deserves to be respected in a distinctive way alongside the collected testimony that is presented in this House.

I therefore encourage all members to be as well informed as possible if we are of a collective mindset to address the prevention of the matter of public importance that has been raised today. That includes being mindful of research, the likes of which I have drawn attention to.

Mx McNAMARA (Nightcliff): Mr Deputy Speaker, I am heartened to see this matter brought before the parliament, so I thank the Leader of the Opposition. I thank the Member for Johnston for the minute's silence.

I briefly refer to my first speech, in which I spoke about this issue:

> *Throughout the election, if I ever heard mention of domestic, family and sexual violence it was often tacked onto the end, almost as an afterthought.*

I have said this many times before and say it again: domestic, family and sexual violence is the largest social issue we face, whether that is a motherhood statement or not. It is the largest aspect and driver of crime. Over 60% of men incarcerated in our prisons are there for domestic violence-related offences. We must look at all crime through the lens of DFSV. Women and children are being turned away from shelters every day, and frontline services have cried out for adequate funding for decades from both sides of politics. I am an assault survivor, and I will fully and relentlessly force the spotlight onto properly addressing this violence once and for all. The safety of my community is of the utmost importance to me; we are not safe as a community until everyone is safe.

Over the past decade as domestic, family and sexual violence has been discussed more, it has always frustrated me that the word 'men' was glaringly absent. The headlines were always about domestic violence or violence against women, as though this violence is being committed by some faceless nameless entity. As the Member for Gwoja said, 'Our words matter'. If we cannot name the problem, how will we ever fix it?

I know that men are also victims of family violence, as are children, but the perpetrators who commit violence against women, boys and girls and sometimes other men are overwhelmingly men. It brings me some sense of relief that as a society we are at a place where we can name the problem properly. I am finally seeing references to combating men's violence, although it is still not present enough in the reporting.

I refer to Assistant Commissioner Wurst's statements after the alleged murder of a Lajamanu woman this week. He said:

> *What we're dealing with here is another tragedy, another tragedy for the Northern Territory, another tragedy for the community …*

The woman who passed away had a family, she had an extended family across the Warlpiri network, she had her own children—they do not have a mother now.

…

It is something that the Northern Territory community needs to wake up to, to deal with and not accept …

The Northern Territory has Australia's highest number of domestic and family violence incidents, with an intimate partner homicide rate seven times the national average. The majority of the women killed are Indigenous women.

It was good to see members acknowledge that alcohol is an exacerbating factor of DFSV. Assistant Commissioner Wurst noted that the last nine incidents involved alcohol as a contributing factor. This is why we desperately need good alcohol policy in the Territory and why I implore the CLP government not to do away with minimum unit pricing.

Reliable research shows that the introduction of a floor price resulted in a 21% reduction in alcohol-involved domestic violence assaults. I contest the Member for Fong Lim's interpretation of the Clifford et al study, which states that the MUP (minimum unit price) was associated with reductions. I am interested to investigate the modelling in their paper, but I do not have time to delve into that now. It is pertinent to point out that if you want us to pore over evidence—I want to pore over the evidence—it was your party that gave us a handful of days to consider this. That is not how good laws are made.

I cannot tell you how many emergency department doctors and nurses have told me that they are horrified by the CLP's intention to let people access cheaper alcohol. They deal with the consequences, so if you are listening to Territory voices, please listen to theirs.

Domestic violence services are crying out for needs-based funding. We have by far the highest DV rates in the country per capita, and population-based funding does not cut it. In September this year the Commonwealth announced $4.7bn for frontline DV services nationwide, but as our population is about 1% of the nation's population we get only peanuts.

I was glad to hear the Chief Minister and the Minister for Prevention of Domestic Violence speak about the importance of needs-based funding for the NT. I am also glad to hear the government and opposition acknowledge that this needs bipartisan support.

I implore everyone here, particularly the government, to make this your number one priority. We have heard from the CLP ad nauseam about its response to crime in the Territory, but I cannot stress enough that domestic, family and sexual violence is the largest aspect of crime and, along with poverty and the housing crisis, it is the largest driver of crime. Addressing all facets of domestic, family and sexual violence should be our number one priority if we want to make any dent in the Territory's crime problems.

I end this by paying my respects to the women who have been murdered in my electorate—women killed by men known to them in domestic violence incidents. Each one of them is a preventable tragedy. The most recent death in my electorate, who I will not name for cultural reasons, was in my suburb. In June this year a woman who was a mother and an emerging leader was killed by her previous partner in horrific circumstances less than 50 metres over my back fence while I lay sleeping. Every time I look at her house I think of her. I think of how this place has historically undervalued Aboriginal women's lives and deaths. I think of her family and children's pain.

Today I have been thinking about the bickering and cheap political pointscoring in this place, and I hope like hell that this government and this Assembly can get their proverbial together to do something to prevent this from happening to any other women.

Mr YOUNG (Daly): Mr Deputy Speaker, domestic, family and sexual violence is a dire issue that continues to have a terrible impact on families and communities across the Northern Territory. I thank the Leader of the Opposition for bringing it to the attention of the Assembly for discussion this evening.

It is important that we have this conversation in a respectful manner and not politicise the issue of domestic, family and sexual violence. We need to treat it with the seriousness it deserves. This is an issue that we as representatives of the Northern Territory and its electorates need to come together on and condemn strongly.

I agree with the Leader of the Opposition that the statistics make for incredibly distressing reading. We have seen too many stories in our newsfeeds over recent weeks, nationally and in the Northern Territory, describing the heartache and terror faced by families and communities impacted by the death of loved ones at the hands of someone they knew intimately. With tight-knit communities such as ours, we cannot go far without knowing someone who has or at least had a family member who has experienced domestic violence.

As my colleague the Member for Gwoja said last week in this Assembly:

> *Domestic violence is real. It is a pandemic that is destroying lives, dividing communities and holding back a better and brighter future for all.*

I extend my respects to the Member for Gwoja and the family of his constituent who was lost to domestic violence last week. I acknowledge the countless victims who have been lost to the terrible act of domestic violence.

Domestic, family and sexual violence is a serious and life-threatening problem that crosses all ages and cultural, ethnic and socioeconomic backgrounds. It is a blight on our society and has no place in our cities, regional centres or remote communities. No Territorian deserves to feel unsafe in their own home. We must do better, and I know we can.

Reducing domestic, family and sexual violence requires a united front and action from all parts of our society, including this Assembly, the Commonwealth and local governments, our multicultural communities, sporting groups, the Aboriginal community-controlled sector, faith-based communities and individuals alike.

Domestic, family and sexual violence should not and cannot be a discussion relegated to the sidelines; it should always be front and centre. We know that a shared awareness and understanding of domestic, family and sexual violence is the first step in addressing the issue and puts us on the path to working together and sharing information and skills which are essential to combating this crisis.

Given the urgency of this topic, I re-highlight some points that the Leader of the Opposition made clear before. The Northern Territory has the highest rate of domestic, family and sexual violence in Australia. Since 2000 at least 90 women in the Northern Territory have been killed as a result of domestic violence. This includes 11 women who have been killed in horrific circumstances since June this year.

Women and children experience a higher rate of domestic, family and sexual violence, and nine out of 10 victims in the Northern Territory are Aboriginal women. Women in remote and regional communities are more likely to be hospitalised for domestic violence and also encounter greater barriers to reporting violence due to shame and stigma.

Data often reflects only the cases of violence that have been reported to police and formal services, which means surveys could be skewed and not represent the full extent of the crisis we are facing.

Violence perpetrated by close family members and intimate partners can incur lifelong trauma, affecting parenting and the wellbeing and development of children and young Territorians. The impact of domestic, family and sexual violence can lead young people to engage in criminal and antisocial behaviour and push them into the youth justice system.

Domestic, family and sexual violence is claiming the lives of too many Northern Territory women. It is tearing apart our families and communities, and it must stop. We know this problem is complex and challenging, which is why we cannot shy away from it.

Domestic, family and sexual violence is preventable. With a concerted, collaborative and long-term effort we can give every Territorian the fundamental right of living a life where they are safe, respected and free from violence. That is why we cannot leave this effort to just the words that are spoken in the Assembly this evening. Words must be followed by action.

That is why the former Labor government:

- established the Safe, Respected and Free from Violence reduction framework in 2018

- invested $70m in the 2024 budget to continue its commitment to generating change and safer communities for women and children, with an additional $30m over two years to continue implementation of the second action plan under the reduction framework, supporting further health, justice and policing initiatives

- invested in the men's behaviour change programs operating in Alice Springs and my electorate of Daly in Wadeye, with funding for a future pilot program in Katherine.

In order to prevent domestic, family and sexual violence, we need to stop it before it starts. There is so much more we can and need to do.

Today we heard from the Leader of the Opposition, as we did last week from the Member for Gwoja, about a concentrated bipartisan approach to deal with this epidemic. The opposition welcomed the CLP following Territory Labor in its election commitment of $180m to fully fund the second stage of the domestic violence action plan, and we call on the government to fast-track the rollout of this funding as soon as possible. As the Leader of the Opposition outlined, we are here to support this rollout where we can.

I echo my colleagues' statements that the Territory Labor opposition stands with our hands open, reaching out across the aisle to work with the CLP government and members of the crossbench in addressing the major issues. We want to work with the Chief Minister and the Minister for Prevention of Domestic Violence to secure the needs-based funding that is required from the Commonwealth and the Northern Territory to combat this prevalent issue that Territory women and children face. We need to put money into prevention, early intervention and crisis response. We need to ensure that remote communities do not fall through the gap and miss out on the services they need to ensure that families, women and children can live in safe environments.

I acknowledge and thank the magnificent work of the frontline service workers and advocates operating in the domestic, family and sexual violence sector. There are a number of organisations, legal services and safe houses across the Territory that deserve our praise. They do so much positive work in the face of what seems to be an insurmountable crisis. I say to them: we are here to support you, and we will do everything in our power, as an opposition and as a collective Assembly, to make sure you receive the support that is needed.

Mrs FINOCCHIARO (Chief Minister): Mr Deputy Speaker, the tone this evening is sombre, and it is a matter of public importance. The information being debated is sobering, but for the opposition to be genuine in its extension of bipartisanship, it must work with us and understand that we have to do something different. Unfortunately for those in opposition, under eight years of their watch, domestic violence increased by 81%.

Although it is fine to rattle off for the history books all of Labor's so-called achievements, we know that they did not make an impact. Whilst it is hard for Labor to take an ideologically different approach from the one path it has been on for a long time, we have hit a point where we must try something different or all we will do is the same thing over and again that did not yield a result in the first place.

If the extension of the hand of bipartisanship is truly there, we will see greater cooperation on laws protecting victims. We will see greater cooperation on making sure that money is spent in a way that will deliver, that there are KPIs for outcomes and that we hold service providers and governments accountable for that spend, because the lives of predominantly women and Aboriginal women are too important to just be driven by blind ideology in the hope that one day something will be different.

The way in which domestic violence comes about and the pathways on which someone is led to become a domestic violence offender are complicated.

Part of it is because they have experienced it themselves—they have grown up in a household where that has been normal so that behaviour has been normalised. As a child they have been exposed to horrific trauma, so they go on to perpetrate that same trauma on other people—people who are close to them and people with whom they are in a close relationship—the people they love or are supposed to love.

Part of it is about economics. It is about making sure we have a Territory where everyone can participate in our economy and people have access to meaningful work that allows them to support their family.

Part of it is stronger laws dealing with harm such as that involving alcohol. We have talked a lot about alcohol this evening. Even on that point of alcohol, the former Labor government for eight years focused on supply. That did not yield results, because the data does not bear it out.

We are taking a different approach to alcohol, as we did all day today, passing stronger laws so that our police can intervene earlier so that the public drinking in the morning does not turn into domestic violence in the evening. Yet we were met with fierce opposition from every member of the crossbench and opposition. You cannot have your cake and eat it too. You either want a new approach to this issue or you want to sit

there entrenched in ideology and maintain the status quo. My responsibility to the Territory is to remove the status quo. My responsibility, as Chief Minister, as a government, is to do things differently, and that is what we will get on with.

We appreciate this important debate being brought to parliament. It was week 2 of us coming into government when I flew to Canberra and met with National Cabinet to put the case as hard as I possibly could to the Prime Minister about why per capita-based funding for the Territory makes no sense. I did not come back with needs-based funding from a Labor Prime Minister and government, but we will continue that fight. We will work with the federal government to ensure that the Territory's situation is recognised.

Money alone will not solve this; it is about how we spend it, the laws, the economic development and getting to kids early so that they do not have a violent and traumatic childhood. We must be willing to tackle all those issues together; you cannot just pick the bits that feel good to you.

I welcome this debate, as it is incredibly important. The statistics for the Territory are damning. We will not be afraid to try things differently and spend the finite resources we have as prudently and effectively as we possibly can. We will not be afraid to step in early to a young person's life, to protect a victim or to intervene earlier with alcohol policy in an attempt to reduce the levels of harm.

I look forward to the challenge ahead in dealing with all these issues for every Territorian. We all know the problem is there, but I also know that if what you were doing was working we would not be having this conversation in the first place.

Mr EDGINGTON (Health): Mr Deputy Speaker, domestic, family and sexual violence is claiming the lives of too many Northern Territory women and tearing apart families.

Yes, the Deputy Opposition Leader raised that we should be working in a bipartisan way, and I agree. However, it is important to look at how we got into this situation by looking at the history, statistics and missed opportunities for Labor to intervene, implement policy and deal with the issues in a more holistic way, given that it was in government for 19 of the last 23 years.

I thank the Leader of the Opposition for bringing this important topic to the House. Domestic, family and sexual violence, commonly referred to as DV, is all too familiar in our jurisdiction. Since 24 August there have been three DV-related deaths in public housing properties in your electorate, Mr Deputy Speaker, in Malak. These statistics are unfathomable. The number of victim–survivors is growing every day. Domestic violence is a scourge on the Territory, tearing apart families and destroying our communities.

A couple of things need to be put on the record. In 2022 Labor passed legislation to allow domestic violence offenders to be bailed to attend rehabilitation programs rather than bringing rehabilitation programs into prison. The court was given discretion to deem completion of a set program in exceptional circumstances, potentially meaning that the offender would avoid mandatory sentencing. Labor's approach included insufficient monitoring of offenders on bail whilst attending courses. Overall, domestic violence incidents have risen along with recidivist offending.

It is important to look at those statistics. I know they have been spoken about, but it is important to put them on the record. Across the Territory from 2016 to June 2024, domestic violence-related assaults rose by 81.83% and alcohol-related assaults rose by 37.91%. When we look at other serious violent offending, we see that acts intended to cause injury rose by 62.24%, sexual assaults have risen by 17.72% and dangerous or negligent acts endangering persons have risen by 45.52%. Even violent offences such as robbery, extortion and related offences have risen by 343% in the last eight years.

Importantly, I will go back to my electorate where significant offending remained unabated for eight years under the Labor government. In Tennant Creek alone, domestic violence-related assaults have risen by 101%; alcohol-related assaults by 57.62%; total offences against a person by 80%; dangerous or negligent acts endangering people by 60%; and sexual assaults by 150%. The domestic, family and sexual violence statistics are extremely worrying.

It is not only those offences but also the impact they have on the children in those households. I have referred to this before. The Labor government published the Story of Our Children and Young People in 2021, which gave a snapshot of the things that I have been talking about. It is clear to me that early intervention and prevention were not a focus of the Labor government. The Story of Our Children and Young People shows that in 2020–21 the number and proportion of children aged zero to 17 in the Barkly with notifications of child abuse or neglect was 1,199 or 54.8%. The number and proportion of children aged zero to 17 in the Barkly

with notifications of domestic and family violence as a contributing factor was 647 or 29.6%. Clearly, that has a significant impact on young people in the Barkly.

I am always interested to hear about needs-based funding, but other things can be done to try to reduce domestic, family and sexual violence. I often talk about the Barkly Regional Deal. One of its key initiatives was to review government investment and service system reform. We talk about service delivery and making sure that money goes to where it is needed the most. We all want to make sure that the services being funded are delivered in an appropriate way. The Barkly Regional Deal was signed in April 2019, but the government investment and service system reform review, like many things, was not delivered by the Labor government.

The Royal Commission into the Protection and Detention of Children in the Northern Territory found the child, youth and family services system across the Northern Territory to be disjointed, to have gross inefficiencies and waste and to be less effective at achieving long-lasting benefits.

The Productivity Commission's Expenditure on Children in the Northern Territory report found that children and family services are highly fragmented with overlaps, duplication and gaps in expenditure between and within government and that services are poorly targeted and do not always account for cultural strengths or the needs of children and families. That goes back to the Royal Commission into the Protection and Detention of Children in the Northern Territory.

In March 2019 the former Labor government's A Plan for Budget Repair report recommended that the Northern Territory Government work with the Commonwealth and local government to improve the coordination of services in remote communities reduce areas of duplication. That was never done by the Labor government.

It is five years later and there has been no review of government investment and service system reform in the Barkly and Labor has ignored its own recommendation in A Plan for Budget Repair, which is also known as the Langoulant report.

In the Northern Territory Aboriginal Justice Agreement Action Plan there is a further commitment to review and redesign key service models and any contracted services that impact on justice outcomes to ensure that they are efficient, effective and meet the needs of Aboriginal Territorians. Little has been done in regard to that as well, even though the Aboriginal Justice Agreement was signed in August 2021.

Service system reform covers all the areas of early intervention and prevention in reducing domestic, family and sexual violence. It is important that we consider those missed opportunities by the Labor government.

The Domestic, Family and Sexual Violence Reduction Framework 2018–2028 was published in December 2017. It is important to go back to that because the Labor government at the time listed 13 priorities for immediate action, which included:

- developing a model to inform the investment in domestic, family and sexual violence resources
- developing an integrated and specialist domestic, family and sexual violence hub in Tennant Creek to support women and children in the Barkly region to be safe, recover and thrive
- developing and implementing a sexual violence prevention and response framework and gender equality strategy
- supporting local initiatives to promote respectful relationships
- reforming the service model for women experiencing domestic, family and sexual violence in remote communities.

How many of those priorities that the Labor government promised were immediately actioned? Categorically not many of the immediate priorities were implemented.

You only need look at Tennant Creek. Six months after the plan was released, the Labor government announced it would provide $450,000 for an immediate project to develop an integrated and specialist domestic, family and sexual violence hub in Tennant Creek to support women and their children in the Barkly. Guess what? Like many promises made by the Labor government, it was never delivered. There is no specialist integrated hub to deal with domestic, family and sexual violence in Tennant Creek. The statistics

in Tennant Creek are alarming. Domestic violence assaults are up by 101% and alcohol-related assaults are up by 57%, but that seems to have been ignored by the Labor government.

When it comes to this matter of public importance I think there is room for a bipartisan approach, but Labor needs to accept that over the last eight years in government, it failed to put in place initiatives and a program of early intervention and prevention.

On top of that, there is the connection between alcohol and domestic, family and sexual violence. The Labor government put in place laws to tackle alcohol issues, but it focused on only dealing with the supply of alcohol. I often say, and I think the Member for Gwoja did as well, that prohibition will never work.

We hear about issues with the floor price, but by reducing the supply of alcohol there has been an increase in secondary supply. That means people are buying alcohol for exorbitant prices, because of the laws Labor put in place. They may pay $500 for a bottle of rum, rather than getting half-a-dozen cans of beer at the bottle shop because it is closed. This means that there is no food on the table for children in that household. There has been a shift from people buying basic alcohol to heavier spirits, which was noted in the review of the minimum unit price. When people buy the heavier spirits and pay exorbitant prices for that it contributes to crime, adding to the conflict and fighting in the household because there is no money to put food on the table.

All these laws, when combined, contribute to an increase in domestic, family and sexual violence. Therefore, we need to take a step back to ensure the services are appropriately funded and are delivering. We can then focus on early intervention and prevention and work together to make a difference across the Territory.

Mr KERLE (Blain): Madam Speaker, I acknowledge the family of the Member for Gwoja who lost a loved one to domestic violence; every life is precious, and one life lost is too many.

I also acknowledge the bipartisanship of this matter of public importance. From time to time we have a certain measure of opposition in the Chamber, and it is really good that we could come together to speak on different aspects of the scourge of domestic violence that affects all of us in different ways. I am glad that we can all unite against this issue of domestic violence, and I thank the Leader of the Opposition for bringing it on.

I am a child of domestic violence. It is something that I saw growing up as a child. I am not ready to talk about the full details in this House, but maybe at a later date.

There are many types of domestic violence, and I will call out three for special attention. One that we have been talking about quite a bit is alcohol-fuelled physical violence. We have all seen and know couples who get along well together while they are sober, but once the grog comes on violence starts and people get injured. It is one of the things that we hope to combat with this legislation. We also hope to bring on more legislation to combat this scourge as time goes on.

Secondly, I will distinguish non-alcohol-fuelled physical violence, which comes from something deep in the partner and is not fuelled by alcohol. It could be fuelled by their insecurities; who knows what character flaw it springs from. Taking action on alcohol will not help in this case. It is something that men's behaviour change programs and applying consequences for domestic violence will need to address.

I will talk about something that does not get as much attention as the other types of violence—that is, coercive control. I have seen this, and I am sure many members of the Chamber have seen this in people we know. It is as dangerous as the other types of domestic violence, but it is a lot less visible; in fact, it is often invisible. Someone may be suffering from coercive control in silence and you would never know until they opened up and spoke frankly with you about it.

I will put the 12 signs of coercive control on the record. I have taken this from relationshipsvictoria.org.au.

The first sign is isolating you from your support system. An abusive partner will cut you off from friends and family, or limit your contact with them, so you do not receive the support you need.

The second sign is monitoring activity throughout the day.

The third sign is denying freedom and autonomy. A person exerting coercive control may try to limit your freedom and independence by not allowing you to go to work or school, restricting access to transportation, stalking, taking your phone et cetera.

Gaslighting is particularly insidious. Some of us may know situations where this is the case. It is when the abuser makes you doubt your own truth, experience and sanity by insisting they are always right and instils their narrative of a situation even if the evidence points against this. Gaslighting is, in essence, based on lies and manipulation of the truth. It is insidious because it can lead the victim to believe that the abuse is their own fault.

The fifth sign is name calling and severe criticism, as well as malicious put-downs. These are all extreme forms of bullying.

The sixth sign is limiting access to money and controlling finances. This is a way of restricting freedom and ability to leave the relationship. Financial abuse is listed as a specific form of abuse, but within the context of coercive control it is a tactic to keep a person disempowered.

The seventh sign is coercing you to take care of all the domestic duties, such as cleaning, cooking and childcare, without sharing the responsibility and tasks.

The eighth sign is turning the children against you. If you have children, either with the abuser or someone else, they may try to weaponise the children against you by making comments that are critical of you, belittling you in front of the children or telling them you are a bad parent.

The ninth sign is controlling aspects of your health and body. The abuser monitors and controls how much you eat, sleep and exercise or how much time you spend in the bathroom.

The 10th sign is making jealous accusations about the time you spend with family or friends, either in person or online, as a way of phasing out all contact with the external world.

The 11th sign is regulating your sexual relationship—for example, making demands about the number of times you engage in that activity each day or week.

The 12th sign is threatening children or parents as an extreme form of intimidation.

I am sure the subject of coercive control will return to this House in due course. It is insidious, and we need to be aware of it. If we encounter a family member or friend who is a victim of it, we need to be especially cautious.

It is a biological fact that men are stronger than women. Even though DV occurs in same-sex relationships, it is true to say that the largest amount of harm is male on female. In the NT, the largest number of victims of domestic violence are Indigenous women. I am a father of three boys, and I try my best to teach them that men's strength exists to protect and provide for their family, not to harm—never to harm.

We need a multi-pronged approach to combat domestic violence. We first need to take strong action on alcohol-fuelled violence to address the circumstances of offending, provide men's behaviour change programs and hold men to account where domestic violence is proved.

We need to teach young people what healthy relationships look like and what behaviour is not acceptable from a partner so that young people can recognise dangerous patterns before it is too late.

We need to support women who are trapped in these violent and coercive relationships to escape to safety. Escaping from a domestic violence relationship is a sensitive and complicated matter, which I am sure we will return to in due course.

Thank you, Leader of the Opposition, for bringing on this important matter of public importance.

Mr BROWN (Arafura): Madam Speaker, I thank the House for allowing us to debate this matter of critical importance. Reducing domestic violence is an issue that requires all of us to step up. Being from a remote community I was surrounded by it at Milikapiti; it was an out-of-sight, out-of-mind situation there when I was younger. This one is close to my heart.

I want to work with every member of parliament on this, alongside the domestic violence sector, police, schools, Aboriginal and other community-controlled organisations, traditional owners and families, to turn the tide on what is a life-and-death matter for too many Territory women. We need to work together to break that cycle of violence.

We have some of the worst DV rates in the country. I cannot say that I know everyone in this Chamber and their history, but it is shameful that even without meeting everyone I can say that it is more likely than not we have seen the devastating impact of DV on our communities.

Children witnessing violence are more likely to become perpetrators or victims. Domestic violence affects entire communities, not just individuals. There is a generational history of failures through all governments.

Madam SPEAKER: Member for Arafura, you have run out of time. I suggest you complete your speech during the adjournment.

ADJOURNMENT

Mr EDGINGTON (Leader of Government Business): Madam Speaker, I move that the Assembly do now adjourn.

Mr PAECH (Gwoja): Madam Speaker, not all heroes wear capes. I acknowledge heroes from Central Australia's town camps. On Saturday we celebrated 10 years of the Tangentyere Women's Family Safety Group—10 years of town campers talking strong, talking up and talking about change.

I will place on the *Parliamentary Record* the names of the deadly Tangentyere Women's Family Safety Group to acknowledge those outstanding change makers: Shirleen Campbell; Connie Shaw; Barb Shaw; Helen Gillen; Gwen Gillen; Marlene Hayes; Kitana Shaw; Glorianna Moketarinja; Nanetta Kenny; my ganger Louise Abbott; Sadie Richards; Sarah Rubuntja; Cecily Arabie; Doris O'Brien, who has retired from the family violence group; Lorraine Pepperill; and, of course, our sister Kumanjayi Rubuntja.

These women are change makers. For the last 10 years they have advocated strongly and fearlessly for domestic and family violence to be taken seriously. They have gone to Canberra to raise awareness. They have held vigils in Alice Springs and hosted a number of events across the Territory. They have run workshops and education sessions on the prevention of domestic and family violence. They have encouraged people to address domestic and family violence through intervention and prevention.

The Tangentyere Women's Family Safety Group was developed out of a need identified by town camp women for a voice and action on family and domestic violence. The Tangentyere Women's Family Safety Group programs are developed organically from community, elevating town campers' lived experience, understanding and evidence. This group celebrates the knowledge, history, connections and relationships that town camps have. They have done incredible work. On Saturday night we came together and acknowledged that wonderful group of important women in Central Australia.

I also acknowledge the Four Corners program, which is the men's program, as part of Tangentyere. I give a shout-out to the fellas who are a part of that program. They were at the 10-year celebration and made beautiful bush corsages of billy button, the yellow flower from Central Australia, and a coolamon to hand over to the women so that the stories and experiences of the women have a place to lay and rest and be respected.

It was a remarkable celebration. I shout out to the women at the Tangentyere Women's Family Safety Group. You have done an amazing job, and I look forward to working with you over the next 10 years. Your work is incredibly important. Stay strong and stay deadly.

I acknowledge a petition tabled in parliament by the Australian Christian Lobby. Whilst that is with the Public Accounts Committee, I reiterate my support for members of the rainbow community in the Northern Territory who have reached out and are worried about that petition. I reassure them that I stand with them in times of uncertainty, distress and need. This is an important thing to say because there are many people in the rainbow community in the Territory who are nervous for a range of reasons. They are nervous that people who do not have anything to do with their day-to-day lives are reaching in. I say to the rainbow community: I stand with you and I will work with you.

We will look to rally and have a petition brought to this parliament to raise the concerns of the rainbow community. It is important that the voices of everyone are heard. The rainbow community might be small in population, but it is big in colour. They are a bright group of people whom I am proud to be a part of. I wish them well and will continue to work with them over the coming four years of our time in parliament.

Mrs HERSEY (Katherine): Madam Speaker, I attended the Katherine Cowboys presentation whilst home on the weekend. Friday night saw the Katherine Cowboys have their presentation night at Knotts Crossing Resort. It was a great night recognising the efforts from volunteers, the committee and players.

The under-18s best and fairest title was awarded to Jay Wuttke in recognition of outstanding performance. Emosi Uluivuya is to be commended for his outstanding performance as best forward in the under-18 Cowboys. Nicholas Laurie, your victory as best back for the under-18 Cowboys showcases your impressive skills and commitment to excellence. Daniel Jack was a standout as the most consistent player in the under-18s. Jayvon Cadell's debut rugby year was a remarkable success, earning him the well-deserved most improved award.

In the under-16s Cooper Phillips was named best and fairest; George Rosas secured the prestigious best back award; Noah Strachan took home the award for outstanding forward; and Lockyer Gillett's dedication paid off with the under-16 Cowboys most consistent award, which is a testament to his hard work and perseverance. Well done, Lockyer. Hayden Williams received recognition for most improved in the under-16 Cowboys.

There is a memorial trophy for Toby Hammonds. The award honours the memory of Toby, a young lad who had a tragic accident. He was 13 at the time. It was extremely sad for the community. This award is generously sponsored by his parents, Cathy and Jim, and his sisters, Alice and Phoebe. It recognises a player who exemplifies good sportsmanship, teamwork, a strong work ethic and respect for others. It was a great honour for Jack Fondacaro to receive this award. I give a huge congratulations to him.

Callum, the club president, read out all the amazing things about Toby and what it meant to receive the Toby Hammonds Memorial Award. There was not a dry eye in the house. It was amazing.

Kohbi Thomas received the best and fairest title for the under-14 Cowboys. Jackson Wuershing was commended for his outstanding performance as best forward in the under-14s. Congratulations to Alex Gillett-Pracy for his outstanding performance as best back in the under-14 Cowboys.

Hunter Read was recognised for his outstanding consistency, receiving the most consistent award for the under-14 Cowboys. I congratulate Hunter on being selected to receive support from the Athletics for the Outback Opportunity Fund to help him represent the Northern Territory at the All Schools Championships for athletics in Brisbane. We had the pleasure to help support Hunter in his quest to get there with a raffle donation. Go well, Hunter. He will continue to put in the hard work and dedication and continue with a good attitude to strive for excellence in that field.

Declan Lurda received the most improved award in the under-14 Cowboys.

Last but by no means least is the volunteer of the year award which went to Gavin Read, who is always at the grounds. Whether he is running the barbecue, assisting with the under-14s water or setting up the fields, Gavin is a truly amazing person who helps out where he can. Congratulations to Gavin.

A huge thanks to the committee, volunteers and players because it takes a lot of effort to put on a competition. From the people who mark out the fields and run water to the young juniors who referee the games, it takes a great community. Well done to all of them.

Last week the liturgy awards were attended by Jen in my office on my behalf, as I was in parliament. The St Joseph's Catholic College Secondary Thanksgiving Liturgy Awards Night last Wednesday, 16 October, took place at Godinymayin arts and culture centre. This great evening started with a barbecue fundraiser followed by the awards presentation. The awards recognise the dedication and hard work of the students at St Joseph's Catholic College. The award winners were as follows:

- Year 7A—Don Bosco Citizenship Award, Gillian Long; Academic Excellence Award, Maddie O'Driscoll; Academic Endeavour Award, Charli Kessner; Ted Cooper Most Improved Award, Isaac Gaddes; and Creativity Award, Helena Wedding.

- Year 7B—Don Bosco Citizenship Award, Thomas Gadd; Academic Excellence Award, Tanika Otto; Academic Endeavour Award, Isabella Everingham; Ted Cooper Most Improved Award, Joseph Wuttke; and Creativity Award, Archer Young.

- Year 8A—Don Bosco Citizenship Award, Hamish Leckie; Academic Excellence Award, Morgan Buckley; Academic Endeavour Award, Rylee Buckley; Ted Cooper Most Improved Award, Rhys Angus; and Creativity Award, Holly Dahl.

- Year 8B—Don Bosco Citizenship Award, Strickland Tanui; Academic Excellence Award, Joshua Sam; Academic Endeavour Award, Elliot Green; Ted Cooper Most Improved Award, Alex Gillett-Pracy; and Creativity Award, Clay Dickens.

- Year 9—Don Bosco Citizenship Award, Swaran Lachaiya; Academic Endeavour Award, Elyse Window; Ted Cooper Most Improved Award, Tracey Morris; and Creativity Award, Flynn Wegman.

- Year 10—Don Bosco Citizenship Award, Kahl Wienands; Academic Excellence Award, Keeley Green; Academic Endeavour Award, Kahl Wienands; Ted Cooper Most Improved Award, Paul Macam; and Creativity Award, Christine Cragan.

- Year 11—Don Bosco Citizenship Award, Taitt Green; Academic Excellence Award, Riccardo Baldock; Academic Endeavor Award, Markus Mynhardt; Ted Cooper Most Improved Award, Grayson Ferguson; and Creativity Award, Tallis Anderson.

- Year 12—Don Bosco Citizenship Award, Layla Yates; Academic Endeavour Award, Kirkland Tanui; Ted Cooper Most Improved Award, Chelsea Otto; and Creativity Award, Ameli Henderson.

The School Sports Person of the Year went to Frederick Richards; Secondary Outstanding House Captain Award, Kirkland Tanui; Year 9 Top Achiever, Noah Trenholm; Year 12 Top Indigenous Achiever, Emilly Alum; and the Top Personal Learning Achiever, who displayed exceptional perseverance and resourcefulness in achieving personal learning goals across all areas, is Christina-Jane Hill.

The Lyn Powierza Award went to Ellamae Tisbe. The Darwin Diocesan Development Fund Year 12 Scholarship went to Taitt Green.

The Northern Territory Catholic Principals Bursary Award went to Keeley Green; Buzzo Family Community Leadership Award, Taitt Green; Australian Student Citizens of the Year Award went to Swaran Lachaiya at the middle school and Taitt Green in the senior school; and the Katherine Town Council Leadership Award went to Elliott Green.

The Australian Defence Force Long Tan Leadership and Teamwork Award for Year 10 went to Charlotte Wilson and for Year 12 went to Ellamae Tisbe. The ADF Future Innovators Award for Year 10 went to Kahl Wienands and for Year 12 went to Ellamae Tisbe.

The Chamber of Commerce Vocational Education Award went to Chloe Plumeier. The Ampol All Rounder Award went to Layla Yates.

The dux of the school is an outstanding student. She was an outstanding performer at the swimming carnival at the Tindal pool on the weekend and is an all-round lovely girl. I am sure no-one at the school is surprised that the 2024 Dux Award went to Ellamae Tisbe.

Congratulations to all the students who did a fantastic job putting in the hard yards for the awards. I wish the Year 12s, who are studying hard, all the best in their upcoming exams.

Ms BOOTHBY (Brennan): Madam Speaker, I pay tribute to Mrs Helen Day of TEMHCO. That is the Top End Mental Health Consumers Organisation, but we all know it as TEMHCO.

Helen Day has been the CEO of TEMHCO for a long time and will be leaving her position shortly to care full-time for her elderly mother, who lives interstate. I give her a big shout-out because she has worked incredibly hard over many years in the mental health space. She has supported many people who are living with mental health challenges and has advocated strongly for people in the community. She has achieved so much.

When I first met Helen she was part of the small facility in Woodroffe hosting weekly activities, which they outgrew. Recently they moved to the old Hub complex in the Palmerston CBD, where the Palmerston RSL used to be, and it is a lovely space for the TEMHCO participants. That is a credit to Helen, as she has done a fabulous job there.

In a recent statement by Helen in her departure announcement, she said that her fondest memories were being the joint winner of the NT Human Rights Awards 2020 Fitzgerald Social Change Award. Last year she accepted the NT Mental Health Coalition Mental Health Week Awards for Excellence in Mental Health

Workplace Award Special Recognition. These are high achievements for anyone, especially for Helen out in Palmerston, who we love so much.

On Friday 11 October the Members for Blain and Drysdale and I went to the TEMHCO building in Palmerston where they were celebrating their art show. They were showcasing fabulous art and there were competitions and a lot of fun. We had a great time. We were encouraged to write on a post-it note one thing we do each day to look after either our mental or physical health and the put it into a jar. It was great to participate in that.

I commend and congratulate the Greater Palmerston United Football Club on its grand final win for the under-14 team. This is its second year when a team of under-14s has taken out the grand final. Last year and this year they played the Palmerston Rovers, so it has been a Palmerston versus Palmerston derby. They have beaten the Palmerston Rovers both times.

It is a fantastic club. This is one club success of many. It has grown in numbers. It also celebrated 10 years at its annual presentation on 22 September. The Member for Blain attended and represented the Palmerston MLAs who support the Greater Palmerston United Football Club as we could not attend. He reported that many families are involved in the club, which has grown from strength to strength.

I make a special acknowledgement of Chris Kimani, who is the club's longest running committee member. He was a founding member of the club in 2014. His dedication, along with the committees over the years, and bringing people to the club is what makes it successful today. Thank you, Chris and all the people involved in the Greater Palmerston United Football Club. It is a great club to sponsor and I am proud of it.

On 5 October the Palmerston and Regional Basketball Association celebrated 10 years of basketball and youth community activities at the Palmerston Recreation Centre. It was a fabulous event attended by the Members for Drysdale, Spillett, Blain and me; the Mayor of Palmerston, Athina Pascoe-Bell; the families who participate at the Palmerston and Regional Basketball Association; the volunteers; and committee members.

Congratulations to Sharrynne Glover who was recognised as the Volunteer of the Year; Banjo Short who received the McGoo Club Culture Award; and Ervine Alinsug who received the City of Palmerston Basketballer of the Year Award. Three life members were recognised, Steve McGugan, Rachel Fosdick and Lochie Godber—all familiar names around Palmerston.

I also thank Lisa Lock, who is part of the PaRBA committee that hosted the event. We cut a huge cake. She coordinated a lot of awards and thanked the sponsors. She did a great job.

The Chief Minister was a founding member of the Palmerston and Regional Basketball Association. Her name was listed on the club's founding members' frame, which is a fabulous tribute. That was 10 years ago when she was a backbencher in a former government, and now she is the Chief Minister. We are proud that she has been there through the strengths of PaRBA and continues to support them.

The Northern Sharks Rugby League Club participated in the Tamboran Top End Cup in Katherine. The under-10s to under-12s travelled together on the bus to participate in the cup. It was a huge effort to pull all those people together. Kids, volunteers, families and parents all pulled together to get this busload of juniors to Katherine. By all accounts I hear they had a wonderful time.

I thank those club officials who helped pull that together, being Emma, Kylie, Jade, Sharna, Sholan, Dakota and Sandra. I know that they are the reason for the success. A special thanks to some of the amazing parents as well, being Lenny, Kanessha, Straff, Reece and Ambre. Their support for that event was appreciated. The under-10s team took home the Spirit Award, which is a fabulous effort.

Congratulations to some of the Sharks volunteers receiving recognition of five years' continued service in the rugby league club, including Aaron Tilley, Kezia-Lee Tilley, Andrew Waters, Kylie-Ann Roe and Manaia Downes.

The Sharks made the semi-finals for the 2024 Community Achievement Awards NT, which is coming up. I wish them all the best with that. I look forward to reporting what happens with that award.

The Teaching in the Territory Excellence Awards is on 25 October, at the end of this week, and that day is World Teachers' Day as well. We are fortunate in Palmerston to have amazing schools and amazing teachers and staff in those schools.

I am excited to report that Mr Will McInerney from Bakewell Primary School has been announced as a finalist for the Primary Educator of the Year. All the kids think he is a lot of fun. He loves getting behind the microphone, even though he will tell you he does not.

Carolyn Edwards from Zuccoli Primary School is a finalist for Principal of the Year, plus Karen Tagumasi is a finalist for Inclusion Educator of the Year. Zuccoli Primary is a fantastic school.

I give a big shout-out to the other schools in my electorate in Palmerston: Mother Teresa Catholic Primary School; Palmerston College across two campuses in Driver and Rosebery—sorry, that is in Drysdale too but it is kind of connected; and Rosebery Primary School. There are fantastic schools in my electorate that do a wonderful job.

Mr BROWN (Arafura): Madam Speaker, I continue my earlier speech about domestic violence.

Children witnessing violence are more likely to become perpetrators or victims. Domestic violence affects entire communities, not just individuals. There is a generational history of failures.

In the time I have, I acknowledge the work being done by the men's behaviour change program team, Territory Families and service providers. Men's behaviour change programs are an important component in the prevention of and the response to men's use of domestic and family violence. These programs provide tailored services to men to educate them about what drives their abusive behaviour.

Through the programs, men are held accountable for their actions and supported to develop new behaviours, attitudes and beliefs. During these programs the safety of women and children is always prioritised and the programs each employ a dedicated women's safety worker to provide that support directly to the victim–survivors.

Men's behaviour change programs are already in place in Alice Springs, Darwin and Wadeye, with 172 men taking part in courses last financial year. My good friend Kate Worden, in the last few days of the Labor government, announced another program for Katherine—a $2.4m investment through the Australian Government national partnership agreement to provide specialist services for men who are perpetrators of domestic and family violence. I acknowledge CatholicCare NT in the Top End for the work it does in this program.

It may shock everyone to learn that I did not get into politics to make big speeches in parliament. To be honest, it is one of the hardest jobs, so I hope that the government takes my next ask as not an attack but a genuine request.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people are over-represented as victims, survivors and perpetrators of family and domestic violence. Alcohol plays a big part in this. I urge you, please, do not make it easier and cheaper for people to buy alcohol. I also acknowledge what the Member for Barkly said about second-hand sales, with families missing out on putting food on the table. It will make things worse in my community and all of yours.

Putting daily politics to the side, I know that everyone in this place is committed to fixing this problem. The Member for Gwoja has already offered to jump on a plane to help the Chief Minister. If it would help, I am sure the whole parliament would be happy to go there. Together we can create safer, stronger and better communities. Our communities need this. I thank everyone who contributed.

Mr CHARLS (Sanderson): Madam Speaker, I inform the Assembly of the tremendous events I recently attended in and around the electorate of Sanderson.

I extend my congratulations to the Darwin Visual Arts Association and Tactile Arts for their visionary efforts in launching the first Northern Territory Art Award. This initiative has filled a significant gap by providing a much-needed platform for our visual artists to showcase their extraordinary creations. In this inaugural year there were 192 entries from more than 150 artists from every corner of the Northern Territory. This is a remarkable tribute to the strength and diversity of our creative community, and I am proud to witness such a tremendous response.

I commend and extend my deepest thanks to all the artists who participated. The quality of the work displayed was truly outstanding and it speaks volumes about the depth of talent that we are fortunate to have in our region. I give a huge congratulations to the winners: first prize, Sara Maiorino; second prize, Anna Reynolds; and third prize, J9 Stanton.

I was honoured to attend the Fiji Day Celebration hosted by Sekaia Vateitei, the President of the Fijian Association of the Northern Territory. His Excellency Mr Ajay Bhai Amrit, the Fijian High Commissioner to Australia, graced the event as the chief guest. The traditional greeting of the chief guest was a poignant experience as it was heartening to witness that, despite the distance from home, traditional customs and practices are preserved. The evening continued with a delightful traditional dinner that was thoroughly enjoyed by all in attendance.

I was privileged to attend the Charles Darwin University Confucius Institute for the Mid Autumn Festival orchestra night. The program was performed in two parts, separated by an intermission. It was a collaboration between Charles Darwin University, Anhui Normal University and Hainan University. Unique instruments were played to perfection, making it a memorable event. I look forward to the next performance and encourage others to attend.

The Cambodian Australian Community Association of the Northern Territory celebrated Cambodia Day at its premises in Marrara in the Sanderson electorate. Mrs Thyra Ou worked extremely hard to make the event a success, helping to cook delicious traditional Cambodian food and working with the venerable monk. It was a joyous occasion that my parliamentary colleagues and I thoroughly enjoyed.

I had the pleasure to engage with the Nepalese Association of Northern Territory and the CDU Nepalese Student Association in the Sanderson electorate to celebrate the Hindu festival of Nepal, the Dashain Festival 2081, which celebrates culture and traditions. I commend Ms Prativa Devkota, the president, and the Nepalese Association of Northern Territory team 2024–26 for conducting such a wonderful event. We look forward to attending next year's event.

I extend my thanks to Sean Bowden and Sam Gibson from AFLNT for the successful launch of the 2024–25 TIO NTFL season, held at the Myilly Point Heritage Precinct in Larrakeyah. It was fantastic to see the team representatives come together in anticipation of an exciting season. Female participation in AFL continues to grow across all age groups at a nation-leading rate and there is increased representation of women in leadership roles within the sport. I look forward to a thrilling season ahead.

I had the great honour and privilege to extend a warm welcome to our outstanding Olympic and Paralympic athletes in the Main Hall of Parliament House. We were honoured to have athletes Zoe, Lani, Matt, Natalya, Darren, Zac, Nikki and Shae, who made Australia proud in Paris. We also recognised the presence of officials from the Australian Olympic Committee and Paralympics Australia. Congratulations to Northern Territory athletes Jeremy Hayward, Brooke Peris, Tom O'Neill-Thorne, Jannik Blair and Telaya Blacksmith who proudly represented us on the world stage. The Paris games saw 466 Olympians and 160 Paralympians secure 116 medals, marking a historic achievement.

I acknowledge Roopa Bandi, President of the Telugu Association of Northern Territory, and the executive team for organising the Dasara Bathukamma celebration. Bathukamma is a unique festival that highlights the creativity and unity of Telugu women, honouring Gauri Devi, the goddess of womanhood.

As Minister for Multicultural Affairs, I am proud that our government supports events like this through the Multicultural Grants Program. The Northern Territory Government is committee to celebrating cultural diversity, enriching our community and fostering harmony.

I commend the Telugu Association of Northern Territory and all the volunteers for their dedication in organising this celebration.

Thank you to Anjali Guguloth and Bitla of the Telangana Association of Darwin and the executive team for organising such a vibrant Saddula Bathukamma celebration. I commend the Telangana Association of Darwin and all the volunteers for their dedication in bringing together traditional rituals, music, dance and storytelling.

I had the pleasure of an informative meeting with Captain Giuseppe Lai of the Italian Navy training ship *Amerigo Vespucci*, Vice Admiral Pietro Covino and Colonel Marco Bertoli, military attache. The *Amerigo Vespucci* docked in Darwin, the 23rd port and 19th country, having arrived from Tokyo as part of its world tour. The *Amerigo Vespucci* is a magnificent tall ship of the Italian Navy launched in February 1931. This exquisite vessel has 270 permanent crew and can handle another 150 cadets. At the casting off ceremony I was joined by the Members for Casuarina, Fannie Bay and Fong Lim. It was a privilege to witness the precision and professionalism of the crew as they prepared to set sail for a safe journey to Singapore.

I visited St Mary's Football Club in the Sanderson electorate. Carol Stanislaus, the first female president, outlined the club's history, providing a tour of the facilities and a brief outline of the club's vision. Of special

note was meeting with Vic Ludwig who on that day had turned 96. Belated happy birthday, Vic. His service to St Mary's Football Club, with 42 years as club president, is truly inspirational.

It was an honour to be invited by the Puja and Cultural Association of Northern Territory to Durga Puja 2024—Pushpanjali. The festival symbolises the triumph of good over evil, while also serving as a harvest celebration that honours the goddess as the nurturing force behind all life and creation. The committee and volunteers are to be commended for the preparation and presentation of the recently arrived statues and the wonderful array of delicious food.

Independence day cultural events are important celebrations. I am grateful for the invitation to the 64th Independence Day celebration of Nigeria held in the Sanderson electorate. The night was filled with entertainment and a wonderful atmosphere created by the fast-thinking emcee who kept everyone on their toes. Thank you to the interstate council members who took the time to celebrate an important evening in Darwin. To the committee and volunteers, you have done your community proud.

I thank Mr Ravinder Singh and the committee for the vibrant display at Colours of Darwin, held in the Sanderson electorate. The 3.5-hour program was full of excitement, vibrant colours and energetic dancing, assisted by a highly professional sound and lighting team. The commitment of the performers was marvellous to watch. It was wonderful to be part of the events. Observing the advanced dancing skills of five-year-olds to the professionally choreographed adult performer truly made Colours of Darwin a memorable event.

As the Minister for People, Sport and Culture, I am honoured to attend many important events that showcase our diverse culture and bring Territorians together, working to restore our lifestyle.

Ms UIBO (Arnhem): Madam Speaker, I inform the Assembly of great news from the Arnhem electorate.

First, I commend and congratulate Bulman School, which won Community Clip of the Year at the National Indigenous Music Awards this year. Bulman School is in one of the most isolated communities in my electorate. It is almost smack bang in the middle of the Central Arnhem Road between Katherine and Nhulunbuy. Bulman School services Bulman community and Weemol community, which are five kilometres apart. It is great that some teachers and students could attend the NIMAs. It was fantastic they had that affirmation of their work and were recognised on the national stage and that platform for their community clip. If you get a chance, I encourage everyone in the House and anyone listening to look at that award and the clip. The students are proud of it.

The school has successful programs such as the Learning on Country program which has fantastic pathways for students. There is a pathway into the junior rangers and then being fully employed young people in the Mimal Rangers.

The Mimal Rangers have been an independent ranger group for many years; I think it is more than 25 years. They punch above their weight. The Mimal Rangers look after a large geographic area of the Indigenous Protected Area in Central Arnhem. They were contracted a couple of years ago to collect space junk from the NASA launches in Nhulunbuy. They get the coordinates from NASA which says, 'We think space junk from our rocket launches have landed here'. They are paid to clean up on country and make sure that any pieces of space junk from the Nhulunbuy launch pad are cleared.

The second piece of great news is also from Bulman community. Mr Nathaniel Miller has been nominated for the ARIA Awards. He is one of four nominees for the ARIA Music Teacher Award. Voting is open now, and I encourage everyone in the House to vote. Not to be biased, but I would love you to support the Arnhem electorate. Nathaniel is a great Territorian who has been recognised nationally through this nomination. You can go online at www.aria.com.au/vote to support Nathaniel. Voting closes next month, I think on 13 November. It would be great to see Territorians and other Australians get behind him.

Nathaniel learned music by ear and teaches at Bulman School. He had a large amount of influence with the success of Bulman School's NIMAs community clip. He has been recognised on the national stage.

These are great stories around the Territory, particularly from remote and isolated communities. DLA staff, security and anyone else listening, please jump online. It will only take you a minute to vote for the of ARIA Music Teacher category.

Nathaniel teaches music and can sing in three different languages, English, Dalabon and Rembarrnga. It is fantastic to see language and culture being passed on to the next generation of kids in the Bulman and

Weemol communities through education and the arts in a way that supports engagement of young people and attendance at school.

Keep up the great work and congratulations on your nomination, Mr Miller. We are behind you and look forward to the national ARIA Awards show. I am sure attending that in Sydney will be different from watching it in beautiful Bulman and Weemol where you live and teach kids music. I look forward to the outcome. I hope that Territorians get behind Nathaniel to vote and support him.

Motion agreed to; the Assembly adjourned.