

In order for the processes of this parliament to be respected and the people of the Northern Territory to have confidence in their parliament, the matter needs to be properly investigated and the explanation provided to the Territory community. The other matters raised regarding the activities of this government are yet to be answered. This is a positive step—with the objective being to restore the confidence of the Territory community in its parliament.

Mrs WORDEN (Sanderson): Madam Speaker, I thank all speakers for their contributions particularly the Member for Blain. The PAC has seen significant challenges this term and this is one of them.

It is a balancing act between ensuring confidentiality safeguards exist and those providing evidence to the PAC are able to do so in an open and frank manner. To give the Member for Araluen some assurances, whilst we advertised and allowed people to submit confidentially, given some of the language barriers and understanding by people providing evidence to the PAC, the committee made a decision to treat all evidence as confidential even if it was not marked as confidential.

I guarantee all the evidence provided in written form has been treated as 100% confidential. We had hearings in Darwin and Alice Springs, which were advertised open hearings. The people who provided evidence at those hearings were given the opportunity for the hearing to be confidential at any time. No-one took up that offer, but it was available and reiterated at the beginning of every session.

The committee has discharged itself in a highly confidential manner, probably well beyond what we are bound to do. The confidentiality of people's submissions has been guaranteed. This is the appropriate thing to do. There has been much discussion about it. I thank Madam Speaker for her support. I also thank the members of the PAC for their consideration with the rest of the inquiry that is afoot.

Motion agreed to.

ALCOHOL HARM REDUCTION BILL (Serial 25)

Continued from 10 May 2017.

Mr HIGGINS (Opposition Leader): Madam Speaker, the time has come for every Territorian, including all of us in this place, to put aside partisan objectives and truly work towards reducing alcohol-related harm in the Territory. The opposition is in favour of all real solutions that will help minimise the harmful effects of alcohol in the Territory, including the re-introduction of the Banned Drinker Register.

One of the first motions the opposition brought into the 13th Legislative Assembly called for a whole-of-government and whole-of-community approach to alcohol harm. That motion was rejected by the government, which was surprising, given the public statements from the Labor government indicating that there seems to be an appetite for a broad-based approach for tackling alcohol issues.

More recently, the opposition made a submission to the government's Alcohol Policies and Legislation Review headed by former Chief Justice Trevor Riley. That submission once again calls for bipartisan approach to alcohol issues. Instead of putting forward particular policy directives, it outlined issues the review should consider and some of the key points concerning those matters that should be considered, as well as input from the community and experts.

In other words, the opposition is committed to doing precisely what the Labor government claims to be doing—not dictating partisan policy but leaving it to the trained professionals and community members who will be affected, to determine the most effective policies for reducing harm and improving ways the Territory deals with this serious problem.

There is little question the Labor government's approach to alcohol harm minimisation, since coming to government, has been somewhat haphazard. At times the Labor government seemed more willing to take the road of least resistance relating to alcohol policy, adhering to the interests of the liquor industry rather than those of the public.

We are having an alcohol review, but we are also being told the review will not impact the Labor government's policy with regard to a number of important issues such as floor prices, lockout laws, the floor space cap and the BDR bill that will be debated today.