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Licensed Premises – Floor Space Cap

Mr HIGGINS to CHIEF MINISTER

Chief Minister, the letter you wrote, as the Leader of the Opposition to the Australian Hotels Association is undated.

Madam Speaker, I seek leave to table a copy of the letter.

Leave granted.

Mr HIGGINS: Are you able to confirm when the donation from the AHA was agreed to and when it was received? Was it before or after you signed the letter agreeing to election policies, which includes the 400m² floor space cap?

ANSWER

Madam Speaker, as the opposition is aware, donations are handled by the party. I have no idea of the date on which that occurred, and it will have nothing to do with the policy of this government. Unlike the CLP we put the public's interests first when we make decisions.

At the last Territory election we had a very simple policy for the supply of alcohol and tackling the causes of crime in the Northern Territory. We said we recognise that more licences and bigger stores mean more alcohol is sold and more harm is caused to the community. In response we said we would cap the number of takeaway licences in the Northern Territory, we would cap the size of them and we would bring back the Banned Drinker Register.

Of those three responses the CLP supported one, and had the same policy as us on one of them. It was not bringing back the Banned Drinker Register; they said no to that. It was not capping takeaway licences; they said no to that. The one Labor measure the CLP supported of its own volition was capping the floor size of retail outlets.

When it comes to discussing alcohol, tackling crime and the causes of crime in the Northern Territory, the CLP has no credibility in this space. Labor has very consistently, from the last time we were in government to now, taken a very strong approach to dealing with crime and harm minimisation in the Northern Territory to reduce pressure on our hospitals and tackle the leading cause of things like domestic ...

Mrs FINOCCHIARO: A point of order, Madam Speaker—Standing Order 110. My colleague's question was very clear: when did you sign the letter to the AHA, and was it before or after the donation was received?

Madam SPEAKER: Chief Minister, you have the call.

Mr GUNNER: I have answered that, Madam Speaker. I am going into further detail, in response to the question, about the lack of credibility the CLP has when it comes to alcohol issues in the Northern Territory. We have been very consistent, as a Labor government, for a long time about how we will tackle one of the leading contributors to family violence in the Northern Territory. We are having a debate in the parliament at the moment about body-worn cameras and their evidence.

I stood at the front of Parliament House today to talk about the domestic violence summit that we will be having in Alice Springs. Alcohol was discussed at that press conference because alcohol is one of the leading contributors to the problems we have in this space. We will continue to be consistently strong when it comes to tackling the causes of crime and reducing harm in the Northern Territory. The CLP has no credibility in this space.

Home Improvement Scheme

Mr SIEVERS to CHIEF MINISTER

How is this government's new and expanded Home Improvement Scheme supporting local jobs? What feedback has the government received about the new scheme?

ANSWER

Madam Speaker, it is critical we keep Territorians in jobs, and keep them here in the Northern Territory. A lot of businesses said 2016 was the worst year they had on record. We have to do everything we can to provide Territorians hope and jobs during 2017. It is a clear message we are getting.

I have been talking to local businesses—with the Member for Brennan and all of my side—about what they need to make sure we are creating jobs in the Northern Territory. At the last Territory election we promised to have a plan and have the money flowing locally. We are doing that. I commend the Treasurer.

We have an immediate works package, community groups' grants, the steel stimulus package, urban housing repairs and maintenance, remote housing repairs and maintenance, Room to Breathe and the remote health clinics. This is the significant amount of work we are doing to get money flowing locally again.

We said we would listen, and we clearly heard from the business community that they thought the extra money that would help the individual tradie through the Home Improvement Scheme was still important. We brought back the Home Improvement Scheme to ensure we are doing everything we can to drive jobs in the Northern Territory. We made it bigger and better. We made sure anyone who had not accessed the scheme yet got \$4000. We adjusted the scheme to make it more flexible in delivering projects for a house. We ensured subcontracting is possible so tradies can hire others to help with the work.

This scheme is bigger and better to ensure we are doing everything we can to deliver for tradies in the Northern Territory. We did this on top of all the other programs we put in place to stimulate the Territory economy because we recognise the difficulty Territorians have at the moment. Unlike the CLP during the last term, we have a plan. We went to the election with a plan; we said we would get money flowing locally again, and work with businesses to create confidence and certainty. This is something the CLP simply did not do last term.

There have been 1635 voucher applications received in the first three weeks. That is three times as many as during the first three weeks of the program opening in 2016. There are 657 previously registered businesses who have confirmed participation in the bigger and better scheme, and an additional 302 new businesses have joined. I thank them for signing up for this work for these jobs.

The bigger and better package is coming on top of all the other work we are doing, including \$120m worth of fast-tracked infrastructure spending to make sure we are doing everything we can to keep Territorians in a job and in the Territory.

Dan Murphy's in the Territory

Mr HIGGINS to CHIEF MINISTER

Labor's secret deal to keep Dan Murphy's out of the Territory has resulted in them launching legal action to test the legality of your government's midnight changes to regulations. Why should Territorians have their hard earned tax dollars spent protecting your secret deals?

ANSWER

Madam Speaker, there is no secret deal. I find it an odd description considering the CLP had the same policy at the last election. Do you realise you are insulting yourself?

There is no secret deal. Dan Murphy's is welcome. They can open tomorrow. All we ask of them is to play by the same rules as every other Territory business. We have a strong policy in the Northern Territory when it comes to tackling alcohol harm and causes of crime. We have been very consistent for a long time, as a Labor party, on the approach we want to take on the supply of alcohol and takeaway alcohol. We have always been, and will continue to be, tough as a government.

We will never take our eye off the ball of how important it is to tackle family violence in the Northern Territory. A significant majority of the pressure on hospitals in the Northern Territory is driven by alcohol. If we get on top of this problem we can provide better health services for all Territorians. This is not just about dealing with the direct harm that is caused by alcohol. We will make an improvement to the lives of all Territorians if we get on top of this alcohol issue.

We have been very consistent for a very long time, and we recognise that what the research says—and this is what we researched in opposition; I do not know how the CLP came to its policy position. The research says that the more licences you have and the bigger the shops are, the more alcohol that is sold and the more harm there is in the Northern Territory. It is a very straightforward policy for capping ...

Mr Higgins: Where is the evidence? Give us the evidence on floor space.

Mr GUNNER: ... the number of takeaway licences, the floor space and bringing back the Banned Drinker Register.

I pick up on the interjection. The CLP is asking where the evidence is. How did they write their policy? This was their policy. It is a confession from the CLP that they made it up. We conducted the research and we have our policy. The fact that the CLP did not research it is a very telling admission from the Leader of the Opposition, who was a minister in that Cabinet. It defies belief that he is asking for publically available evidence.

Again I make the point that the CLP has no credibility when it comes to the issue of alcohol management, or being serious about dealing with things that drive so much crime and pressure on the health system in the Northern Territory.

SUPPLEMENTARY QUESTION Dan Murphy's in the Territory

Mr HIGGINS to CHIEF MINISTER

You just said that you will listen. When will you start to listen to the 85% of Territorians who are calling on you to allow Dan Murphy's to open in the Territory?

ANSWER

Madam Speaker, we will be listening. We have announced a review process. The Attorney-General is discussing the draft terms of reference, and all Territorians and experts are welcome to contribute to that review. I hope the CLP listens to what comes from that review because they have consistently ignored emergency room doctors. They ignored the police when they said, 'The BDR is the best tool we ever had.' They scrapped it. The CLP has consistently ignored people in this space ...

Members interjecting.

Ms FYLES: A point of order, Madam Speaker! Standing Order 37—interruption of debate from the opposite side.

Madam SPEAKER: Yes, could we have a bit of order please. Chief Minister, you have the call.

Mr GUNNER: The CLP has consistently ignored people in this space who know what they are talking about. I listened to a very passionate Charlie King at lunchtime today. He talked about alcohol and the problems caused by it. We heard from the police about the Banned Drinker Register. We heard from emergency room doctors. I have had some excellent meetings, particularly in Alice Springs, with those doctors, nurses and paramedics who ...

Madam SPEAKER: Chief Minister, your time has expired.

DISTINGUISHED VISITOR Chris Burns

Madam SPEAKER: Honourable members, I draw your attention to the presence in the Speaker's gallery of a former minister of government, Chris Burns. Welcome to Parliament House. I am sure you will enjoy your time here.

Members: Hear, hear!

Infrastructure and Jobs Creation

Mr KIRBY to TREASURER

How is the government rolling out infrastructure spending to create more jobs throughout the Northern Territory?

ANSWER

Madam Speaker, we made it very clear when we came into government that our priorities would be to invest in jobs and business to get the economy moving forward, and to deliver on our commitments to Territorians. When we came to government we inherited quite a difficult financial position. We had a deficit, debt and a slowing economy. This was all despite the fact that we had seen TIO sold, the port leased for 99 years and the bus service gone.

We are responding to those challenges because our priority is to keep people in jobs. We know 2017 will be a difficult year, but the long-term future of the Northern Territory is very bright. There is a positive future ahead for the NT. We have challenges. We will have significant challenges regarding GST revenue, payroll tax and revenues coming into the Northern Territory.

At times like this the priority of this government is to ensure every dollar counts—that the dollars we spend support jobs, the economy and Territorians, and honour our commitments. We made decisions to fast-track projects; we will see a lot of that work happen this year, including the Palmerston police station and upgrades to the Katherine police station.

We will see a multistorey carpark at the Royal Darwin Hospital, a new home for rugby league at Warren Park, an indoor netball stadium at Marrara, investment in a women's shelter in Alice Springs and a Tennant Creek child and family centre. We have brought forward money for the Room to Breathe program this financial year. We have brought forward more money for bush housing, and are proud of our \$1.1bn housing infrastructure investment.

We are continuing to get infrastructure program money out the door. Despite all the wet weather from the top to the bottom of the NT, we still have record rates of infrastructure money going out the door to support jobs and businesses, and to deliver key infrastructure across the Northern Territory. We are delivering important community stimulus grants; we have had a huge uptake on that. We are investing in remote health clinics, more urban housing repairs and maintenance, and supporting steel manufacturing industries. We are honouring our commitments, supporting jobs and supporting the Territory.

Madam SPEAKER: I have let Channel 9 come in to tape Question Time. We are having technical issues because all cameras in this Chamber have recently been replaced. One camera went down, and they were all 20 years old, so we replaced the lot. It is linked into the audio. You are being recorded but the outside is unable to listen in, so the media would like to cover Question Time.

Alcohol in the Community

Mrs FINOCCHIARO to ATTORNEY-GENERAL and JUSTICE

Questions have been publicly raised regarding the legality of the regulations to ban Dan Murphy's in the Territory. Can you explain to Territorians why you launched a review into your 400m² floor space cap just 24 hours after Dan Murphy's launched legal action against your government?

ANSWER

Madam Speaker, the alcohol-related harm and mayhem that continues in our community is an issue we need to tackle once and for all. We need to have an evidence-based approach. We need to listen to health professionals. The opposition do not like to hear this because they do not like to listen to evidence. They like to make policy up on the run and flip out of it when it does not suit the agenda. It is important that we start to tackle the huge cost of alcohol abuse in our community.

When you go to the Alice Springs ICU and the doctors tell you that 70% of the beds are filled with patients who are there due to alcohol-related harm, when the last figure—and it was some time ago—was \$642m that alcohol costs our community each year, when you hear that 40% of police work is based on alcohol

related issues—we have a huge issue with alcohol. As a government we are determined to tackle the cost of alcohol both economically and socially.

I am very pleased to have the support of my Cabinet colleagues and my Caucus, and a Chief Minister who is willing to look at this issue through an evidence-based review.

Members interjecting.

Ms NELSON: A point of order, Madam Speaker! Standing Order 20: no interruption. You asked a question; allow the minister to respond. You might not be interested in it, but we are.

Ms FYLES: Last week I was pleased to issue the draft terms of reference so we can work with the community over the next fortnight to get those right.

This government is committed to making the Territory safer. We have, since coming to government, strengthened the CLP's mistakes with Sunday trading. We have put a cap on takeaway licences. We are reintroducing the Banned Drinker Register. We are willing to look at the issue of alcohol in our community and have a consultative approach in which we listen to industry and health experts, and, most importantly, the community.

The draft terms of reference are out for review, and we are seeking input from the public in finalising them. We will then have an expert panel which will be commissioned to examine alcohol policies and legislation, consult with the community and report to government in September. We will issue that report and the government's response. It is the right thing to do, to have an evidence-based approach and listen to experts. We must get this right.

The *Liquor Act* has not been reviewed since 1996. This is about working with police, health professionals and the community about what they want to see in regard to alcohol in the Northern Territory—the licensing regime that surrounds it. I look forward to the opportunity my colleagues have given me in taking an evidence-based approach to an issue that has dominated the Territory for so long.

We will not be influenced; we will not backflip out of policies, like you see from the opposition. We will work with the community and industry to get the right framework for the Northern Territory.

Mining – Project Facilitation Agreement

Mr COLLINS to MINISTER for PRIMARY INDUSTRY and RESOURCES

As a born-and-bred Eels supporter, my question is to the sartorially elegant Minister for Primary Industry and Resources. Last week a project facilitation agreement was signed between the Northern Territory Government and TNG Limited. Can you please inform the House of the importance of major projects like TNG's Mount Peake mine and Darwin's metal refinery projects in developing industry and creating jobs for Territorians?

ANSWER

Madam Speaker, I thank my Parramatta colleague, the Member for Fong Lim. He is working hard as the assistant minister for Primary Industry and Resources. This government understands how important it is that we do our job and help facilitate the creation of employment opportunities for Territorians.

Members interjecting.

Mr VOWLES: I have a good story to tell, and I would appreciate it if you could listen.

We want the Territory and our regional centres to grow. We do not want Territorians to leave the Territory to go south for work. The way we can achieve this is to ensure our industries, such as resources, are growing and providing jobs. The mining sector, both in exploration and production, creates jobs, builds our regions and grows wealth for Territorians. It contributes to improving essential infrastructure such as transport corridors.

The Territory has a wealth of mineral and energy opportunities that continue to underpin the economy and drive growth. As part of our hard work in unlocking the potential of these opportunities, last week the Chief Minister and I joined TNG in signing the project facilitation agreement. The TNG project is already being

awarded major project status, and is recognised as a project of significance to the region. With the signing of the project facilitation agreement, TNG agrees to work with the government to ensure businesses based in the NT have ample opportunity to win contracts for the project during the construction and operational phases.

This project is worth \$850m and comprises mines at Mount Peake and a refinery in Darwin. What does this mean for Territorians? It means the opportunity to get jobs. This project has an estimated life of 20 years. There is potential for 500 jobs during construction and 200 jobs during the operation of the mine, as well as more than 1200 jobs during construction and 400 jobs during the operation of the refinery.

I will teach you a little bit about vanadium titanium iron mines. This Mount Peake mine is 280 kilometres north of Alice Springs. Magnetite concentrate will be transported to the refinery in Darwin. The refinery will produce vanadium pentoxide, titanium dioxide and pig iron. Vanadium is predominately used to strengthen an additive to steel and some forms of iron.

Another exciting use of vanadium has been discovered. A demand for renewable energy means a growing demand for energy storage solutions, and advancement in technology of vanadium is being used to make vanadium redox batteries. My friends in South Australia are probably reading about this right now.

There are some exciting developments over the horizon for the Territory. TNG is undertaking a road to technological and engineering environmental studies to fully assist the project. TNG will also conduct an environmental impact study for the refinery during the course of 2017, which will include stakeholder consultations. We are improving the Territory, attracting investment and creating jobs for Territorians.

Political Donations

Mr WOOD to CHIEF MINISTER

This is the first time I have seen this response to the Australian Hotels Association questions. Just to clear the air, did you or members of your government or party receive any donations from the AHA or any people associated with the liquor industry? Could you tell us who the donors were and the value of the donations? Did that have any bearing on your agreement with the AHA to limit liquor outlets to 400m²?

ANSWER

Madam Speaker, there are a couple of things there. The party secretary has provided some of that information already, because I do not have it. Mr Roe provided those answers in response to questions from journalists.

The secretary can answer those questions regarding what the donations were and when they came in. I simply do not have that information. It was not relevant to any of the decisions I made, and I give Territorians the guarantee that I do not make my decisions based off those grounds. We will put it to public interest tests first. The proof of that is we are having an inquiry into political donations in the Northern Territory that will provide practical recommendations about how we can reform donations in the Northern Territory.

I can give you certainty that the party secretary, if you forward this question on to him, will be able to provide the answers to you. I do not know those details; they have not come to me. They were not the grounds upon which the shadow Cabinet and I made a decision. We are having an inquiry into political donations in the Northern Territory. We are serious about reforming donations in the NT.

There will be an inquiry into the last 10 years of donations in the NT. It will come back with practical recommendations about how we can improve donations, and move towards openness, transparency and confidence in how parliament makes decisions. This is not just for government; this goes to all of us. I am happy to do all that. I can give you assurance that is not how I, or the shadow Cabinet, came to our decisions. The party secretary has provided all that information to the media already.

Room to Breathe Program

Ms UIBO to MINISTER for HOUSING and COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

The Room to Breathe program was recently launched, and consultation on the program is under way. I am excited that seven communities in the Arnhem electorate have been announced for the initial works for this program. How is this innovative housing program delivering for the bush and Territorians?

ANSWER

Madam Speaker, I thank the member for her interest and the opportunity to speak about all the work happening with Room to Breathe. As part of a \$1.1bn visionary program over 10 years, the Chief Minister has directed \$15m into early works and \$5m into repairs and maintenance across Arafura, Arnhem, Big Rivers, Barkly and the central regions. There will be \$10m to boost the Room to Breathe program.

This program was thoroughly consulted on throughout the election campaign, and was negotiated with peak stakeholder groups, such as the Land Council. Since then there has been a lot of work done regarding community consultation and identification of local capacity, as well as pinpointing housing stress in the communities to know where we can start.

Early works means a stimulus to the Northern Territory economy, as well as the program rolling out before the real commencement date of 1 July this year with Labor's first budget. You have heard some exciting parameters around that budget, with the Treasurer talking up the Territory.

In December and early January we focused on making contact with Indigenous business enterprises to engage them, confirm their capacity and get them ready for the work. There was significantly challenging weather which caused delays. We were not able to properly commence extensive community consultations until February, and they have continued into March. We have visited 17 communities for local one-on-one consultation with residents, as well as the organisations within those remote towns.

Housing reference groups and other local decision-making bodies have also directly contacted us, and we have been talking to them about the highest needs in their community. Residents at 251 houses have been consulted. The local consultation has been in the area of requests for verandas, such as the installation of and extensions to verandas, as well as extensions to bedrooms and other privacy concepts.

Some great advice has come from remote constituents about how to improve mobility modifications. External storerooms have been mentioned. The Chief Minister's concept of granny flats is extremely important and very welcomed by communities. Outdoor cooking areas and living areas have also been mentioned.

This is a 10-year plan, a visionary plan, and I am really proud to say that construction will begin in April. Construction will be delivered by local people. This is creating jobs, stimulating the Territory economy and improving outcomes for remote Territorians.

Vaccinations

Mrs FINOCCHIARO to CHIEF MINISTER

Over the weekend both Prime Minister Malcolm Turnbull and federal Labor leader Bill Shorten unequivocally committed to a national policy of 'no job, no pay, no jab, no play.' The Chief Minister, on radio yesterday, when asked to support this policy, stated that he would refer the matter to the Children's subcommittee of Cabinet for advice.

Why will you not support the policy of the Prime Minister, your federal Labor boss, the AMA(NT) and Northern Territory doctors to ensure all Territory children are vaccinated?

ANSWER

Madam Speaker, the Deputy Leader of the Opposition must have only heard half my answer because I said I fully support the policy. We are talking with the Children's subcommittee of Cabinet and the experts about how to implement this. I just said that we have to be very careful about making sure we do not disadvantage the disadvantaged, and that we look after vulnerable kids.

One example is a father who had two epileptic daughters and had to delay vaccinations on advice from medical professionals. This is about making sure we get the implementation right. I support the policy 100%, and I encourage the Deputy Leader of the Opposition to listen to all my radio in future. I love that she listened to all of the answer. We fully support the policy, and will talk to the Children's subcommittee and other experts about how to implement it.

We support it. I have been saying we support it. Yesterday the Minister for Health said we support it. It is a very good move. We would like to discuss with the departments and experts the implementation process to make sure we get that right. As the father of two epileptic daughters said, 'I have to make sure my kids are not disadvantaged because I have been given advice from my doctor about delaying the vaccinations'.

We can work through those things; that is not an issue. You have to do that. The Children's subcommittee of Cabinet and the experts will do that. That is the approach we are taking as a government. It does contrast with the rather thoughtless approach the CLP often took to important issues during the last term of government.

I can reassure the Deputy Leader of the Opposition that we fully support the process. I fully support the Prime Minister and the leader of the federal opposition on this issue. It is a good measure for kids. We went to the last election with a very strong commitment, a strong promise, to get policy right for children's early years. We have changed the way we govern. We have the subcommittee of Cabinet and we put children at the heart of our decision-making.

I confirm again for the Deputy Leader of the Opposition, so there can be no doubt about the value that we place on Territory kids, their lives and their health, that we fully support this approach. The Minister for Health made it clear that she fully supports this approach and will be working very closely with the Minister for Children and the Minister for Education to ensure we implement a very important policy for the health and welfare of Territory kids.

One more time, just so the Deputy Leader of the Opposition has no doubt, we support this policy. I hope she does not spread any doubt about that amongst the community. We 100% support this. I clearly said that on radio yesterday. I would love for the Member for Spillett to listen to me on 105.7 and 104.9 all the time.

Firefighters – Gender Equity

Mr MILLS for MINISTER for POLICE, FIRE and EMERGENCY SERVICES

You have decided on a policy to change the culture of the fire and emergency services by aiming for gender equity by 2020. While you assert that standards to ensure community safety will not be compromised, this policy has resulted in significant angst due to successful male candidates having offers rescinded, some training programs being delayed and some careers sacrificed. Could this policy implementation be handled better? What measures will you take to ensure it is both fair and equitable?

ANSWER

Madam Speaker, it is important to get more females into the NT firefighting service. That has been supported by every firefighter I have spoken with. If they have concerns they can raise them with me. I am a strong supporter of creating greater diversity in the police force, fire force, emergency services and the public service. This is not just about women; we benefit from diversity. I support the Commissioner and the measures taken to increase female representation in the firefighting services.

Some of the concerns you raise are not entirely accurate. I am happy to have a briefing with you about everything, including the processes that took place. We have said very clearly that standards will not be changed; to graduate as a firefighter there are minimum standards. We are changing how we recruit into the firefighting service, which can sometimes disadvantage a female.

A very practical example is in regard to a test that happens early in the process; a female applicant was required to do a series of chores while wearing the uniform of a male firefighter, which is extremely difficult to do. A practical change is to get a set of clothes that is appropriate for a female to wear. These are practical things that are being done to try to encourage the participation of females in the firefighting services so they are not disadvantaged early in the process. None of the standards will be reduced regarding who graduates from the program.

There were some issues identified in the recent recruit squad, so it was paused. I am not saying none of those concerns were there. There was a pause. My understanding of the impact is not the same as what the Member for Blain is suggesting. I am happy to get you the briefing process on all of it. There was a pause, but we are not delaying or affecting careers or anything like that. There is a recruitment process. We are providing greater capacity for females to get through the early stages of that recruitment process, when previously they were disadvantaged on practical grounds that we can change.

The graduation has not changed. What it takes to become a firefighter has not changed. You still need to successfully get through the recruit program. It is clear that there were impractical things at the start when trying to be serious about getting more females in the firefighting service.

Secondary School in the Bush

Ms UIBO to MINISTER for EDUCATION

As a former secondary teacher I would like to know how this government is delivering on its commitment to better support secondary schooling options for students in the bush.

ANSWER

Madam Speaker, I thank the Member for Arnhem, who, as we all know, was an award winning secondary teacher in the Northern Territory. Well done.

All children and young people have the right to access a high-quality education in the Territory. This government is backing Territory students and teachers by investing an additional \$124m in education across the Territory over the next four years. As part of this package—and Member for Daly, we are already delivering this—we have already delivered \$20m of additional funding to government schools for the 2017 school year.

We listened to teachers, principals, parents and other stakeholders and put money where it is needed most. Funding for secondary school options in remote and very remote schools was clearly something we needed to address. The previous government had a one-string policy, which was to put all kids into boarding school and secondary school. Successfully completing school has a significant lifelong impact on students. It means individuals can get jobs, go onto further study or start a business. It means they have the capacity to care for themselves and their families, and to live healthier and longer lives.

Through the funding boost this year we have delivered over \$10m in extra funding specifically to remote and very remote schools. About \$6m of that has been to middle years and senior secondary. So a school like Milingimbi will now be able to offer employment pathways and NT Certificate of Education and Training options for its students. At Ntaria, where I and all of Caucus visited last week ...

Ms Fyles: Caucus was taught by Mrs Green.

Ms LAWLER: That is right. They can now run a program for students in Years 7 and 8 which includes prevocational education and skills preparation.

Last week I met with Klate McFarlane, the principal of Yuendumu School. He told me they will now have the funding certainty to employ more Indigenous teacher assistants to deliver a two-way approach to their middle years and senior school ...

Mrs FINOCCHIARO: A point of order, Madam Speaker! Standing Order 241. I ask the minister to table the notes she is reading from.

Madam SPEAKER: Minister, are they your private notes or do you wish to table them?

Ms LAWLER: They are private notes.

Madam SPEAKER: Thank you, please continue.

Ms LAWLER: I am more than happy to give the Member for Spillett a briefing on all the details of our funding.

Deb Williams, the principal at Laramba School in Napperby, has been there long term. This school now has extra funding to employ a trainee to enhance the secondary pathways program for all secondary students. At Jilkminggan at Duck Creek, additional funding will go towards the provision of a vocation education training facility to increase attendance of secondary aged students. The school will now also have the resources to increase support for at-risk and disengaged young people through a more individualised approach.

This government is serious about reinvesting in education and providing real pathways for young secondary students across the Territory to have targeted programs that meet their needs. All Territory students deserve the same choices as children who live in urban settings.

Infrastructure Spending in Central Australia

Mrs LAMBLEY to TREASURER

In November of last year you took approximately \$27m out of the infrastructure budget for Central Australia. You scrapped the Maryvale Road, \$11.5m, the storm rectification works at the Alice Springs Hospital, \$11m, and so on. You are bringing out your first budget in May. Can you promise the people of Central Australia that you will not reduce the current infrastructure spending for Central Australia by one cent?

ANSWER

Madam Speaker, I thank the Member for Araluen for her question. She is a passionate advocate for her electorate, Alice Springs and Central Australia.

We will be investing in infrastructure across the Territory in this budget. It is important to recognise that sometimes the investment in town, and that which goes more broadly outside of town, also benefits the people of Alice Springs directly. As I stated, we have some real challenges with this budget and with revenue coming into the Northern Territory. We have seen challenges nationally with the GST. We have a slowing economy and will see declines in payroll tax.

It is important to make sure every dollar counts. We are supporting local jobs and businesses in Alice Springs. Infrastructure is a great way of doing that with construction projects and the critical area of repairs and maintenance. I believe in making sure we have a strong repairs and maintenance budget because we know that money goes out the door very quickly to support local jobs. We are investing in minor new works, and we have a very extensive minor works program for every Territory school.

Roads are critical infrastructure. They are very expensive, but we have secured significant funding for roads across Central Australia. I am very pleased with where the Australian Government has landed in ensuring that we get more money there. Central Australian infrastructure will be a priority. We have significant investments in remote housing. We are investing in the women's shelter, and we need to see more invested in youth justice facilities there too.

We hear the tradies loud and clear. They will be helped further with the Home Improvement Scheme and the community grants programs. We made the changes to stamp duty for first home owners. We are investing in steel manufacturing, which is going towards important infrastructure. Parks are a great driver of tourism ...

Mrs LAMBLEY: A point of order, Madam Speaker! Standing Order 110: I am still not hearing the answer to my question. Will you commit to not reducing the current infrastructure spend for Central Australia at all, not even by one cent?

Ms MANISON: Madam Speaker, I will be committing to making sure that all infrastructure priorities are delivered, and that we deliver as much infrastructure investment as we can in Alice Springs. I therefore do not see any cents being cut from that infrastructure budget.

ICS is strongly investing in infrastructure in Alice Springs, Central Australia and across the Northern Territory because now is not a time for government to take its foot off the pedal of infrastructure investment. We need to support jobs, business and the economy, which are important economic enablers for the future.

Education in the Katherine Region

Ms NELSON to the MINISTER for EDUCATION

For the last four years Katherine schools have felt very ignored. How is the government ensuring students get the support they need at schools in the Katherine region?

ANSWER

Madam Speaker, it was lovely to Skype with students from Katherine yesterday, and have conversations about the direction we are taking in education with the bright future citizens of Katherine. It is vitally important to put additional dollars back into schools. We are delivering \$20m in education, which is in school bank accounts right now. Schools are grateful to have those additional funds.

Through our 2017 funding boost to school budgets we have delivered over \$2.5m to the Katherine region. This is benefitting those students. Katherine High School, the one big secondary school in Katherine, was under-resourced for many years. This school now has financial certainty. It can make improvements in technology infrastructure to better support the learning needs of its students. MacFarlane Primary School will be able to provide extra one-on-one support for students with the greatest needs.

The most vulnerable kids and those with learning difficulties were missing out on funding. To be able to provide intervention programs for these students to lift their literacy and numeracy levels is vital. MacFarlane School can put the additional dollars into support for those students, which is a wonderful thing. Teachers and families will be grateful for that. This is also good news for remote students from the Katherine region. For Ngukurr School this funding will employ more local support staff ...

Mrs FINOCCHIARO: Point of order Madam Speaker! Standing Order 241. This afternoon we have an education statement. Can the minister just table the answer to this?

Madam SPEAKER: That is not a point of order.

Ms LAWLER: This side of the House knows how vital education is, and we are more than happy to hear about the great things that are happening in education. I will always talk loudly about, and advocate for, education in the Territory. We know that prevention is such an important aspect to improve the lives of Territorians.

Ngukurr School will be able to employ more local support staff. That is a great thing. Money going into schools has a flow-on effect into employment in our remote communities. Wugularr School will be able to employ at least two extra assistant teachers and tutors to assist in classes for its 100 or so students.

This government is delivering on its \$2m Healthy Life Creative Life program. This program will provide alternative education pathways for middle and senior year students in Barkly and Katherine. It is important for kids to have access to arts, sports, social and emotional learning, culture, language and learning on country programs to get them reengaged and attending school. All of these funds will hit the mark and provide additional learning and support to Territory students.

Crime in the Northern Territory

Mrs FINOCCHIARO to MINISTER for POLICE, FIRE and EMERGENCY SERVICES

Your justification for the floor area cap policy, which essentially bans Dan Murphy's from Darwin, has pinballed from alcohol-related harm to alcohol-related crime. Last night's *Nine News* reported a series of break-ins by teenagers in my electorate, the suburb of Durack, in which the crooks stole soft drinks and left beers in the fridge. They terrorised a 17-year-old girl when they entered her bedroom through the ceiling as she slept, leaving the family of three afraid to be in their own home. Meanwhile Territorians are still waiting for you to bring to this House the urgent *Bail Act* amendments you announced last month.

Why do you keep blaming Dan Murphy's for your government's failure to tackle crime? Why have you failed so dismally to make our community safe?

ANSWER

Madam Speaker, Dan Murphy's is welcome tomorrow. I have no problem with Dan Murphy's. They just have to abide by the same rules as every other Territory business. There is no anti-Dan's sentiment on this side. The Labor Party, the Attorney-General and I have been very consistent that when we tackle alcohol we also tackle the causes of crime, harm minimisation and pressures on hospitals.

I am perplexed that the opposition does not realise that alcohol is involved in health and crime issues in the Northern Territory. This shows a remarkable ignorance from the CLP when it comes to the importance of tackling problems in the Territory. From that policy the opposition did segue into a very concerning issue in the Northern Territory. I feel for the Territorians who do not feel safe. Every Territorian should feel safe in their home and workplace. I commend the work police are doing to get on top of what was a spate of crime in December and January. They are doing significant work.

On the topic of the matter of urgency for electronic bracelets, the Attorney-General gave notice—obviously the Deputy Leader of the Opposition missed that—at the start of Question Time for it to be introduced and debated tomorrow for potential passage on Thursday. That is the parliamentary process, and it is as urgent as urgent gets. I commend the Territory public service, which has done significant work to get this done urgently.

The bill we brought forward on urgency will pass on urgency. I give that guarantee to Territorians. I appreciate the support of the opposition for that urgency. I did not take the advice the CLP gave me last sittings about slowing down this bill. I thought that was rather strange because we want to deal with this as a matter of urgency, and we will, just like we did in providing certainty to police about the extra 120 officers so they could have a four-year recruitment plan.

We are giving police the tools they need to have additional equipment regarding car chases and the pursuit of vehicles. We are doing the monitoring. We have identified 18 police officers to target youth crime before it occurs, 54 youth justice workers and more in this space. We appreciate the frustrations they have when crime occurs. People should feel safe in their homes and workplaces, and these places should be safe when they are not there.

Madam SPEAKER: Chief Minister, your time has expired.

Alcohol Issues – Labor Policy

Mr HIGGINS to MINISTER for HEALTH

Earlier this year the Chief Minister stomped on your support for lockout laws. This morning the *NT News* showed the government backing the introduction of a floor price for alcohol sales, but today on Mix FM you stated that a floor price for alcohol sales is not Labor Party policy. Your government's alcohol policy is all over the shop floor.

Is the *NT News* wrong, or is this another case of you being a one-woman Cabinet delivering policy on the run through the media?

ANSWER

Madam Speaker, I wish the Opposition Leader understood the essence of teamwork. We are a Caucus that works together, unlike the CLP and the stories we hear about them throwing books around during Budget Cabinet. Things are getting a bit boring now that we are eight months into our term and have the same Chief Minister and Cabinet. We have not had our third reshuffle.

Since coming to government, not only have we had the stability of one Chief Minister and one Cabinet, but it has become apparent that we need a cohesive approach to tackling alcohol management and controls in the Northern Territory. This will be achieved by our wide-reaching review of alcohol policy and legislation.

Member for Nelson, you will appreciate this because this is something you are passionate about, and you often ask questions about licensing and processes. This review will look at all those aspects. We will hear from community, industry and experts about alcohol abuse. We know the impacts of alcohol. I have spoken clearly about that in the House numerous times, as have my colleagues.

The Opposition Leader asked a question about the floor price; the Labor Party has a policy position to oppose the floor price and support a volumetric tax, which is the responsibility of the federal government. We support a national approach to alcohol tax. We are doing the responsible thing. We are looking at the issue and tackling it. We have released draft terms of reference for a review on alcohol. We stick to our guns, unlike those opposite who rushed things through when they were in government. They changed the licensing approach to a director-general approach, which cut the community out of the conversation on alcohol licences.

They were so busy worrying about themselves—who the Chief Minister was and who was in Cabinet—that they stuffed up the legislation on Sunday trading. We had to fix and strengthen that. They did not listen to the community regarding the BDR, a measure to tackle alcohol supply, which police said was one of the best tools they had to tackle alcohol-related crime.

On this side of the House we work together as a team and we are proud of that. We are pleased to take this review to the experts and the community so we can look at this issue holistically. If you genuinely want to address alcohol issues and harm in the Northern Territory, you need to look at community safety, licensing and the health approach. I look forward to updating the House further on this important policy.

Education – School Resourcing

Ms WORDEN to MINISTER for EDUCATION

One of the best parts of this job is engaging with local schools and ensuring they have the right resources to support kids in the classroom. Can the minister please outline how this government is resourcing schools to better meet the needs of students?

ANSWER

Madam Speaker, we will maximise the potential of every child; we need to make sure the funding hits the mark so we can achieve that. We have delivered on the \$20m, which is flowing out to schools now. The bulk of the funds have been distributed to schools through the students' needs-based funding model.

Mrs FINOCCHIARO: A point of order, Madam Speaker! Standing Order 241: can the minister just table what she is reading from so we can get on with it?

Madam SPEAKER: No, sit down. It is not a point of order.

Mrs Finocchiaro: We are debating it this afternoon. Who thought of your strategy for Question Time today?

Madam SPEAKER: Deputy Opposition Leader, you are on a warning! Minister, you have the call.

Ms LAWLER: This gives Territorians a chance to listen to how we are addressing a needs-based funding model to ensure a fair and transparent distribution of funds on a per-student basis according to student needs. Changes have been made to the global school budgets, which includes \$100 increase to the base funding for every student in the Territory, \$3m more for students in preschool and all transition students ...

Mrs Finocchiaro interjecting.

Ms FYLES: A point of order, Madam Speaker! Standing Order 37: interruption to debate. We know the opposition members do not care about education and do not want to listen to this response ...

Madam SPEAKER: Attorney-General, please be seated. It is not a point of order. If we could hear the last question and answer in silence, it would be useful for all of us.

Ms LAWLER: With the global school budgets methodology, there is \$3m more for students in preschool and transition; \$10m for middle years and senior secondary students; \$2m in additional funding for schools with high proportions of Indigenous students and \$2m in targeted funds that recognise the higher cost of delivering education to students in remote and very remote homeland sites, as well as students in special schools and distance education. All schools are benefiting from increased funding. That is every single school in the Territory, including Darwin and Palmerston schools, which will benefit from an additional \$8m.

Schools are working with their school councils to determine how to spend the additional funds to meet the needs of their students. This may be in the form of additional teaching staff, support staff or resources to deliver high-quality teaching and learning programs. An example for the Sanderson electorate is Wulagi Primary School, which will be using its additional funding to enhance student engagement and wellbeing. It will also use the funding to manage students with behavioural difficulties through targeted programs and additional hours of classroom support.

Wagaman Primary School will be able to expand targeted support for students with focused professional learning for staff. Increasing the skills of staff has a flow-on effect to our students, so they benefit. There are many examples of how this funding is being distributed and how schools are using it very wisely. I was at Dripstone Middle School last Friday and it has been able to deliver extra programs for drama and information technology. These additional funds are on top of the base funding, so schools can put on additional staff to provide programs that will keep kids engaged.

In my electorate of Drysdale the additional funding will go to Driver Primary School to support the establishment of child and family programs, including an early intervention support centre. This \$20m is flowing out to schools, and I encourage you all, including the Members for Spillett and Daly, to talk to your schools to find out how they are using the funds and how grateful they are for them.

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