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Madam Speaker Purick took the Chair at 10 am.

VISITORS
St Joseph's Catholic College

Madam SPEAKER: Honourable members, I advise of the presence in the gallery of Year 6 students from St Joseph's Catholic College in Katherine, accompanied by their teacher, Selena Martin. Welcome to Parliament House. You have come a long way. I hope you enjoy your time here.

Members: Hear, hear!

PAROLE AMENDMENT BILL
(Serial 21)

Continued from 11 May 2017.

Mr HIGGINS (Opposition Leader): Madam Speaker, it is extremely satisfying to see that after almost three years of hard work by the Attorney-General and Minister for Justice, Corrections staff and numerous other public servants we are finally debating the passage of this important bill.

Reducing the appalling rates of incarceration and recidivism in the Territory is perhaps one of the most important issues we face as a society; it affects everything from increasing business confidence to increasing our population. People will not move here or invest in the Territory if our crime rates continue to soar.

Over the past few months foreign governments have issued travel warnings because of crime in Alice Springs, and long-time Territorians have told me they are moving interstate due to the unacceptable level of crime and antisocial behaviour we are experiencing. They do not feel safe in their homes or neighbourhoods.

The Territory has the highest per capita imprisonment rate in Australia by a long margin. Nearly one in every 100 Territorians spent time in prison during the 2015–16 financial year, which is simply stunning. Western Australia was a distant second position with 0.3 per 100 in prison during the same period. Correspondingly, the Territory has the highest recidivism rate in the country, with at least 60% of offenders returning to gaol within two years. What is even more disturbing is the fact that nearly 84% of prisoners during 2015–16 identified as being of Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander descent. Aboriginal youth are extremely likely to reoffend, with over 97% returning to gaol.

There is no single answer to the crime, incarceration and recidivism problems in the Territory. As I have stated many times, publicly and in this place, there are both short- and long-term solutions that need to be explored, implemented, measured and continually reassessed.

One long-term solution we know is working is the Sentenced to a Job program. Studies have shown that offenders who take part in training and work experience are as much as 50% less likely to reoffend. The Territory is leading the way in providing prisoners with skills training, work experience and a path to sustainable employment.

Sentenced to a Job changes lives, providing sometimes lifelong offenders with the tools they need to lead a new life as contributing members of society. In just a few years' time, the Sentenced to a Job program has transformed corrections and rehabilitation in the Territory. Prisoners take part in a wide variety of training courses including literacy and numeracy, engineering, health support, kitchen operations, agribusiness, visual arts, white card, business and commercial, Indigenous higher education and many others.

These skills, much of which will result in a certificate of some kind, allow those prisoners to then seek and gain work experience with local employers while on parole or work release. In turn, this may result in long-term or lifelong employment.

Thanks to Sentenced to a Job and other programs, about 80% of prisoners are engaged in some type of employment, which will significantly lower their chances of reoffending. However, one persistent and reoccurring problem is that often minor parole violations can result in overly harsh and disproportionate consequences. Currently, the only real consequence for breaching bail, whether a serious breach or minor, is the revocation of parole and the loss of time served for any parole period preceding the breach.

This consequence is usually the last straw, so to speak, as probation and parole officers will often decline to breach an offender for minor violations, preferring to give them a chance to improve their behaviour by issuing a warning letter or by placing new conditions on the parolee.

If an offender continually violates the conditions to his or her parole despite warning, the only recourse a parole officer will have is to seek to revoke their parole. In other words, there is no middle ground that would allow the probation board to provide a consequence to the parolee but not go so far as to revoke their parole.

Adding complication, the resolution of deliberation surrounding the revocation of parole may take some time to be concluded, during which time the connection between the past behaviour and the consequences may be less apparent to the offender. The need for more proportionate and immediate response which discourages breaches but encourages positive behaviour has been clear for some time.

The bill we are debating today presents a constructive solution to this problem and will go a long way to complementing and supporting the successful Sentenced to a Job program in the future. The inspiration of this bill can be traced to a Hawaiian judge, Steven S Alm, who in 2004 became increasingly disillusioned with the lack of a middle road for imposing consequences when parole or probation conditions were breached.

As Judge Alm rewrote in a 2015 article, published in the *University of Minnesota Law Review*, a solution was born out of his experience with his children. When there is a mix of encouragement and swift consequences, children tend to tie the two together and change their behaviour.

In the learned judge's words:

You tell your child that you love and care for him or her, but the family has rules. If your child breaks one of those rules, you do something about it right away. If you give the child a consequence that is swift, certain, consistent, and proportionate to the misbehavior, he or she can tie together the bad behavior with the consequence and learn not to do it again.

This may be a simple premise, but the judge recognised that often offenders were quite young and had grown up in households where consequences were often random, arbitrary and inconsistent. By providing a structured system for encouragement, tempered with predictable consequences, these offenders would learn to reach for the carrot and avoid the stick.

This, in turn, would increase the prospects for rehabilitation. A key precept of the HOPE program is that offenders are told upfront that everyone involved in the justice systems wants them to succeed on parole and they will be given the support to do so. That, however, is followed by a warning that should they violate the terms of their probation parole, they will and without exception, immediately return to gaol. The period of time they will spend in gaol for a breach is variable based on a number of factors including the nature and seriousness of the breach, whether the offender has taken responsibility for the breach, and how many previous breaches have accrued.

Actual time can vary from a few hours to a few months. For example, where an offender misses an appointment or a drug test, that person will likely receive a few hours or a day in gaol. This is compared to situations where participants abscond or attempt to tamper with drug testing which will attract a 30-day sanction.

In early 2015 the former Attorney-General, John Elferink, travelled to Hawaii to meet with Judge Alm about the HOPE program and was convinced that the program would work in the Northern Territory. Upon his return, Mr Elferink began sharing his experience and information concerning the HOPE program with the judges, lawyers and members of the Parole Board. This culminated in a visit by Judge Alm to speak to the magistrate's conference in Darwin in August 2015, which gave the HOPE program wide exposure in the Australian justice circles.

Following that, the National Ice Task Force recommended in December 2015 that HOPE be piloted in Australia. The Council of Australian Governments agreed and, in late 2015, designated the Territory as the location for the pilot program. The result was the COMMIT program, which was trialled with offenders on suspended sentences using the HOPE framework. The pilot program has been a success with offenders, lawyers and various representatives of the criminal justice system.

The HOPE program has been a success around the world with over 160 jurisdictions worldwide adopting the program. Independent scientific evaluations have concluded that participants in the HOPE program are more likely to succeed in both the short and long term.

A peer review study commissioned by the National Institute of Justice concluded that in the 12 months following completion HOPE participants were 55% less likely to be arrested for a new crime, 53% less likely to have their probation revoked, 72% less likely to test positive for illegal drugs and 61% less likely to miss appointments with their parole officers.

The institution of the HOPE program in the Territory has the potential to decrease recidivism, increase compliance with parole conditions and show offenders a better path in life. Perhaps the most important and relevant benefit to the Territory is that it will positively complement the very successful Sentenced to a Job and further enhance the benefits of that program. Employers engaged in Sentenced to a Job followed more certainty over the offenders that take part in their program, knowing that while a breach will attract some gaol time it will likely not result in revocation.

This means that employers can plan with more certainty and stand much less risk of losing an employee that they have trained, mentored and provided with valuable work experiences. The bill incorporates all the important aspects of the HOPE program while adopting them to the law, custom and operation of the Territory justice system.

There are some differences in the operation of the program on the ground, but these are largely superficial and should not impact on the success of the program going forward.

We will be supporting this bill and we credit the previous Attorney-General for commencing the process.

Mr SIEVERS (Brennan): Madam Speaker, I, too, speak in support of the Parole Amendment Bill. I thank the Attorney-General and the NTG staff for all their hard work in preparing this bill.

During my many years working in the correctional system, around 1992 to 2002, in most of our correctional services across the Territory parole was always a topical subject, as some offenders would like to be released earlier, though many did not.

As parole and its conditions seem too difficult or complex for many offenders, some found it difficult to comprehend the process and some found it very difficult to commit to.

I recall talking to many offenders during my years in correctional services, and many of them would say about the parole system, ‘No, it is easier to go full-time, and then if I make a mistake I have a clean start and do not need to come back and start full-time again’. That is what offenders were telling me 10 to 15 years ago about parole.

Parole can be a sensitive issue, and I understand that, especially when individuals have been convicted on more serious criminal offences. Some people may see parole as a let-off or early term of release not warranted for the crime. I, too, want the full extent of the law given to those who commit dreadful and horrendous crimes.

There are those who have committed a lot of other offences or crimes like unpaid fines, stealing, unlicensed driving or drink-driving. These people can learn a lot from a good, supervised parole program that engages them in a system in the real world and supports them to become a positive contributor to our society.

The less time an offender spends in a judicial system the better chance they have at not getting caught up with others who seem intent on continuing a life of crime. The new amendments to the parole bill will allow such a process for those individuals who warrant an earned parole. Parole should be available to those who do the right thing whilst they are incarcerated, including completing appropriate behavioural programs, attending educational courses, getting a suitable prison job, staying out of trouble and going through what used to be, and still is, a rigorous classification and parole assessment interview.

I agree that parole is a privilege and not a right. The terms it is entered into must be conducive to ensuring the parolee is engaged in positive behaviours that will benefit our community. There must be key time frame goals with regular checks and reports conducted by the parole officer.

I am pleased the new bill will encourage offenders, if deemed suitable, to enter a parole system that has strict guidelines but may be better able to guide and support them to become a better person and positive contributor to our community. The parole period and the opportunity is to be used effectively to assist the person to reintegrate into today’s society and assist in their rehabilitation in the real world, facing real-life issues.

I am sure that under proper supervision and regular monitoring the amendments to the parole bill will benefit those offenders who wish to make a positive change to their life. I am confident the new bill has appropriate sanctions and measures to address those who reoffend or breach parole conditions.

Madam Speaker, I thank the Attorney-General and her staff, and I commend the bill to the House.

Ms NELSON (Katherine): Madam Speaker, I support the Parole Amendment Bill 2017, which will amend the *Parole Act* and highlights government's commitment to reducing incarceration and recidivism rates in the Northern Territory. It is an established fact that incarceration rates in the Northern Territory are the highest in Australia.

As the Attorney-General noted in September 2016, the NT recorded a rate of 895 prisoners per 100 000 adult population, which is four times the national average.

Paired with the increasing recidivism rate of prisoners who have offended within two years of release, I was left wondering why it took so long for us to reform the *Parole Act* and introduce measures that acknowledge and address the difficulties so many people face during the parole period that led them to reoffend.

In an attempt to reduce violation rates and the associated costs, our government is introducing measures that will not only support parolees, but empower members of the parole board to act swiftly when faced with parolees who have violated their parole terms. This new approach, which is based on the model in Hawaii and Washington State, is very similar to the program originally tested on high-risk probationers in Hawaii.

The Parole Amendment Bill introduces measures and protocols that will swiftly deal with probationers or parolees who violate the conditions of supervision, are immediately arrested and are brought before a judge, hearings officer or probation and parole administrator, depending on the specifics of the implementation, who determines their sanction. These measures will entail certainty that violations are likely to be detected and all detected violations are addressed.

The goal of the approach is to reduce incarceration and reoffending. We have seen, time and time again, that the tough on crime and all-or-nothing approaches have very little positive effects, and strict punitive and retributive measures, while appropriate in some cases, often lead to greater rates of reoffending.

In addition to ensuring that parolees are supported sufficiently during their reintegration to community, this bill also provides the chairperson of the Parole Board the ability to apply swift, certain and appropriate actions for non-compliance with orders.

Enforcing community supervision for released prisoners is a persistent challenge for the criminal justice system in any country. Often this challenge comes at a high cost, as many probationers and parolees are revoked and returned to prison on technical violations, such as continued drug use and no-shows for appointments.

A great majority of people imprisoned for a criminal act are returned to the general community. It is imperative that we look at measures and initiatives to ensure they are supported, not only when they are serving their sentence but also in their efforts to reintegrate into the community. Often these parolees who continue with self-destructive behaviours do so because of a lack of support once they are back in their community.

Our prison population has increased exponentially in the past two decades and the penal system has become retributive, not rehabilitative. This bill introduces measures in an attempt to reduce violation rates and the associated costs.

As Dr Lorana Bartels of the University of Canberra quoted from Judge Alm in her assessment of HOPE, printed in the *QUT Law Review*:

We are also convinced that one of the chief reasons HOPE works as well as it does, is that the probationers feel they are being treated fairly ... the rules are being enforced consistently and proportionately, and probationers are thus more likely to buy into the program.

And that is the key right there: probationers buy into the program.

Having seen the noticeable difference that HOPE has made in communities in Hawaii and in Washington State, where I lived for 14 years, I am looking forward to seeing the same results in our communities with the introduction of these amendments, as outlined in the Parole Amendment Bill.

I commend this bill to the House.

Mr KIRBY (Port Darwin): Madam Speaker, this bill is a significant change from some of the initiatives we have in place. It will allow people on parole to make some mistakes, as we all do at various times in our lives, and be held responsible in a proportionate way. It will make sure that they get an opportunity to make choices about how they deal with those mistakes and how they deal with their life beyond parole and incarceration.

The sanctions matrix that this bill will set out the period of the term of imprisonment to be served as a sanction. This will allow for a swift, certain and proportionate response to non-compliance with a parole order. It will give people the opportunity to make some mistakes, to have those mistakes acknowledged, but also have them rectified in an appropriate manner.

If there are times of multiple instances of non-compliance that have been alleged, the chairperson has determined that sanctions are proportionate to the instances that have been taking place. In these circumstances, the chairperson must not sanction greater than the longest individual sanctions that have already been imposed. They must not impose a sanction that extends beyond the term of imprisonment imposed at sentencing. There are some benefits involved for people, as well as the ability to have a realistic and mature look at what those incurrences are and how they are dealt with.

The intention is to apply the corresponding sanctions to acts of non-compliance set out in the sanctions matrix. There are some guides and opportunities for people to prove that whilst they may have made mistakes they will not, as previous speakers have mentioned, go back in for extended periods of time. They will have those mistakes viewed on a case-by-case basis.

The chairperson also retains the power to revoke or amend the parole order or take no further action. There is a range of initiatives that the chairperson will have available to them. Revocation and cancellation of the parole order will still be an available option when very serious non-compliance occurs. For some people who are trying to find their way after being in prison—there may be very serious occurrences of people reoffending and those non-compliances will be dealt with in a strict and formal manner.

The purpose of the sanctions regime is to ensure that a swift, certain and proportionate response is applied to acts of non-compliance across the board. There is a very fair outcome if minor infringements have occurred. There has already been mention this morning of the very high imprisonment rates throughout the Northern Territory. With our high regard of NT Indigenous living in the Territory—they are unfortunately ranked in the highest rates of imprisonment in Australia, just behind Western Australia.

The recidivism rates of prisoners who offend within the first two years are pretty astonishing. In 2012–13 it was almost up to 60%. We have a critical problem amongst our society whereby once people find themselves walking on the wrong side of the law—if the rate is up to 60% reoffending we have a method and regime that does not support those people as well as it should. It is high time we do something about that.

We need to reduce the number of people being locked up in the Northern Territory and the rate of recidivism, where people find themselves in trouble once they are released. That is something we need to concentrate on.

This bill will provide the mechanism to start to lower these rates. As a government and a society, we need to recognise and help people who have been released from prison and support them through parole and other initiatives to live responsibly and abide by the law—get them into support services and full-time employment and ensure these repeated instances do not become a thing of the future, as they have been a thing of the past.

The purpose of this bill is to authorise the chairperson of the NT Parole Board, without revoking a parole order, to impose a period of the person's sentence of imprisonment as a sanction for non-compliance with the parole conditions. A range of those non-compliances have been discussed already. If it gives the chairperson the ability to decide and work through the range of those impositions and sanctions for non-compliance, then it gives people a much better chance of having minor infringements viewed very fairly. Short sanctions are what we are talking about, the acknowledgement of the amount of personal responsibility for actions people have been involved in for non-compliance with their conditions.

The Parole Board has noticed a growing trend of offenders declining parole when they become eligible. The Member for Brennan explained his experience of working within the system. It was highlighted by prisoners that they did not think it was worth taking part in parole. They did not think the sanctions that would be

imposed upon them, if they were to reoffend, were fair. It was easier for them to stay the full course of their imprisonment and try to start with a clean slate afterwards.

We all acknowledge, with the rates we have in the Northern Territory, that anything we can do to improve and encourage people to get into the parole system and into regimes that can help them reintegrate and be productive and proactive members of society will be a great help across the board.

As a government, we need to recognise that people who have been released from prison on parole can live responsibly and abide by the law. The growing trend of offenders has been mentioned. We are certain this will go a long way towards acknowledging, but also tidying, some of those numbers. Word will quickly spread that parole is a serious matter. If people in prison get the opportunity to take part in a parole program, people will look positively and proactively at those opportunities.

As a government and a society, we need to recognise that, at times, these conditions have been too harsh and it has been easier for people to serve their full sentence, which is not a great outcome for any of us. We have had that feedback from offenders but also from subject matter experts in the field.

Currently, under the current regime, there are limited options to address non-compliance. This is probably a big part of the reason we have not seen people wanting to take up parole options. Hopefully, we are encouraging offenders to take up parole options in the future with the passage of this bill. We must recognise that the strong encouragement and support we can give people to get into parole and work programs ensures they then become productive and proactive members of the community.

In essence, the current system is an all-or-nothing system. It does not give people the opportunity to have minor indiscretions viewed on their merit. It was probably an unpredictable system as well. The offenders presently stand the chance of not just returning to prison for a short time, the amount of time they had left to serve, but for quite some extended period. The ability for the chairperson in the future to apply swift, certain and proportionate sanctions will be a constructive move to encourage offenders to take up parole options and hopefully, in the future, take up a more productive and proactive role within society.

We have no doubt that this policy will result in the decrease of a number of episodes of non-compliance considered by the Parole Board. The proposed amendments will allow for fair and immediate sanctions to be enacted when people have indiscretions. All in the House would admit that there will be indiscretions in the future. These offenders are humans, like the rest of us, and we all make mistakes at times. Some of us are lucky in our upbringing and had the ability to tidy up our mistakes, apologise for them and move forward.

The ability and opportunity to acknowledge what they have done wrong and move forward—they are the types of habits we want to instil into people as they move back into society. If the opportunity and ability we have with the passage of this bill is to encourage offenders to put their hands up, admit they have done something wrong, acknowledge that was a breach of conditions and then quickly move forward on a way to rectify that situation, then that will be of benefit not just to society but to these individuals as they move through those situations.

The acts of non-compliance that will be targeted include failure to attend scheduled supervisions of appointments, drug and alcohol use and abuse, curfew violations, and others. This bill will help to make people accountable for those actions and to apologise and move forward.

In line with other swift, certain and fair justice models it is expected the maximum sanctions may be around the 30-day mark. They are short and sharp sanctions that hopefully encourage people to stay on the right path and get back on the right track. When a person makes a poor choice on parole and is non-compliant but takes responsibility for their actions, the sanctions are expected to be within the ball park of only a few weeks to try to help them.

The cancellation of the parole order will still be an option and available to the chairperson if that is the only course to take. That will be a serious consideration. Parole is a privilege and still needs to be treated like one, but we also need to concentrate on giving people other opportunities to get on the front foot and prove they can be a confident and proactive member of society. They need support and assistance in moving along that path.

It is important that the parole period is used effectively to assist people to successfully reintegrate into society. They will need guidance and a great deal of support. Any opportunities we can give them to have full-time employment or to become a good member of society is something this government will support as much as it can.

The National Ice Action Strategy and pilot COMMIT program concentrate on swift, certain and fair initiatives to make sure people understand that if they make a mistake it is not the end of the world and there will be measures enacted that are proportionate to the misdemeanours that have happened.

I acknowledge the body of work taken on by the Attorney-General and her staff over an extended period of time, and I commend the bill to the House.

Mrs WORDEN (Sanderson): Madam Speaker, while this bill is not a big, sexy bill that changes the fundamental way we do things, like the recent introduction of the Alcohol Harm Reduction Bill or the medical terminations act, this bill is equally important because it is about lives. It is about lives of Territorians, innovatively changing the way this government will do things and providing an opportunity for a better outcome for some of our most vulnerable Territorians, those who are incarcerated.

We often read negative stories about our system of incarceration, so it is nice to speak about something positive for a change. It is also lovely to see the positive attitude of the staff who have been working on this bill, because they know its potential for change.

The bill amends the *Parole Act* and allows the implementation of the COMMIT program, which will trigger swift, certain and fair action in response to breaches of parole conditions.

This bill and resultant program will contribute to a commitment to reducing incarceration and recidivism rates in the Territory, which is something I believe every member of this House wishes to achieve. I find the Territory's incarceration rates embarrassing and sad. It is not something to be proud of, particularly when it comes to the incarceration rate of our First People. It is probably more than embarrassing and sad. But we all know it does not come with one easy solution; we acknowledge that.

It is something we can address and we need to do so quickly. When we start to drill down and look at the number of prisoners who breach parole and return to prison, reoffend or, as we have heard, do not even opt for parole, we can see that the figures are high. This is something we are addressing today.

Particularly for our Indigenous prisoners, life on the outside can be very difficult and returning to prison cannot even provide a break where a person can get three meals a day and a bed. That is something for us all to be concerned about. It is much more beneficial to leave prison, not at the end of their sentence but early, with support from parole officers.

I, like many others, have had family, friends and acquaintances who have spent some time at Her Majesty's pleasure, which is the term my grandmother would have used. I have some constituents who are either serving or who have served some time.

The stories I have heard show clearly that the longer a person is incarcerated the harder it is for them to turn their life around. If you are around people every day who have committed a crime, then it is a fair chance they might have an influence on you, your attitude or, ultimately, your values. The less time people are incarcerated the better their chance of reintegrating with the community and becoming contributing members of society.

It is important that when prisoners are given parole and return to the committee they are supported in their lives to turn the corner, away from whatever circumstances placed them there in the first place, and encouraged to make a fresh start. We know it is not easy. There are circumstances that may interfere with the ability to meet their full parole conditions, as the Member for Port Darwin spoke about, often opting to not to take parole for those reasons.

The aim of the bill, and the COMMIT program sitting underneath it, is to keep parolees out of prison. The longer and more repeatedly we have people coming in and out of our prison system, the greater chance they will continue to reoffend.

This bill provides a new way to support them, providing a new mechanism through the COMMIT program to deal with breaches of parole to enable them to continue life on the outside and really succeed. What I like about the bill is its clarity. It clearly sets out predetermined, fair and immediate sanctions—the words we have been using to cover that are 'swift, certain and fair'—for non-compliance with parole conditions that are, for the first time, proportionate to the breach, not simply returning the parolee to the prison system for a minor breach. That is a first for the Territory, founded in the Hawaiian HOPE program.

The bill before the House will create a new, certain and fair system for dealing with non-compliance of parole orders. Once the chairperson of the Parole Board makes a few decisions, prisoners will quickly realise they will be able to apply for parole and stick to the conditions of their release. Should they breach those conditions they will face those consequences quickly, and if the breach is minor they return back onto parole. The alternative to this is to make a decision not to apply and serve out their full sentence, resulting with them leaving prison unsupervised and unsupported.

The cost of imprisonment versus parole has to be a major consideration here, particularly for prisoners who are imprisoned for minor offences. We have to make parole an attractive option and then support parolees not to reoffend through community supervision. We have all made poor choices, perhaps not bad enough for us to end up in gaol, but we have all made decisions that have landed us in hot or semi-hot water.

The outcome of those decisions comes with consequences that are commensurate to the level of the mistake that we may have made. We might be insensitive to a friend and lose a friend; we might be rude to a boss and lose a job or get stuck with the nasty jobs for the next year; we might crash a car and end up with a big bill to foot; or we might be late for an interview and lose the opportunity to get a new job.

Where parole it concerned, the breach for such things as being late for a check-in due to circumstances beyond your control means that the parolee returns to gaol and serves the full measure of their sentence. That is hardly in the public interest.

The Attorney-General earlier stated that the purposes of a parole period are to supervise an offender in the community post-release for custody, monitor compliance with the parole order to assist in and support the offender's rehabilitation into the community, and to effect positive behaviour changes whilst under supervision.

The whole idea is to get these people on parole, supervised and supported. If there is a breach they go back in for a bit then back out again. It just makes sense. When they are out they are with family and being supported. We are aiming to better support the process and the parolee to move on with their life and be reconnected with their family.

If you always do what you have always done, you will always get what you have always got.

Mr McCarthy: Your grandmother?

Mrs WORDEN: No, I think that was an old work colleague of mine who tried to make us a little more innovative at the time. But when it is not working you have to try something new. There will always be people who commit further serious offences, and those people will be appropriately returned to the prison system. That is the expectation of our community, and this bill still allows for that.

Our Attorney-General has been very busy these last 12 months. Again, she has delivered contemporary legislation to the House that provides a new pathway to achieve a better outcome for Territorians. Congratulations not to the Attorney-General but her team of committed staff, who are determined to make good laws, policy and programs to support the work of our justice system.

Congratulations on the intention to implement the COMMIT program to support behavioural change through consistency and an expectation of personal responsibility. As is the case with the BDR, it is another piece of the puzzle towards making the changes that, one year ago, the community voted us in to make.

I look forward to the influences this bill has in the years to come, and I commend the bill to the House.

Mr McCONNELL (Stuart): Madam Speaker, today I rise in support of the Parole Amendment Bill. I support this bill because it encourages personal responsibility, is evidence based and is expected to reduce incarceration and recidivism rates in the Northern Territory.

This is a poignant moment for me to reflect on why I have come to this place. This is a really important bill. It may seem like a minor adjustment to the way we use bail in the Northern Territory, but it has the opportunity to fundamentally change the community. I was heartened to see the Leader of the Opposition speak so positively about this bill. Congratulations to all the people that have worked on the bill. It looks quite good to me.

I will talk about some wider things rather than the legislation itself because plenty of people will talk about that.

I note that the incarceration rates in the Northern Territory are the highest in Australia and, as the Attorney-General stated, Indigenous people are overrepresented in this enormously, and the Northern Territory continues to contribute to these statistics.

Making a commitment to reducing Indigenous incarceration is a key initiative of closing the gap. The Northern Territory includes some of the most disadvantaged areas in Australia, with higher rates of unemployment, criminal convictions and imprisonment than other areas. This is not due to a higher rate of inherent criminality; it is due to people's circumstances. Poor education and lack of employment are strong determinates of Indigenous and non-Indigenous offending.

I have seen it cited previously that unemployment is a greater risk factor of offending than being Indigenous. Unemployed Indigenous people are 20 times more likely to go to gaol than Indigenous people who are employed. For too long we have been putting people from poor socioeconomic backgrounds in prison because it is somehow easier than getting people to participate in the economy. That is an appalling state of affairs.

High incarceration rates are a huge determinant of society, causing long term disruptions to family and social structures, participation in the economy, reducing the safety of the wider community and increasing risk of future criminal behaviour.

We want a bail system that works as best as it can. We want to look for those evidence-based best-practice models, like we have in this case.

The cost of continual expansion of our prisons and gaols is not sustainable and is unacceptable. These financial costs are borne by taxpayers, who pay for all the prisons, gaols and ever-expanding instruments of incarceration. They do not get a good return on this investment. The ongoing cost of incarceration on the community is almost immeasurable. Spending on prisons and incarceration diverts resources from more important and effective community services and strategies, including education, infrastructure, supporting business development, and jobs.

We often talk about the importance of being tough on crime. I, too, want to be tough on crime. I do not want to witness criminal activity in the streets of our towns or communities. I do not want to have my house broken into. I want effective measures to come out of this place that stop that sort of activity from happening as best we can.

That is not always the simple answer of being tough on crime. 'Lock 'em up!' That does not always work. We need to represent to the community that we value their participation in the community. We are not looking for them as a target to make our next example of. I saw on the news this morning that Blacktown, Sydney, was being used to target drug users in such a way that would roll out drug testing for people on welfare. Let us not target people who are victims of circumstance. People are responsible for their own recognisance, but we must remember that sometimes society places people in situations that are very difficult to deal with.

Imprisonment and punishment alone have proved to be no deterrent of people returning to prison. In fact, the rate of people returning to prison in the first two years after their release is more than half. Once people are out of gaol, we are not providing enough support for transition back into mainstream life. That is in the case of when people are handed their actual sentence and at other times during the process.

We must reduce the incarceration rate in the Northern Territory. This is my keystone statement. I believe in investing money in communities and people, not in building more structures to contain them. I have been heartened to see a number of Territory organisations promoting justice reinvestment strategies in recent years. Of note is the work of the Central Desert Regional Council. I have discussed justice reinvestment strategies a number of times with a number of members, most notably with the Member for Katherine. They are initiatives I hope we see more of in the Northern Territory.

Justice reinvestment redirects funds from investing in more prisons to instead reinvesting in community-based initiatives to address underlying causes of crime. That is what we should be doing. It is great to see unity in this place when talking about this measure of changing some legislation to better allow government's resources to be used to create that outcome.

This strategy has the power to change the trajectory of entire communities. Their return on investment will be undeniable.

This bill is a small part in the change required to reduce the number of people going back to gaol in the Northern Territory; it is working towards closing the gap. The bill is evidence based and informed by work that has already been done in other jurisdictions and overseas. It promotes personal responsibility, being fair and certain punishment if parolees breach their parole requirements. That will be centrally important.

I will be asking for a further briefing from the Attorney-General about the resources that will be available, particularly interpreters, to make sure people who are involved in this program have an adequate understanding of the consequences of any breaches of bail. That understanding will be central to the success of this project.

The measures of this bill also fall within the parameters of the broader community expectation. I believe most members of the community are committed to a sentence being part of being rehabilitated, not just punishment. We forget that the community has expectations of our justice system that we rehabilitate people involved in it, not just have a revolving door. That does not work. It takes people out of the economy and their families and it costs a lot of money. The most important measure of a justice system is people not being involved in it again.

Yes, we want to incarcerate people to some degree to demonstrate to others that this is what you will happen if you continue to be silly; there are eventually consequences. But a much more important part of the justice system is rehabilitating people. The vast majority of the community is on board with us on that matter.

Without going through the details of the bill, which I am sure others will, I believe these fair and immediate consequences will create positive change. A number of minor parole breaches can be dealt with in other ways than fully revoking parole. This bill provides consequences for breaching parole, but those consequences draw a clear line between the breach and the punishment. It provides an opportunity for parolees to learn to change their behaviour. It gives people a chance. Too often, in the Territory, we are unwilling to give people a chance to change.

I believe in this type of targeted punishment reform for non-violent offenders. The bill drives good policy which promotes and teaches better life decision-making skills in addition to supporting reintegration into society.

Madam Acting Deputy Speaker, I commend this bill to the House and thank the Attorney-General and her staff for their work in lowering the number of people going to gaol in the Northern Territory.

DISTINGUISHED VISITOR
Dr Angela Carrascalao

Madam ACTING DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable members, before we continue, I draw your attention to the presence in the public gallery of Dr Angela Carrascalao, the vice president of the judicial council of Timor-Leste. Welcome to Parliament House.

Member: Hear, hear!

Mr PAECH (Namatjira): Madam Acting Deputy Speaker, I believe that is also the Member for Katherine's brother in the Chamber. A big welcome to him.

I am very pleased to support the Parole Amendment Bill 2017. I understand the purpose of the bill is to amend the *Parole Act* to authorise the Chairperson of the Northern Territory Parole Board to, without revoking a parole order, impose a period of the person's sentence of imprisonment as a sanction for non-compliance with a parole condition.

The sanctions matrix, which sets out the period of the term of imprisonment to be served as a sanction, is to be fixed through an instrument published in the *Northern Territory Government Gazette*. The bill will allow for a swift, certain and proportionate response to the non-compliance of a parole order.

It is fair to say that while parole is a privilege, it is not a right. It is a privilege that we should encourage people to use if available to them. It is a mechanism which requires a certain level of support by the community, government and family to ensure that the individual has every opportunity to succeed at reintegrating back into the community.

It is no secret that the parole system in the Northern Territory has not been working as well as it could. For far too long it has been a process of papers exchanging hands rather than one which addresses and tries to stop people from reoffending and reducing recidivism.

An effective parole system is a crucial part of an effective corrections system. If convicted criminals are to be genuinely rehabilitated and reintegrated back into our towns, communities and cities across the Northern Territory, we need to ensure they are given access to a path that will lead to a successful, positive and productive life where they can begin to contribute back into the community that has supported them. They can begin to contribute back to the community through paying taxes. Not only do we owe it to the individual, we owe it to the public purse. It is not cheap to keep them inside. Most significantly, we owe it to Territorians to make sure we have a system in place that is effective and committed to reducing recidivism and reoffending, and reintegrating people back into society.

The system has not been working to its full capacity until now. As we in this House know all too well, the number of people in our prison systems is far too high. Incarceration rates in the Northern Territory are the highest in the country. That is a statistic I am not proud of and it breaks my heart. The Northern Territory Indigenous imprisonment rate is 2827 per 100 000 Indigenous adults, in terms of the population. That is 19% higher than the national rate of 2361 per 100 000 of the adult Indigenous population.

The Indigenous prison rate was ranked the second-highest in the country, not far behind Western Australia. The recidivism rate of prisoners who reoffend within two years has gone up significantly. These figures reflect a sad and dark time for many people in the Northern Territory. They are a result of failures that we, as a government, are addressing; failures of insufficient resources for correctional programs for men and women; failures of previous government policies which did little to address offending behaviours; failures to invest in more prevention of crimes.

That is not acceptable to me, to government or to the community. I am sure it is not acceptable to the Assembly. Parole systems are hard and complex systems for anyone to navigate. Striking a balance between the interests of the offender, the community and the victim is a process that I do not envy. That is why I believe the legislative amendments are aimed at tackling this approach from a different angle not taken before in the Northern Territory.

The proposed amendments allow for a smooth transition from correctional institutions to community. These proposed amendments allow for a sanctions regime similar to the one currently known as the COMMIT program. Given my comments around the current parole system, I acknowledge and place on the record my appreciation for the hard work that goes on in the relevant agencies of Corrections, Justice and the Attorney-General's. Not surprisingly, we all know the volume of work they deal with and the pressure they work under.

The first priority of any parole system is to ensure the safety and protection of the community, which can only happen when we successfully reintegrate offenders back into the community and prevent any further breaches or crime being committed.

Given the complexity of the justice system and the commitment of the government to address these matters in a holistic nature, we have taken a considered and a well-staged approach to reforming this area. But let us not be fooled; we are a government that understands the all-or-nothing approach to non-compliance is not working and has not for some time.

We are looking at alternative ways to make sure people are pulled up over their breaches and sanctioned accordingly whilst reducing the cost to our hard-working taxpayers of the Northern Territory. This is not a soft approach to the severity of the case, rather a way to ensure that the offender will be sanctioned and penalised in accordance with the sanctions matrix.

I think it is important to take the opportunity to place on the record that the sanctions matrix will look at situations where someone on parole goes to country and has the permission to be on country, but has to be home at a certain time and is unable to get back into town due to a flat tyre or a vehicle breaking down—we know the complexities of the bush and the conditions of the road. The sanctions matrix will then reflect the level to make sure that an appropriate sanction is placed on the offender and they can work through that breach in a manner that does not result in the offender being placed in a correctional environment for a short time, which adds layers to the costs associated with that.

Today we see the first action of the legislative reform by the Attorney-General. I am very proud to work with her on this processes to address the overrepresentation of Territorians in our criminal justice systems. I have

no doubt that as an outcome of this process; we will see a number of other reforms and measures that will come to this Assembly in the future, aimed at making life better, safer and fairer for Territorians.

I am confident that this is a government that is open and willing to look at alternative ways to reduce recidivism, support victims of crime and effectively reintegrate offenders into the community. We have a duty to the people of the Northern Territory to provide a parole system that works.

I believe the proposal before the House today will assist with the progressive overhaul of the parole system in the Territory. It is a complex process, as I have said, and there needs to be a considered and staged approach. It is proceeding very well. This reform is essential because a parole system that fails the Territory, offenders and victims is not effective in regard to corrections. The amendments we are putting in place through this process will remedy the system that has failed the Territory for far too long.

I commend the bill to the House and encourage members in the Chamber today to support the bill. It brings into line reform that is needed in the Northern Territory to make sure we can look at alternative ways rather than what we have done for a number of years—and that is whereby someone who breaches ends up back in the prison system, which we know is not the ideal place for them.

A number of members in this Chamber have touched upon this greater need for and emphasis on preventative programs to look at how we address escalating behaviours so that we can get on top of them before people enter the criminal justice system.

It has been a very poignant topic today—the matters whereby we look at post-release from correctional environments. Reintegration and rehabilitation are fundamental across the Territory to ensure we give people every chance at succeeding once they have left the correctional environment so they are able to reintegrate back into the community and contribute to the Northern Territory, as well as reduce the rates of incarceration, whether it is Indigenous or not. The rates of incarceration in the Northern Territory are far too high. This is one of many legislative amendments being put forward to start the process to reduce the horrific level of incarceration in the Northern Territory.

I look forward to continuing to work with my parliamentary colleagues and the Attorney-General on mechanisms to reduce the rate of reoffending, as well as looking at preventative ways to stop people from entering the criminal justice system in the first instance. That is a priority of this government; it is something we are committed to. We have made sure it is clear in a lot of the policies of the Territory Labor government.

This is an amendment in which the sanctions will reflect that of the breach that has occurred. The Member for Katherine spoke earlier today about the HOPE program from Washington State and its benefits. That model is very effective and I welcome it and similar models being looked at across the Northern Territory. The Member for Stuart spoke about the programs which prevent people from entering the system.

This is a process in which we need the family to come with us on the journey to ensure that people who are reintegrating into the community have a stable place to live and the opportunity to engage and enter into employment. We need people to be engaged and contributing to the Northern Territory through social determinants or impacts, or through gaining employment, contributing to the economy and paying taxes. This is one of many measures being introduced to ensure we have a system that is fair to everyone and ensures we are bold and progressive at looking at alternative ways, rather than just locking people up.

Thank you for the opportunity to speak on this bill. I commend the bill to the House.

Ms UIBO (Arnhem): Madam Speaker, the amendment to the *Parole Act* will contribute to our government's commitment to reduce incarceration and recidivism rates in the Northern Territory. I love the Territory. It is where I come from, where I belong and where I call home. But I am sad to say that incarceration rates here are some of the highest in Australia.

In addition to that shocking fact, Northern Territory Indigenous incarceration rates are grossly overrepresented in relation to the population base.

On 20 May this year on ABC's television program Q&A, Noel Pearson, the founder of Cape York Partnership, announced that Indigenous Australians are:

... the most incarcerated people on the planet Earth.

This statement was checked by The Conversation's FactCheck unit, which according to their website, is the first fact-checking team in Australia and one of the first worldwide to be accredited by the International Fact-Checking Network.

In relation to Mr Pearson's statement that Indigenous Australians are 'the most incarcerated people on the planet Earth', Ms Eileen Baldry from The Conversation's FactCheck unit stated on their website that:

For countries for which we do have data this, is an accurate statement.

It is a truly depressing idea to think that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people are not only overrepresented in our prisons and corrections programs in Australia, but in comparison globally, across the world.

Our government is committed to implementing measures to reduce the incarceration rates in the Territory. As a government it is our responsibility to review options that will assist people who have been released from prison on parole to live responsibly and abide by the law, thus in turn keeping themselves, their families, friends and communities safe.

As the Attorney-General has already stated, the purpose of this bill is to authorise the Chairperson of the Northern Territory Parole Board to, without revoking a parole order, impose a period of the person's sentence of imprisonment as a sanction for non-compliance with a parole condition.

I represent the fourth largest electorate in the Northern Territory. I know the harsh reality that there are people in our prisons and corrections systems who come from the electorate of Arnhem. I have family members who make up these numbers. I am in favour of any measures to reduce incarceration and recidivism rates in the NT. I am therefore supportive of this bill's amendments.

The other side of this conversation is about the support for people to reduce reoffending rates with opportunities such as training and skill development in order to gain employment and become productive members of our society.

The effects of these amendments will occur over time, and it is anticipated that this policy will result in a decrease in the number of non-compliance episodes considered by the Parole Board. As a decrease in the number of parole orders revoked starts to occur, this will consequently improve completion rates and, very importantly, encourage prisoners to apply for parole. Notably, the sanctions envisaged by the model are to be short and proportionate to the act of non-compliance and the level of accountability the offender takes for his or her decision-making.

Accountability for one's own actions is something, as a former teacher, I endeavoured to instil in my students. The relationship between two people can be improved vastly with trust and accountability. In my experience as a teacher, I got to the point where my secondary students would confess some of their minor crimes, usually with relief teachers. I would say to them, 'Why are you telling me that? What do you need to do to make it better?'

There was a push for taking accountability for one's own actions regarding behaviour and what was said and owning that responsibility. If what they were doing was not the behaviour that was expected at school or in the classroom, they had to make amends for that poor behaviour. It is something I have tried to do in my education field, and it goes to the heart of the amendment to this bill to make one accountable for one's actions, which is very important in building a productive and safe society.

The Attorney-General talked about examples whereby a person making a poor choice on parole is non-compliant but takes responsibility for their actions. The sanctions would be expected to be within the ball park of two to seven days.

Another example of small measures within my history of education was when I was a student at Sanderson High School and we had the 'poor choice' system. To be honest, I made some poor choices when I was a student. I had to admit it and take responsibility for those poor choices, and there were consequences for them. I am happy to say I am on the right path and I learned from those poor choices and took responsibility for my actions, and I am not doing too badly now.

Taking responsibility and accountability for your actions makes a big difference. It also empowers you to do the right thing and have high expectations of yourself rather than thinking you cannot do something correctly.

I heard my colleague the Member for Stuart talk about closing the gap of disadvantage for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. From the Australian Human Rights Commission website:

The campaign's goal is to close the health and life expectancy gap between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and non-Indigenous Australians within a generation.

In addition to improving health outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in Australia, key elements such as education, housing, infrastructure and employment are vital to closing the gap of health disadvantage.

Support services are very important in striving toward this communal goal of health equality in our country, Australia. The corrections and justice systems play a large role in that.

As the Attorney-General stated in her second reading speech:

The pilot, known as the COMMIT program, has the support of the judiciary, Correctional Services and the Northern Territory Police as well as the legal aid agencies here in the NT. The COMMIT program is available to offenders who are sentenced to a suspended sentence of imprisonment and follows a 'good parenting model'.

The program aims to achieve behavioural change by sending a consistent message to probationers about personal responsibility and accountability and includes a consistently applied and timely mechanism for dealing with non-compliance.

I recognise the hard work of staff in the Department of the Attorney-General and Justice and in Correctional Services and the Office of Parliamentary Counsel. I thank the Attorney-General for her hard work in ensuring that the reform has been undertaken swiftly, smoothly and in a timely manner in order for the amendment of the bill to be presented to the House.

Madam Speaker, I commend the bill to the House and thank the Attorney-General for making the amendments.

Ms WAKEFIELD (Territory Families): Madam Speaker, I also support the Parole Amendment Bill. I am very proud to be part of a government that has such a focus on reforming evidence bases, and I proudly support the new parole system enacted in this bill, which is accountable, responsible and evidence based. It is about what works.

I want to talk about how this bill will support women and children in domestic and family violence situations, as that is one of my portfolio responsibilities. Across my entire portfolio, child protection, domestic and family violence, elder abuse and a range of other things intersect with the justice system. As a government we are committed to working together in a collaborative way to ensure all those systems join up in a way that is focused on the needs of Territorians.

Every woman and child has a right to feel safe at home, in their family and in the community. The period following the release from prison of a man who is a perpetrator of family violence is a particularly dangerous one for the female partner. It is a window of time where violence can occur and can result in horrific injuries and even death.

The history of repeat perpetrators is that the violence can get more violent over time. During my time as the CEO of the Alice Springs Women's Shelter, women would often seek shelter at the time their partner was coming out of gaol. We would have presentations of women saying, 'That man is coming out and I am not sure how he will respond. I need my children here to know we are safe until we can see how he will respond and make a plan to move forward depending on where he wants to stay and continue the relationship.'

One of the things that is important when talking about domestic and family violence—so often in the Northern Territory we talk about it in relation to alcohol, and I will touch on that later—we need to understand that the dynamics of an intimate partner relationship involving violence is about power and control. After a period of incarceration where that perpetrator of violence has been away from his partner, he has lost control. It is a predictable behavioural pattern of perpetrators of domestic violence, and one of the things that happens is they will try to reassert that control upon exiting gaol.

We believe this is an important tool. The more often we can have perpetrators of violence leaving gaol with sanctions and situations to monitor their behaviour and provide them with support to change their behaviour—

that is very important. I have memories of sitting with women saying that when they find out their partner is being let out of gaol as a free man—that was really a high-risk time for us. As domestic and family violence workers, we were very worried.

Another great tool for practitioners on the ground is that it provides a strength and a graduated way of managing risk. We know this is more likely to change behaviour and pick up those changes in behaviour when someone is perpetrating violence against their partner and the behaviour is escalating—it is a predictable pattern—this bill will respond to that escalation, providing stepped-up, stronger sanctions and better monitoring systems. I believe this has the potential to save lives.

The sanctions would include conditions related to increasing safety for women, such as places the perpetrator is able to go, as well as drinking and drug usage. I touched on alcohol before. We know that drug and alcohol misuse increases the risk of the level of harm that can happen in a domestic violence assault, the risk of a more serious injury and increasing the likelihood for homicide. We need as many supports as possible around alcohol misuse for perpetrators of domestic and family violence.

The amendments also provide a better system of support and monitoring for the perpetrator when they leave prison, providing them a period of time to get their life back on track. It provides a swift response when perpetrators make poor choices rather than wait until they have committed an assault for there to be action toward that behaviour.

One of the difficulties that domestic and family workers, police and court staff have is that some of the risk factors and warning signs that are well proven in evidence to be a sign that behaviour is escalating and a woman's risk is increasing, are not always criminal events. They are things like increasing control, not allowing a woman to leave the house and a range of increasingly controlling behaviours. It gives us an opportunity to introduce some of those sanctions that will trigger a response earlier, providing opportunities for domestic family violence workers to provide that support.

One of the other things I am very proud of is—we all know there is no silver bullet to this issue. This is another reform. It provides another tool in the suite of law reforms this government has introduced that will make women and children in domestic and family violence situations safer.

In November we amended the domestic violence mutual recognition act, ensuring women no longer have to go through the long and traumatic process of reapplying for domestic and family violence orders every time a woman crosses state borders, ensuring DVOs in place in one state or territory will be recognised in every other jurisdiction.

In March we passed the body-worn video and domestic violence evidence bill, enabling videos captured by police with body-worn cameras to be used as evidence-in-chief in court for domestic and family violence cases, making women feel safer and have greater surety, reducing the level of trauma being experienced by women through providing an alternative form of providing evidence in court.

Also in March we amended the *Bail Act* to allow the use of electronic bracelets during police bail. These bracelets will enable DVOs and bail conditions for perpetrators of domestic violence to be effectively policed and enforced, and it will greatly increase the safety of women, potentially saving lives.

If you put all those amendments together with this amendment and further work, we have a great new set of tools for our law enforcement officers and our court officers to support women and children to be safe in our community.

During this sittings we have passed the Alcohol Harm Reduction Bill, which includes a new and improved BDR, which prevents those who abuse alcohol and cause harm to others through misuse of alcohol from being able to purchase, consume and possess takeaway alcohol anywhere in the NT.

That is a really important part of upholding bail conditions. It means we are actually able to police alcohol conditions. A person who is on these bail conditions will also be on the BDR, which means they will not be able to purchase alcohol, whereas in the last couple of years you might have been stopped by the police in Alice Springs in a rather haphazard way. This is a consistent way for those people not to be able to purchase alcohol.

This is important for the safety of women and children in our community because alcohol has such an impact on the level of injury and harm caused to women in domestic and family violence circumstances.

These changes in legislation will provide further tools for police and those working in the area of domestic and family violence to prevent imminent risk of serious harm, injury and death. It will also provide another option to be sought and used as part of the Family Safety Framework. I want to talk a little about that because it will be a really important tool to be used as part of that process.

I was so lucky to be a part of the formation of that framework in Alice Springs in 2012. It brings together a range of stakeholders to sit around and make sure we are sharing information and supporting women and children who have been identified as high risk of homicide or further injury, and to make sure that as a service system we are providing the right support to do everything we can to prevent any further harm.

One of the big changes in that time—unbelievably it was the first time that the women's shelter worked with Community Corrections, which seems like a really simple thing to be done, but it had not been done. There was difficulty with the information sharing legislation and there were constant barriers to that, and the Family Safety Framework gave us an opportunity to do that.

I know the Member for Brennan would support me in saying what specialist work being a Community Corrections officers is. It is not just about sanctions or about enforcing a piece of paper; it is about building relationships and supporting people to get back on track. It is a key part of our rehabilitation. That was an important part of the Family Safety Framework; where parole officers and domestic and family violence officers were together, we often saw really good outcomes.

I have a strong memory of one of our very first meetings in Alice Springs. A gentlemen was coming out of prison and everyone was very concerned. He had been a recidivist DV offender over a long period of time—very high levels of violence—and on previous occasions when he would come out of goal there had been assaults fairly soon after his release. We were concerned about how we would do that, so we were all making a plan on how we would support the family.

We came back to the following meeting and everyone was pretty pleased because they had managed to get a plan together. The agency working with the man coming out of gaol said, 'It is all good. We got him on a bus to ...' blah, blah '... on this date.' Then my service said, 'We have just booked her on the same bus'. If we had not been coordinating and sharing that information, who knows what would have happened. We would have accidentally put the perpetrator of the violence and the woman on the same bus back to the community. This is where people who are working in ways that are positive for the person in front of them do not understand the whole system. A coordinated response is essential.

I see this bill as enabling many more of those coordinated responses. It provides a flexible, individually-focused decision, rather than trying to make a system that is one-size-fits-all and does not work for those individuals.

I also will touch base on the opportunity this provides people coming out of gaol to make different choices. Many people coming out of gaol are often put back in to the community with little support. Again, I go back to the professional role of the parole officer having a rehabilitation focus. The approach of locking someone up, waiting for them to assault their partner again and then re-locking them up, is not working. That was highlighted quite starkly in some of the examples in a recent coronial report on the death of two women in Alice Springs. We need much more flexible systems that are able to respond to individual people's situations, but also make them accountable for the decisions they are making in a much more responsive way.

Often there is a delay in a response in serving a domestic violence order. This new system gives certainty and a swiftness of action that I believe is essential for the safety of women and children in this circumstance. It also gives the perpetrator of violence a message that we are serious about this. We will not sit around and wait, but we will make sure they are responsible for their decisions and there is an immediate reaction to it.

The amendments to the bill will also work towards preventing crime and reoffending before it happens. In my portfolio area, and as someone who is responsible for the reform of the youth justice system—stopping crime before it happens is something the government has been focusing on. This is the best response we can have to crime and community safety. We need to reduce the amount of crime in our community and the contact people have with our criminal justice system.

I will give notice this afternoon about changes I will be bringing to the House with the Youth Justice Bill. Not pre-empting debate, one of the important things within the bill I will be introducing is to separate the youth justice system from the adult justice system. That is something we need to do if we are serious about making our community safer. We need to acknowledge that the needs of the youth justice system are different to the

adult justice system. We need to acknowledge that children are not mini-adults in the way we respond to them.

Equally, this bill is about adult corrections. I note a rather simplistic presentation from the Leader of the Opposition in his response to this bill. We need to be clear that this is a program focused on adults taking responsibility for their behaviour as adults. Adults are able to understand those consequences and take responsibility by having a swift and fair response that is proportionate to the breach.

The Member for Namatjira made some great points, as did many other members, about the fact we do not want, as a criminal justice system, to respond in the same way to people who have a flat tyre on the way home as we do with people who have assaulted their wife as part of a breach, or harassed and terrorised them. We cannot respond the same way. We need a flexible, incremental system that treats adults as adults and responds to their choices and the seriousness of the implication of those choices in an appropriate way.

The other thing we need to do, one thing the community wanted us to do at the last election, is to reform the system in such a way that it actually works. People are sick of having the same conversation about the justice system. What they want to see is government trying things that work. The evidence continues to show that locking up people for long periods of time does not work towards reducing reoffending, and the longer a person stays in prison the more likely they are to reoffend and live a life of constant re-cycling through the prison system.

Not only do we need to stop our youth justice system being a funnel into an adult justice system, we need to put in the checks and balances that stop people spending a lifetime going in and out of our prison system. We all know the stories of those who have been on the front line of service delivery in the Northern Territory. We can all think of examples of people who get stuck in that cycle, who keep coming out more institutionalised and traumatised from their time in gaol, with less skill, being less connected to their family and to country and culture, cycling into a self-destructive life of crime.

It is important that we not only respond to that but that we give people as many opportunities as possible to make a different choice.

There are also people who succeed in turning their lives around. We need to focus on those good stories, and there are plenty of them. I met with the Member for Nhulunbuy this morning and he reminded me that we need to hear those good stories where people have a strong sense of where they need to go. This is a really important bill in making those changes.

I do not think any of us would argue that the current parole system is not outdated. It does not meet modern terms. It was sad to hear the Member for Brennan talk about a conversation he had 10 or 15 years ago—we have had these conversations for a long period of time, and this is an opportunity to try something new and look at a new approach. It means we are much more likely to reduce incarceration and recidivism—not punishment for punishment's sake. We need a system that is completely focused on preventing crime and reoffending. That is what the community expects and wants.

We also need to remember what parole is about, the core purpose. When things are complex—one of the strategies I was taught in social work was to go back to the core of what you want to achieve. Parole is meant to prepare people for successfully transitioning and reintegrating back into the community. That is its core purpose. It is not about increasing the sentence or making life more difficult—making it much more likely for people to spend a longer period in gaol. The core purpose of parole is that after a period of good behaviour in gaol, where they have had time to reflect and rehabilitate, the Parole Board judges them as able to take the opportunity to successfully transition with support and, most importantly, monitoring. This is to make sure that what the system has seen within the prison—someone willing to take responsibility for their behaviour and start a new life—is true.

Parole is about policing that to make sure that is the case. We are focusing on that core purpose of parole—the very fact that is the core purpose means there will be some walls and that people will not be able to succeed at times or will continue to make poor choices. That is why the system has such a strong monitoring system—and the good work of the Community Corrections officers. The new amendments will also provide ongoing case management support along with stepped up sanction in accordance with the level of severity in non-compliance.

The system could work on incentive and not just penalties and provide the judge and others with more flexibility in adjusting conditions in accordance to the individual's needs and behaviour change.

I had the opportunity yesterday to address all the local judges in the Northern Territory. They were doing domestic and family violence training, which I have to commend them for—professional development is an important part of anyone's role—and it was great to see the judges making sure they were educated in the contemporary approaches to domestic and family violence.

One of the things I am personally determined to do in my time as minister, and I know the Attorney-General is committed to this also, is provide our judiciary with the tools to make a better decision and have enough information to make good decisions on the bench each day. It must be a frustrating job to sit there watching the same people cycle through the court system for minor breaches and not have the powers to respond to those flexibly. This is an important step toward making sure we provide the incentive for people to change their life.

I thank the Attorney-General for bringing this bill to the House. It is another step on the journey of our strong focus to stopping crime before it happens in our community—making sure we have systems that work better to ensure people are accountable for their behaviour and that the system supports them to make the best decision they can in that moment.

The way that will happen is through having a transparent and consistent system that is applied consistently across the board but is individually focused and looks at people's individual circumstances. I know people have said this many times, but I think the real strength of this system is that it provides swift, certain and fair responses to poor decision-making.

I thank the Attorney-General for bringing this forward. As the minister responsible for women's policy, I know we have a significant issue with an increase in the number of women in prisons, and this is a great opportunity to make sure female prisoners have access to parole in circumstances that will allow them to continue with parenting.

This is where many of our portfolios intersect around the areas of child protection, the justice system, women being incarcerated, being disrupted from their ability to parent, and children going into the welfare system and starting a really difficult cycle.

I hope this parole system will also give women the opportunity to have more flexible parole conditions that acknowledge the complexities of parenting, and often single parenting in these circumstances, but also provide less disruption to children whose parents are going through this process. Making sure we have consistent attachment as a social work concept—which is about making sure we keep that bond between parents and children as strong as possible—is a really important part of this process.

I think this is an important thing our system has not provided. Too often we see the needs of children prisoners as being the same as adult prisoners, and often we see the needs of women prisoners as being the same as male prisoners. Clearly there are many things that intersect in this issue—making sure we can provide flexibility and responsibility. The ability to take on the responsibility of parenting again soon after being in prison is clearly an important issue.

I look forward to hearing the evaluations of this program. I know it will be well evaluated. There will be much to learn from the processes. We have many challenges. One of the challenges for this program will always be the size of the Territory and the area in which we are providing parole services. Community Corrections are well-seasoned in how to provide those services. They have done an amazing job in ensuring we can have these systems in place.

We have achieved law reform in a very short period of time with things that completely change the system, as the Member for Sanderson mentioned, as well as these other small steps toward making sure our community is safer and that we are supporting those frontline workers. One of the things that can wear you down, as someone who has worked on the front line, is when you do not feel that you have the support of the government of the day, making your job harder.

I remember the experience of being a head of an NGO, and thinking the government did not understand what we were doing. That does not mean we always get it right. Some of these reforms, such as using cameras for evidence, making it easier for the courts to hear evidence and give the courts tools for how to respond flexibly to complex situations—we have to remember that people's lives are complex. It is not a straightforward scenario. It is not an equation of ...

Mr McCARTHY: A point of order, Madam Speaker! I request an extension of time for the member, pursuant to Standing Order 43.

Motion agreed to.

Mr Wood: Will you just repeat what you just said in the last five minutes?

Ms WAKEFIELD: I note the interjection from the member on the other side. It is such an important debate and I am sorry if I have not kept you entertained enough this morning, but these are important issues. People's lives are complex and if we sit here, trying to come up with simplistic solutions to complex problems, then we will always go wrong. This is about us making sure we reform the system in a way that is evidence based, focused on what works, provides for our very complex community and acknowledges the complexity of the people we are working with through the system.

This gives judges the ability to respond to people's individual needs, meaning they can be much more sensitive to the fact that we have a high amount of Indigenous clients going through our justice system. It can acknowledge the differences between those groups. What works in Central Australia does not necessarily work in the Top End. Issues like parole conditions that do not respond to the Wet Season will set people up for failure in the north. In the south that is not such an issue, but there may be other things such as the breadth of distance, access to transport and a range of other conditions. If those conditions are not tailored to meet the needs of those specific circumstances then we end up disadvantaging Indigenous people yet again. This is why we need flexible systems that respond to the individual, rather than trying to dictate a one-size-fits-all circumstance to our parole situation.

Whilst the member on the other side may be a little bored, this is a complex issue and it requires complex debate. We need to think about all the processes in this.

I thank the Attorney-General for bringing forward legislation which we have acknowledged was commenced by those on the other side when they were in government. We are happy to deliver it and make sure it will work on the ground. We know—and I am convinced from my on-the-ground experience—that we will make a difference to women and children and their safety through this program. It will give women another sense of safety and workers on the ground another tool, but most of all, it gives people opportunity.

All of us in government became part of this government because we are about giving people the opportunity to make the change, if they can, and take responsibility for their behaviour and become a constructive and important part of our community, which is where we want them to be. We think every Territorian has something to contribute to our community. This gives people yet another opportunity to do so.

Debate suspended.

The Assembly suspended.

MOTION
Censure of Chief Minister

Mrs LAMBLEY (Araluen): Madam Speaker, pursuant to Standing Order 67, I move that this Assembly censures the Chief Minister and Minister for Trade, Business and Innovation for misleading the Assembly in regard to:

1. His party's dealings with the Australian Hotels Association Northern Territory and the secretive manner in which his government formulated the regulations of section 33AB(1) of the *Liquor Act*, preventing Dan Murphy's from obtaining a store licence and entering the retail liquor market in the Northern Territory.
2. The Assembly notes that his actions constitute a breach of clauses 3.3, 3.4, 3.5, 5.2, 5.3 and 6.2 of the Ministerial Code of Conduct, as well as clauses 5, 10 and 11 of the Legislative Assembly Members' Code of Conduct.

In less than 12 months we have seen this government, which came in on a very strong platform of promising integrity to government, come apart. It has fallen apart on this issue of doing a deal with members of the alcohol industry of the Northern Territory to secure a restriction on the floor space of takeaway liquor outlets to 400 square metres. I find it incredible that such a deterioration would occur in such a short space of time.

I draw the House's attention to Restoring Integrity to Government, a Labor document that was released prior to the 2016 election, just 12 months ago. In this document, the Chief Minister said:

Confidence in the integrity of public officials and government processes is essential if we are to meet the considerable challenges that we face and to grasp the opportunities that we share.

He went on to promise Territorians that his government would be one that operates with integrity, honestly, fairly and in a transparent manner.

Today in Question Time I asked the Chief Minister to provide information about political donations his party received in the lead-up to the 2016 election, just 12 months ago, from stakeholders in the alcohol industry in the Northern Territory. The Chief Minister is the leader of the Labor Party in the Northern Territory. He was given over 24 hours to provide this information, yet he decided not to do so. He decided not to be transparent or open to Territorians about the nature of the political donations he received from members of the alcohol industry in the Northern Territory. He made a deliberate decision, despite the fact that he was given more than one day's notice, not to provide information that the people of the Northern Territory are demanding at this point in time.

For those of you who are listening this afternoon and have not been following what has been happening in regard to this government's performance in legislating to restrict the floor space of takeaway liquor outlets to 400 square metres—there has been a very interesting succession of events over the past six to nine months which has brought to bear very important question about the honesty and integrity of this government.

Last week we read in the *NT News* that a member of the Chief Minister's Cabinet, a minister of the Territory Labor government, spoke to a journalist, Christopher Walsh, and provided him information that a deal was done with the Australian Hotels Association of the Northern Territory to secure this restriction on the floor space of takeaway liquor outlets to 400 square metres. This minister confirmed to this journalist that it happened and that it was all about securing political donations to fund the August 2016 election campaign for the Labor Party.

Also from this article we learned that there has been an attempt to cover this up. The Leader of the Opposition asked the Chief Minister questions in Question Time today about when he found out about Dan Murphy's coming to town. This debate is all about the fact that the government legislating and regulating to the effect of restricting the size of takeaway liquor outlets to 400 square metres was specifically designed to stop Dan Murphy's from coming to Darwin.

There have been many questions about when the government found out that Dan Murphy's was coming to town, when they met with the people from Dan Murphy's and when they formulated this spurious policy—which no one seems to have a copy of and was never announced, published or put in the public domain—about restricting the size of takeaway liquor outlets to 400 square metres.

There have been many questions asked of this government with a range of inconsistent answers or that have simply not been answered at all. That is enough to put a case to the parliament today to say that this government is not operating with integrity and honesty, and these questions must be answered.

We heard today in parliament about the government's intention to bare all to the political donations inquiry, that this will supposedly be the panacea of all the problems we have experienced in the Territory over the last five to 10 years.

There is a problem within their ranks, a problem of a questionable activity, and anomalies in how this government has chosen to operate. In less than 12 months we have a government that is falling apart, has taken money and accepted political donations in return for policy and favour for the people who have donated to the Labor Party's political campaign.

It has been an interesting time. Over the last few years I have been an Independent member of this parliament and have listened to this government talk endlessly about integrity, respect and about doing things honestly and openly, only to find that one year into its first term we have a very strong case that this government has not operated with integrity. It has let itself down and fallen into a trap of accepting political donations for favour, and there is evidence to suggest this.

On 22 June 2017 the Chief Minister told this parliament that when he introduced regulations to limit the size of the floor space of takeaway liquor outlets to 400 square metres—in December 2016 he did not know about Dan Murphy's coming to Darwin. This is what he said in parliament on 22 June, and you can check *Hansard* for the record.

When he introduced the regulations to effectively stop Dan Murphy's in December 2016, he said:

Dan Murphy's was not on the radar back then.

He said:

I had no idea it was coming to town. The government at the time might have known, but I had no idea about Dan Murphy's. We picked what we thought was a reasonable number for the size and density of the Territory.

Since he made that statement in parliament in June, other evidence suggests that he did know Dan Murphy's was coming in December 2016 or before, and he acted deliberately to obstruct it, as we know in hindsight. On ABC radio this morning he contradicted himself. I heard it for myself and I am sure many people in the Chamber, and people listening this afternoon, would have heard the interview with the Chief Minister on ABC radio this morning.

He said that he found out that Dan Murphy's was coming to Darwin in November 2016; another day, another story. Was it December or November 2016? Who knows? The story changes from day to day. Yet we know also from an article in the *NT News* last week that the Chief Minister's Chief of Staff had a meeting with people from the Dan Murphy's company on 26 October 2016.

Who is telling the truth? Is it the Chief of Staff—I am sure there is documentation to prove that he met with Dan Murphy's in October—or is it the Chief Minister, who thinks he knew about Dan Murphy's in November, but it could have been December? The story is falling apart.

VISITORS
Seed

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable members, I advise of the presence in the gallery of Seed, which is Australia's first Indigenous youth climate network. We extend a warm welcome to you and we hope you enjoy your time at Parliament House.

Members: Hear, hear!

Mrs LAMBLEY: We have very strange but clear anomalies in the story that the government would have us believe. Discrepancies in the dates that have been provided are well documented now. I note that the ABC produced a story that was quite damning of what has transpired within this government over the last few months. The headline said, 'NT bottle shop law blocking Dan Murphy's closely mirrors industry group request ...' and the letter obtained shows that.

The ABC quoted the AHA NT from a letter obtained, saying:

The AHA (NT) seeks a commitment that a maximum bottle shop size of 400 sq metres of 'public area' be introduced, through legislative amendments.

We have the Chief Minister saying they had their policy before this document was sent to the Chief Minister on 26 April 2016.

The onus was then put onto the Chief Minister. You say you had a policy in place before 26 April, when this letter was sent to you, to give feedback on exactly what your party's position was on a number of policies the AHA had constructed. The ALP, headed by the now Chief Minister, said it was already a policy of the Australian Labor Party.

What is a policy? Is it a thought bubble, an idea or just something that comes to them out of nowhere? No, a policy is something that is considered. A political policy usually goes through a process of scrutiny, being made clear and transparent. A policy is shared and communicated to people in order to reflect the needs of the community at large. It is there to be presented and valued, and ultimately, as a political policy to be voted on.

We have been told by this government that it had a policy before 26 April, when this letter was received by the AHA saying, 'We have a policy to restrict the floor space of takeaway liquor outlets to 400 square metres.

Do you agree with it? They did agree with it, but now we are told that the Chief Minister stated to Territorians that their policy existed before this policy was presented by the AHA.

There is no evidence of this policy, as we have heard already. The Opposition Leader presented a question to the Chief Minister today: where is the policy; where did it come from; where was it written; where was it published; and when was it announced to the public? He had no answer. He evaded answering the question; instead he talked about how great this alcohol review and the political donations inquiry would be.

He has tried to answer the question in other forums, such as on ABC television news on Friday night. They played part of an interview with the Chief Minister and he said, 'We created that policy whilst in opposition. We were under-resourced and we did not keep record. We do not have a copy of the policy in question.' All very lame and implausible. If you have a political policy you hold it up and you share it. You do not have a policy that you hide away and do not account for. It does not make sense.

I maintain that the Chief Minister is not telling the full truth on this matter. If he did have the policy it would be written somewhere, endorsed by his party, and he would be willing to share it with Territorians. But this policy does not exist and he is not owning up to it.

There has been a lot of argy-bargy around this. Many people have been telling many stories. Ultimately it has to be the subject of an inquiry. I suspect this will be the first referral made to the independent commission against corruption, which is due to be established in the Northern Territory in 2018. The very first referral made to the ICAC will be of this new government, which has really let itself down.

My censure motion today is based on my contention that the Chief Minister has breached clauses of the Ministerial Code of Conduct as well as the Legislative Assembly's Code of Conduct. I will share with you what those clauses are.

Clause 3.3 of the Ministerial Code of Conduct: Disclosure of Actual, Potential or Apparent Conflicts of Interest. I think it is clear the government has breached that.

Consideration of Disclosures is clause 3.4:

Conflicts of interest relating to portfolio matters will generally be dealt with by the Chief Minister. Conflicts that are very serious or which involve the Chief Minister or which relate to Cabinet matters, will be referred to Cabinet for discussion and determination as to what action should be taken.

Clause 3.5 is Consequences of Failure to Disclose a Conflict. There is a conflict here. There is a new government, within months of coming to power, apparently acting on a policy which was never made public and happens to coincide with a policy presented by the AHA on 26 April. It quickly acted, regulated and legislated to restrict the size of floor space of takeaway liquor outlets to 400 square metres, effectively squeezing Dan Murphy's out.

Do not forget, the whole precinct Dan Murphy's was meant to be the anchor tenant for a \$40m development. This government is facing an economic downturn not seen in the Territory for probably decades. It is in a position to say, 'No, we do not want a \$40m shopping complex built in Darwin. We will turn our back on that and accept \$50 000 or \$100 000—or whatever it was—'as a political donation from stakeholders within the alcohol industry because that serves us better. Do not worry about the economic stimulus that would have been created by a \$40m shopping centre with Dan Murphy's being the anchor tenant.' It was a very bad decision on all fronts.

Items 3.3, 3.4 and 3.5 and 5.2 and 5.3 of the breaches of the Ministerial Code of Conduct are about ethical principles. The last one is 6.2, Respect for Parliament. The Chief Minister, the Minister for Trade, Business and Innovation, has breached all of those in that he has misled the Assembly on this very serious matter.

Also, there have been breaches of the Legislative Assembly Members' Code of Conduct. Number five is about honesty; number 10 is about responsibility; and number 11 is about public interest.

I also take the opportunity to table a letter that has been alluded to many times now, both in the media and in this Chamber. It is the response by the then Leader of the Opposition, Michael Gunner, to the Chief Executive Officer of the Australian Hotels Association, Mr Des Crowe, in response to a letter sent to the ALP's Michael Gunner on 26 April 2016.

In this letter Michael Gunner details his response to a range of issues defined and outlined by the AHA. It presented its policies and the ALP presented its response to those policies. Interestingly enough, the response from the ALP very clearly stated:

We will restrict the public area of a bottle shop to a maximum of 400 square metres.

The Chief Minister said this is a coincidence. I have been in this Chamber long enough to know that coincidences do not exist in politics. There is no such thing. Some of you may laugh, but some of the newer members of this Chamber, over time, will come to agree with that. They do not exist. If people say it is a coincidence, they are really saying, ‘Gee, I have been caught out. This is an awkward moment and the only explanation I can give is an implausible one, that it is a coincidence.’

Madam Speaker, I seek leave to table this document.

Leave granted.

Mrs LAMBLEY: It is a coincidental claim of the ALP to have, word for word, the exact same policy as the Australian Hotels Association of the Northern Territory.

It is a great tragedy that members of this relatively new government have let themselves down and let go of the high standards they gave themselves, particularly in opposition. This illustrates how quickly and easily standards can start to crumble and decline. With pressure from lobby groups and the pressure of trying to fund a political campaign, those issues of integrity and transparency can soon begin to erode.

I would never have thought I would be standing here, one year into this government’s first term, making these allegations and presenting these concerns about the performance and management of this government, but the facts speak for themselves. The onus is now on the Chief Minister to provide concrete evidence as to where that policy exists, where it was published and where it was presented to the party.

I know within the CLP, all policies are scrutinised by the party at large. You cannot just come up with a policy out of your left pocket and say, ‘Here it is’. It goes through a process of scrutiny and debate with the whole party being involved in the creation and development of the wording and implications of every policy.

When I was a part of the CLP, in 2012 we went to the election with a large volume of policies that, one-by-one, had been written and endorsed by the party. There were no policies I was aware of which just came about that were not written to the party or in some way made public to the Northern Territory.

I have listened to and concurred with many of the allegations made about the former CLP government over time. I had concerns about certain members’ integrity, respect and honesty, and how they conducted themselves in this parliament. It pains me to stand here this afternoon and make similar allegations about people I concurred with when they made allegations about the former CLP government. It pains me to think things have declined to the point where these serious matters involving the operations and decisions of this new government are being brought into question.

I think that over time, with the media, the members of the opposition and the Independent members—I have heard the Member for Nelson ask numerous questions in this parliament about this matter and not getting satisfactory answers. It is time for this government to stand up and truly provide evidence. The onus is back on you. The ball is in your court. You have not provided the evidence to make people think they have made a mistake; there was a policy in place.

It looks like you have done the wrong thing by Territorians, that you have sold your soul to the devil. You have accepted political donations to further your own political party needs. I remember distinctly this legislation being slid under my nose and the explanation for the urgency of the changes to the legislation was inadequate, strangely timed and very suspicious. But at the time I had no reason to be suspicious. I thought you guys were good and that you had some sense that things had to be done right, but I think Territorians and I may have gotten it wrong.

I think you should hang your head in shame until you can provide concrete evidence that you had a policy in place, authorised and endorsed by the Labor Party of the Northern Territory, prior to this letter going out to the ALP and the CLP from the AHA in April 2016, asking you whether or not you agreed with their policy on restricting the floor space of takeaway liquor outlets to 400 square metres.

Unless you can provide that evidence, there is a very strong case that you have misled the people of the Northern Territory, that you have breached the Code of Conduct of this Chamber, and that you have breached the Code of Conduct of what is required of ministers of the Northern Territory.

The onus is on you. You cannot say it did not exist. You cannot say you do not remember. You cannot give these sloppy and insincere responses. I gave the Chief Minister 24 hours' notice to provide a list of the political donations the ALP had received in the lead-up to the August 2016 election to ensure he had an opportunity to be open, transparent and honest with Territorians, and he passed it up. He decided, 'No. Despite the fact I am the leader of the ALP, I will pass it up. I will not provide Territorians with transparency or the list of alcohol industry stakeholders that provided money to my party in the lead-up to the 2016 election.'

I think that is a great travesty, a big mistake of this government. He has proven this afternoon that he is hiding something. He asked the Treasurer, or the secretary of the party, to provide that information. The fact he came to the Chamber this afternoon without it says to me he is hiding. Territorians listening this afternoon will agree with me. He had the opportunity; he was given a whole day. He was probably given about 26 hours' notice; I think I emailed them all at about midday. I emailed each minister in the government Cabinet and none of them were able to provide that information to the people of the Northern Territory in Question Time today.

You have missed the opportunity to come clean. You have missed the opportunity to provide that information and transparency to Territorians. I think that is a great shame and it will come back to bite you. Territorians have had enough of being misled, bullied and denied things they should be entitled to by any government.

I believe in an open-market approach to any commercial activity. I do not think there is any argument to stop Dan Murphy's from coming to the Northern Territory. That is not my political philosophy. I would never have supported a restriction of that type. It is the same as Bunnings coming to Alice Springs. If I go to Bunnings to buy a hammer, just because it is a big shop I will not come out with five hammers. That logic is insane. It is not supported and there is no evidence.

The way in which this government operates is interesting. They talk endlessly about evidence-based approaches and decision-making—they scrapped alcohol mandatory treatment; they brought in the BDR; there was no evidence for either of those. Here we have another example of the fact they have decided to scrap Dan Murphy's because of some spurious and questionable evidence they have plucked from somewhere.

That is not the issue we are here to talk about today. We are not talking about the voracity or the rights and wrongs of any of their alcohol policies. I do not want to hear a debate about that this afternoon. I want to hear some evidence that supports the comments and statements that have been made. I want to hear an explanation of the inconsistencies in the stories—the fact we have three months in which the government supposedly knew about Dan Murphy's coming to Darwin, the fact you cannot come up with the written policy prior to April 2016.

These explanations are not good enough. Territorians deserve better and you need to start functioning as a government a whole lot better than what you are; otherwise you could end up with the same destiny as the former CLP government.

Ms FYLES (Attorney-General and Justice): Mr Deputy Speaker, I am extremely concerned by the attitude taken today by the Member for Araluen. Just like when she was a member of the CLP government, she is not speaking with any credibility about the alcohol-related crime or antisocial behaviour that we experience in our communities every day.

When the Member for Araluen or the opposition speak about trust in government or political donations, it is the height of hypocrisy. The opposition and former CLP Independents voted to scrap the BDR in 2012. The result: the two most violent years in the Territory's history. To stand here today and to listen to the ramble is appalling. She is asking questions about political donations, yet she is the member who voted to scrap the inquiry into political donations that this House had passed; and she is over there giving me a puzzled look.

I will take a moment to reflect on the history, because you cannot rewrite history, Member for Araluen. On 20 August 2014, the Member for Nelson introduced a motion to establish a political donations inquiry. The CLP lost the vote on the floor because they were all asleep at the wheel, which pretty much sums up their four years of government.

They unsuccessfully attempted to reverse it. The Member for Daly and the Member for Araluen voted to overturn the political donations inquiry. They come in here now—with the Independent and opposition members—and talk about it, but they are the ones, when this parliament had passed a motion to have a donation in political inquiries, who voted against it.

They then kept quiet. They said they would have the political donations inquiry whilst we got through the Casuarina by-election, which was on 18 October 2014. Then on 22 October 2014, funnily enough, a few days after the Casuarina by-election, it was rescinded. And who voted to rescind that political donations inquiry? The Members for Araluen and Daly! Not only did they vote against it in the first place, they rescinded it. During this time, the Member for Araluen was a part of Cabinet. She did not leave Cabinet till 2015 and did not leave the CLP until June 2015.

Just to recap for Territorians: in August 2014 a motion passed this House; they stayed quiet while the Casuarina by-election took place; and as soon as they could after that by-election they scrapped it. It was many months after that the member then left Cabinet and ultimately the CLP.

It is interesting; they try to rewrite history around these political donations. We said we would put an inquiry into political donations and we are doing that. We said we would put in place an independent commission against corruption and we are doing that with legislation being presented to this House tomorrow.

We have nothing to hide. We are putting in place measures for Territorians. Those opposite speak about the success of alcohol mandatory treatment. Well, that was a white elephant. Coming to opposition they are trying to rewrite history.

We have seen some extraordinary statements from the Leader of the Opposition this week. The now opposition, the then government, had the same policy of a 400 square metre limit. It is very interesting ...

Mr Higgins: No we did not!

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! Members will have an opportunity to say something when it is their time and they are called.

Ms FYLES: It is also worth noting that the Leader of the Opposition has repeatedly suggested he would refer issues of donation to the ICAC, which his former government and the Member for Araluen never got around to putting in place, the ICAC that the CLP fought so long against—the political donations inquiry they back flipped out of more quickly than an Olympic gymnast.

We have set up a donations inquiry. The CLP albeit accidentally set one up in the last term of parliament and then misled Territorians by not scrapping it until after the by-election.

The member opposite's claims in this House today are appalling. She has not provided anything to back up those claims. She talks about policy and claims that the CLP passed everything through their council meetings. They have volumes of policies that they took to the election.

Nobody will forget the leaked rant that Adam Giles gave to a CLP council meeting in Alice Springs, where he went on and on about the Labor Party and that he had robust policy after policy and was talking them through. But he had nothing like that. You get two very different sides of the story, including the fantasy that the Member for Araluen has in her new found independence. She seems to have forgotten very quickly what those CLP councils were like.

This censure motion, which the government utterly rejects, is based around Dan Murphy's, but I will step it away from that and outline the facts to the House. The Territory government welcomes new businesses, and Dan Murphy's is welcome to come to the Northern Territory, but it needs to abide by the rules that everyone has to abide by. The rules are clear. We have legislation that clearly outlines those rules.

As Health minister I make no apologies for making policy that is backed by evidence. The Member for Araluen has pretty much said we should simply accept this development because it is economic stimulus and there is no evidence. I dispute those facts, as do many others, including the Royal Australasian College of Surgeons; Bernie Dwyer, the Chief Executive Officer of Amity; and FARE.

I will outline some of their facts because no one in the Northern Territory can deny the devastating impacts that excessive alcohol consumption has on our community. It was something the CLP chose to ignore. It cut

the BDR overnight, left nothing in its place, and we had two of the most violent years in the Territory's history following that. It then put in place a treatment program that criminalised alcoholism. It failed Territorians.

We know that the cost of alcohol-related harm is not just seen in the economic costs but in our hospitals, prisons, courts, police watch houses and domestic violence centres and across the Northern Territory. The last figure, in 2009, was that the cost to the Territory community was \$642m. That is \$4197 for every adult Territorian, which is four-and-a-half times the national average.

Fifty per cent of assaults are alcohol related. Up to 65% of domestic and family and violence incidents are alcohol related. That is 12 000 domestic incidents per years. We have the highest number of alcohol-related deaths and injuries in the nation. We have one liquor licence for every 353 adult Territorians. Seventy per cent of alcohol sold in the Territory is takeaway alcohol.

As a government, we went to the election with a strong position and commitment to reforming alcohol policy to have an impact on those extraordinarily high rates of harm. That is what we are implementing. We are being open and transparent with Territorians. We said we would put a cap on takeaway liquor licences and we have done that. We said we would bring back the Banned Drinker Register, and we passed the legislation last week. I thank my parliamentary colleagues for their support, unlike those opposite who were naysayers and said it would not help—absolute rubbish!

We have reinforced the lack of Sunday trading. The former government inadvertently left a loophole in the legislation, so we have fixed another CLP mess.

We have taken it a step further. We believe we need to have an independent, evidence-based report into alcohol so we have set up an inquiry, the Alcohol Policy and Legislation Review, led by the former Chief Justice, Trevor Riley. The expert panel will provide a report to government by the end of September with recommendations for reforms to tackle alcohol-fuelled crime to make our communities safer and strengthen our legislative base for responsible alcohol management.

We will not be bullied by the comments by the Member for Araluen. We support economic development. That is why we, along with the Treasurer and the Chief Minister, are working across the Territory, putting in place strong economic policies, unlike that mob opposite who failed to plan for the post-INPEX construction phase. Now they try to bully people into supporting big box liquor outlets on the back of 'it is economic development'. We support economic development and are putting measures in place. But we need to look at the social harm in our community.

Since coming to government, I have outlined the measures we have put in place for protecting the community and letting community have a say. We have introduced new guidelines for liquor licensing to allow for public hearings. These are reforms the CLP failed to carry out. The CLP allowed alcohol harm to grow under the rapid expansion of liquor licences. In 2015–16, under the CLP, there were 38 new liquor licences issued, bringing that total up to 537.

When it came to office, the CLP hastily dismantled the BDR and left a policy vacuum—2500 who were banned were then able to access alcohol. We have been clear about the BDR and I will be announcing, before the BDR is in place, an evaluation method.

The CLP government failed to even leave it in place Territory-wide for 12 months. There were 16 500 sales that were stopped, thanks to the BDR. That is numerous times police were saved from having to be called to a domestic or family violence incident that was fuelled by alcohol. The community did not have to suffer the effects of alcohol-related crime and antisocial behaviour. Our health professionals did not have to deal with alcohol-fuelled harm in the hospitals.

We have to talk in the context of the evidence pointing to why we need a cap on our alcohol outlets. We put in place a cap on the number of outlets; we have restricted the number. We said, 'No more takeaway licences in the Territory', but if you have 10 licences with an unlimited cap, that is an unlimited supply of alcohol into the Territory.

If we place a value on each licence, with every 10 licences that is a maximum of 400 square metres—we need to put in place measures to protect the community, and our government has the courage to put that in place.

The Member for Araluen questioned the evidence. I will read some of the evidence right now. The Royal Australasian College of Surgeons—I am sure she would have met them as she is a former Health minister—wrote to the *NT News*.

I will take a moment to read some of the letter that the *NT News* published:

'The Royal Australasian College of Surgeons supports the Northern Territory government's cautious approach to approving a new Dan Murphy's megastore in Darwin. As surgeons we are very aware of the devastating effect of heavy alcohol consumption on the lives of Territorians. Misuse of alcohol is strongly implicated in our high rates of injury due to interpersonal violence, road traffic accidents and family violence'.

It is also responsible for a high rate of deaths from alcohol-related diseases including cancer, liver disease and the heart-breaking life-long disability from foetal alcohol syndrome.

Daily we deal face-to-face with trauma that alcohol misuse generates.

There is very strong evidence that excess alcohol consumption is directly related to the density of liquor outlets, exposure to alcohol advertising and availability of cheap bulk alcohol.

High volume warehouse type stores, such as the proposed Dan Murphy's store, tick all the above boxes and have the potential to lead to an increase in alcohol related harm in our community.

There is not just a problem for a few heavy drinkers. Alcohol misuse exposes all Territorians to increased risk, injury and death. There are increased costs of policing, legal and prison systems, medical and rehabilitation services which are borne by the whole community.

Family and social breakdown due to alcohol misuse sets up social dysfunction that can affect Territory families and their communities for generations.

We recognise the consumption of alcohol is an integral part of our life style and contributes to the quality of enjoyment of life, but we also acknowledge that each of us has the right to make personal decisions about the amount of alcohol we purchase and consume. As medical professionals we are very aware that this is not done on a level playing field. Skilful advertising, the aggressive promotion of alcohol by the liquor industry is not done with the primary intent to increase the wellbeing of Territorians.

Maximising good and minimising harm for the whole population is, however, the primary responsibility of our elected government. The current stand of the Territory government in balancing commercial interests of a retail giant and the overall wellbeing of Territorians is to be applauded'.

This position is from a health point of view. We need to protect our community and look at those appalling statistics and work on them. There are numerous pieces of correspondence available in the public domain talking about the impacts of alcohol and the evidence of those impacts.

It is appalling to have a former Health minister come into the House today and say that she does not believe there is any evidence. This government has operated with integrity. The member has not provided anything to back up her claims. She said there is no argument at all on the health impact. How can she say that?

She talks about the fact we need to answer questions. We have answered those questions in regard to political donations. I am sure the Member for Araluen knows that political donations are a matter for the Labor Party. I note that the Speaker reminded her of that today during Question Time. This is something the Chief Minister has explained to the House but the Member for Araluen does not want to listen to this detail—all the donations received for the 2015–16 financial year are already disclosed and online.

The Chief Minister confirmed that whilst donations are a matter for the party, he has asked the secretary of the party to check donations received in the 2016–17 financial year and to disclose them as soon as possible and when appropriate to do so.

The Member for Araluen, if she had been paying attention, would have released the information she is referring to earlier this year. These actions are in stark contrast to the former CLP government. I pointed out the hypocrisy of the Member of Araluen, as she was the one who voted against the political donates inquiry and also voted to rescind it.

We also remind those opposite of the absolute hypocrisy that when they were elected in 2012, both the Mills and Giles governments, they were the beneficiary of hundreds of thousands of dollars raised by

Foundation 51. The express purpose of Foundation 51 was to hide the details of donations from Territorians. Shame! How can the CLP come in here and not acknowledge that? It was conceived and created by the current Member for Blain—he had a period where he was not the local member—but it was created in his office when he was the Leader of the Opposition.

We certainly will not be taking any advice or accepting lectures about transparency and political donations from those opposite. I can clearly outline to Territorians the political donations inquiry that the CLP members voted against and rescinded. They created Foundation 51 and did nothing to put in place an independent commission against corruption when they were in government.

We will continue to do more. The political donations inquiry is in place; we are putting the independent commission against corruption in place; and we will be providing transparency. The Chief Minister has done that. He has asked the party secretary to provide information for Territorians regarding donations. I can assure Territorians, we do not make policy or decisions based on donations. We base them on good outcomes for Territorians and on the evidence which I referred to in my speech.

While we are talking about donations and the CLP deliberately establishing Foundation 51 to hide political donations, I remind the House of the former CLP Treasurer's comments regarding political donations and the famous quote, 'They will open my door'. The former Treasurer, Dave Tollner, summed up the CLP's approach by saying that money opens doors. That is appalling.

We have heard comments from the Member for Araluen today that seem to back up that attitude. When she was the Minister for Health she cut wraparound health services, such as drug and alcohol support services, and cut staff numbers in the Department of Health. She put in place measures that did not protect the Territory community. It is appalling for her to come into the House today and try to say that we are not making decisions based on evidence in the best interests of Territorians.

She talked in depth and the censure motion is based around the Ministerial Code of Conduct, which I am sure the CLP ministers had not read, as they certainly did not behave as though they had read it. We have been reviewing the Ministerial Code of Conduct because we know the community expects more from us. They expect more than what they saw over the last four years under the CLP.

What we have seen today from the Member for Araluen, in attempting to censure the government, is absolute hypocrisy. I have outlined evidence regarding why we need to protect the community with a 400 square metre—the Chief Minister has been leading a strong team; a team focused on Territorians, unlike those opposite when they were in government.

I will take a moment, while I am on my feet, to remind the House about the last four years of the CLP government. There were 18 Cabinet reshuffles, two-and-a-half Chief Ministers—we sometimes forget the half a Chief Minister, the midnight coup. Then someone dug their heels in and refused to resign. There were eight Deputy Chief Ministers. What was the cost to that chaotic government? The cost was imposed on Territorians, who suffered high costs of power and water; they failed to plan for Territorians; they cut teacher numbers from schools and cut health care services. We saw a chaotic estimates process where, right before the election, the Chief Minister, who had to take on board more portfolios because the Member for Blain had to resign from his, slowly read answers to avoid the scrutiny of Territorians.

This government supports new business interests, but they need to operate within our rules, within our parameters, which have been set up to support Territorians and us, as a government, in tackling the alcohol-related harm we see in our community.

We were elected with clear policies to reduce alcohol-related harm through implementing restrictions to the supply of alcohol. We have been doing that. I have talked through the figures. We have put a lot of measures in place since coming to government. They have been outlined. We will await the alcohol policies and legislation review, which those opposite would not be game enough to do—to have an independent review by expert panels from health, business and the judiciary providing advice. We have said we will publish the report and then our response to it.

I challenge those opposite to participate in that debate and outline what they would do. They have back-flipped out of their commitments leading into the election more quickly than an Olympic gymnast.

I am appalled by the Member for Araluen's comments and statements in the House today. We will not allow those opposite to rewrite history. I remind the House that the Opposition Leader is quick to say the 400 square metre limit was not CLP policy, but he said to Pete Butler on 8 March that he had seen a letter written by the

Chief Minister at the time, and it was up to the Business minister—and we would be looking at that. There is a letter on their side too, but they have not released that, have they? No.

Mr Higgins: All you have to do is ask for it; I will give it to you whenever you like.

Ms FYLES: There you go. I will ask for it today. The Opposition Leader should release the letter from the former Chief Minister. Let us see what it says. Why are you continuing to hide from the public?

Mr Higgins: You are in government!

Ms FYLES: The Opposition Leader just said if I ask for the letter he will release it. I have asked for the letter. It is absolute hypocrisy from the opposition.

Mr Higgins: It is not our policy. I have the gumption to stand up ...

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! Opposition Leader!

Ms FYLES: We do not support the censure in the House. We have put in a number of measures, such as the donations inquiry. Even when the CLP members accidentally passed it, they committed to Territorians that it would be followed through, but they stepped away from it.

We will continue to consult with Health, industry and community, putting in place measures to protect the community. We do not support the censure before the House.

Mr HIGGINS (Opposition Leader): Mr Deputy Speaker, it is interesting to hear some of this debate. When people want to debate policy, the best way is to attack someone. If you cannot defend your policy, let us attack someone. It is obvious that the people opposite, the government, cannot defend this policy. Their only excuse is, 'The previous government did this but did not do that'.

Let us correct a few things while we go along. The first motion ever moved by us in opposition in the 13th parliament was to work cooperatively as a whole of parliament to address the alcohol problem. It is an issue that I have been very active in for five years, since I came to this parliament. I have always said I support the BDR, and I was outspoken on it against our government. I sat on the FASD inquiry; I support floor limits; I support a stack of issues that should be implemented to address the alcohol problem.

I offered the olive branch to those opposite to say, 'Let's work together', but they knocked it back. We know why. They knew about this shonky deal that was being concocted behind everyone not knowing about it.

Let us have a look at the ICAC. Who started ICAC? They talk about the donations inquiry being back-flipped. Out of all that came the Martin inquiry, and the Martin inquiry led to this ICAC. Let us get the facts right. The issue is that all the policies this Labor government went to the election with—they said, 'We will bring back the Banned Drinker Register'. I supported that and said it was an election commitment. I said, 'Yes, I will allow you to do your onshore gas moratorium', because it was an election commitment and people spoke about it.

The issue you fail to see is that the removal of the Banned Drinker Register by the previous government was an election commitment. While, yes, it may have caused some problems, how many jobs have you lost because of your moratorium? But, no, you will not backflip on that, will you? But everything else, you just want to put out to consultation. 'We will set up a committee to have a look at it.'

But there are two things that have come through this parliament that have not been through consultation by you people opposite, that is, the shonky half-day holiday to meet your mates in the union's requirements. That was never discussed. The other one, of course, was this 400 square metres—no evidence, nothing. You say you have evidence and there is a problem with alcohol. Yes, there is—the first motion I ever moved. Is there a problem with density? Yes, there is. Is there a problem with 400 square metres? No evidence; none whatsoever. You cannot produce any.

Let us go into some of the other things that have happened. Let us look at the facts around this. The issue, to me, is not the 400 square metres. As my grandmother and mother always said to me, 'If you do not tell the truth, you want to have a good memory'. That is the first thing. The second thing is, when you do not tell the truth, what you are talking about does not remain the issue. The issue becomes the fact you are not telling the truth. That is the issue being questioned here. It is not the 400 square metres or the policy; it is about the integrity and the honesty in this whole process.

A letter was written. Before I get to that I will talk about the policy of the previous CLP government. I have said in this House on many occasions that the 400 square metres never went to Cabinet or to a parliamentary wing meeting or to the party as a policy. The 400 square metres never appeared in any of our documents. The 400 square metres only came to my attention when you people decided you would implement it.

Have I clarified that?

Ms Fyles: Clarify it by tabling the letter.

Mr HIGGINS: I am quite happy to produce that letter, and I will ensure that it is tabled here this afternoon. But I reiterate that it was not policy, a Cabinet decision or a parliamentary wing decision, and it never went to the party. Not like yours, which has been made out to be a policy. I will go through it.

The AHA wrote on 18 April to both parties. If the 400 square metres was a policy, in your response why did you not say it was a policy? Why did the Chief Minister not say, 'Yes, 400 square metres is a policy of ours'? That would be quite acceptable. But we doubt it was a policy.

If I refer to a debate on 22 June when the Chief Minister talked about the 400 square metres:

I have said before, on the public record, that there is research on size and density. The number we came to, we had to work out for ourselves.

When did he work it out? That is our question. Prove you did it before 18 April when you got the letter. He also said:

There is no magic number, which I have publicly said before. We had to find a reasonable position and we felt 400 square metres was a reasonable position to fall on. It could be 401; it could be 399.

I find it hard to believe that, by coincidence, the two of you came up with the same figure. The government says it will restore integrity and base everything on fact. The fact is there is an alcohol problem. The fact is there is no evidence around 400 square metres ...

Ms Fyles: Rubbish!

Mr HIGGINS: There is no evidence around 400 square metres. If there was evidence, why did the Chief Minister not speak about it then? Why did he not raise it then? He did not. He said, 'We can have 399; we can have 401. But in actual fact we have 200, so we doubled it.'

Ms Fyles interjecting.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! If interjections continue, members will find themselves on a warning and removed for an hour.

Mr HIGGINS: The Chief Minister's excuse that we can pluck these figures out of here, because this happens all the time in government—I do not know about you, but if I was a Territorian voter wondering if we can have faith that this government is delivering on what it committed to, I would be thinking, 'Is that what we want?'

The Chief Minister claims he did not know anything about this policy. I will not refer to it as 400 metres anymore; I will refer to it as policy because he said, 'This is our policy that is scientifically based'.

How come, on 26 October, his Chief of Staff met with people from Dan Murphy's, and they said, 'Sorry about that, but we do not support you coming up here. We do not support business. We do not support jobs. We have picked this policy out of the air because the AHA will support us'?

The other comment we heard by the Chief Minister—Dan Murphy's was reported in the *NT News* on 9 March 2017—was, 'There is no magic number on floor sizes'. He does not say 'policy' in here. 'We are happy to have a conversation on size and density through the review process.'

If you were to give in on size, you would have to tackle density. Why did we not have a policy of density then? Why are we then doing an inquiry after it?

We have a government that says it will be open, accountable and transparent, and everything will be based on science. 'We will introduce two half-day holidays—that is an exception. We will stop Dan Murphy's from

coming here. We have this policy, and there is no scientific evidence to back it up. Gee willikers! We got caught out; we had better do an inquiry. But then, of course, we banned things from the inquiry as well.'

Ms FYLES: Everything is on the table.

Mr HIGGINS: Everything is on the table except floor prices. Is mandatory treatment on the table or have we just removed all that? Is the 400 square metres on the table or have we legislated for it? Will we have to pull it back out?

If you look at what this government has done since it came into power—let us go through some of that. We have already mentioned the two half-day holidays and the 400 square metres, but we have had some other legislation come through.

This morning Mr Deputy Speaker—I am sorry, but I think it was you—was saying there is some great legislation into the future that they will introduce around this whole alcohol issue. I think the Member for Braitling said Labor has introduced some great legislation in the past. Let us have a look at some of that legislation.

The issue with alcohol mandatory treatment—there was a policy and there was evidence that it did, in actual fact, benefit more people than AA identified as a success rate. There was some scientific evidence, but you still removed it without any evidence behind it.

When we look today at our *Parole Act*—the issue is that those opposite are happy to criticise the previous government but never give it any credit. It was the previous government that started all that, but not one person who has spoken on it has acknowledged that. Every other time they pick on the previous government because they cannot justify what they are doing.

The other one coming through today, or tomorrow, is to do with associate judges. Who started it? The previous government did. There is another piece of legislation coming up.

The ICAC will be introduced tomorrow; where did it come from? And who did the Martin inquiry? The previous government did.

Without pre-empting debate, wait until I speak on the minister's statement. That is fantastic! The decisions made by this government in relation to Dan Murphy's—let us look at the impact of this and the things the Chief Minister is trying to hide.

It is a \$9m development and it has \$8m in fitout. The anchor tenants will be \$40m. I actually have a document here that I was advised by Dan Murphy's and Darwin Airport Central—that was given to every MLA in here, so they are aware of all of this. Airport Central brings, for the first time, national brands to the Territory.

I heard the Leader of Government Business say, 'We support businesses, but we do not support this one'; \$9m—\$8m in fitout, with a total of \$40m. There are 100 construction jobs. Thirty local Territorians would be employed and a further 10 would have been employed with the fast food outlets that would be linked to it.

The project is 100% privately funded; not a brass razoo from the government over there. Maybe they wanted to hold something over their head, so they decided to say, 'No, we will not approve that because we do not have any buy-in'.

There are 215 Dan Murphy's stores across Australia, and there are none in the Territory. But that document was made available to everyone in this Chamber. It is disappointing that people did not consider the fact these were jobs lost. The flow-on effect through the economy is unbelievable. A government elected on the basis that it would be open and transparent—how transparent have you been on this? You will not even give out any evidence that you had a policy. I have stood here and said, 'We don't have a policy'. It never went to Cabinet or the parliamentary wing or the party. There it is, clearly, but you have someone who was the Leader of the Opposition saying, 'Our office was a bit untidy. We didn't keep good paper records there.'

The thing that worries me with that is, if you have an untidy office you have an untidy mind. The mind transfers to government, so do we have a government with an untidy mind? It seems we probably have.

Members interjecting.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! Order! I remind members of Standing Order 49; I will remove you if you continue to interject at a certain level.

Mr HIGGINS: The thing that really disappoints me about all of this is that the real losers out of this are Territorians. This farcical decision by those opposite about the 400 square metres has led to the division in this parliament over the alcohol issue. I did not want that to happen. I first moved that in this parliament. Those people who stand up and crow about being so compassionate about the alcohol problems in the Territory are the biggest hypocrites I have ever come across.

If you really wanted to do something, you would have done it when that opportunity was given to you, and you would have had civil discussions about options here, but you are too interested in pushing your own barrows for what you think are your political gains. It is about time those people opposite and the Chief Minister started to work for Territorians and what Territorians want. They want an open, accountable and honest government. They do not want one that cannot remember what day of the week it is. We want a government that is responsible, and that is not what we have at the moment.

You are hypocrites when you stand there and pick on the previous government. I had the guts to stand in here and say they did things wrong. You people do not have the guts. You cannot come out with it. You will not admit when you have made a mistake. You will not say, 'We've made a mistake, so let's go back and have a good look at it'. If you people really thought about Territorians, you would be working for them in here, honestly and appropriately.

I am embarrassed about the people opposite and their arguments. We support this motion because the Chief Minister is way out of his depth in this instance. There is a stack of murk around this deal and it should be investigated. If the Chief Minister rants and raves about Foundation 51 and the donations, why does he not refer this one to donations? Why does he not commit to referring this to the ICAC? If he is that confident he should do it.

I support this motion, and I am interested to see if the Chief Minister has the gumption to defend himself.

Ms MANISON (Treasurer): Mr Deputy Speaker, I do not support the censure motion. We have just heard a very fiery contribution from the Opposition Leader, who is only now the leader after being part of what was the most appalling government in the history of the Northern Territory.

I cannot support this motion when I listen to the members opposite talk about openness, transparency and accountability when they were part of the most appalling government in the history of the Northern Territory. We have gotten to the point where an ICAC has become a necessity in the Northern Territory, after what everybody saw in the last term of government, and the fact the former government was dragged kicking and screaming to bring an ICAC to the Northern Territory to look at the debacle around the political donations inquiry.

The Leader of Government Business has outlined the very sad history regarding the political donations inquiry. I cannot support the censure coming from that lot when you look at their previous performance.

I heard them speak about the fact they want a government that stands up in the best interests of Territorians, that makes decisions based on the best outcomes for Territorians. This government is committed to doing that.

I want to be very clear; this is not a government that makes policy decisions based on donations. That is not the type of government this is. We never have been and we never will be. We will prove that. There are two very open processes taking place. The first is the inquiry into political donations.

We have Justice Mansfield, who will hold an inquiry into political donations. Justice Mansfield will be independent of government. He is holding an independent inquiry. This government made that inquiry happen. Let us remember how we got to this point.

In the previous government there were some very serious questions asked about their conduct. We spent much time in this House debating issues regarding Foundation 51. It is effectively a slush fund to hide political donations. Very serious questions were raised about that in the previous term of government to the point where opposition and Independents brought forward the fact we believed there was a need for an inquiry into political donations.

The Member for Nelson, one General Business Day, brought forward a motion to set up an inquiry into political donations. That night he happened to be successful in achieving that. We all remember what happened that night, on 20 August 2014, and how that inquiry came to be. We were very pleased that inquiry came to be and we were looking forward to it.

The former government said it would honour that inquiry during the Casuarina by-elections, which was a topical one at the time. After that by-election we saw government swiftly come in a few days later and rescind that motion, so there would not be an inquiry into political donations. It was not to look into the donations to former Liberal and Labor governments—political donations going to political parties in the Northern Territory.

They rescinded that. It makes you wonder, what on earth did they have to hide?

We have brought forward the political donations inquiry and that will happen. That inquiry will look at what it feels needs to be looked at, particularly over the last 10 years. Political donations must be open and transparent. They are reported to the Electoral Commission and they must be scrutinised by this inquiry. We look forward to that scrutiny; it is important.

People want to have trust in government and, unfortunately, after the last term of government we inherited a few legacies, as I spoke about in Question Time earlier today, after we saw four years of absolute chaos and dysfunction. We saw several issues which warranted more questions that would warrant investigation through an inquiry into donations, but also for the establishment of an independent commission against corruption. There were definitely issues of trust with government.

There is a trust deficit with governments, and we are working very hard to restore that trust because it needs to happen. There is a great deal of work happening in this space. This inquiry will be able to look at the donations that go into political parties. I think it is very important because people want to have faith that decisions of government are not based on donations. This government does not make policy decisions based on donations. Let us be very clear about that.

The independent commission against corruption is being established. It will be a very important commission. It is very sad that it got to the point that we needed to establish this commission, but there were far too many questions after the previous four years under the former CLP government that made it clear that an ICAC is needed to help Territorians have trust in the functioning of their government.

Some very serious matters were raised over the last term, which is why we need to see an ICAC. It was not just about the questions on Foundation 51; we saw a raft of other issues come up. Questions were raised about water licences, for example. The former government was not willing to necessarily establish an ICAC. It took a lot of work to get it there.

All sorts of serious allegations were raised around the Pensioner and Carer Concession Scheme, regarding travel, and there were a raft of investigations happening. I do not think I will ever forget some of the accusations that flew out of the former Chief Minister's mouth on the morning after the midnight coup, when he refused to leave his job.

We need an ICAC, but it is time to have a body established for an inquiry into donations, because we want to restore trust to the system and for people to understand the decision-making of government and have faith that decisions are not based on donations. I stand by that. This is not a government that makes decisions about policy based on donations. As these inquiries take place and as the ICAC is established, this will be proven to Territorians. I am adamant about that.

We are very serious when it comes to tackling the issue of alcohol, and we make no apology for that. As the Minister for Health has outlined, alcohol is a deep problem in our community. We know it contributes to assaults, domestic violence, hospital admissions, homelessness and trauma on our roads. It has a deep impact on the Northern Territory. Incarceration—alcohol has a huge impact on a number of people who end up in our gaols. The Territory has some deep issues when it comes to alcohol abuse and the social consequences of that are absolutely devastating. When it comes to liquor licences, there is one for every 353 adults in the Northern Territory, and 70% of alcohol supplied in the Northern Territory is takeaway.

There is no doubt that you can correlate the supply of alcohol with alcohol-related harm in our community. The more alcohol in the community the more likely there will be alcohol-related harm in the community. That is a fact.

We have a responsible range of measures in place to tackle the issue of supply. We have brought back the Banned Drinker Register. We have placed a cap on liquor licences, and the minister outlined the work around Sunday trading. We have implemented the floor size restriction, and we have the liquor inquiry, which is undertaking an independent body of work that will look at the big issue of alcohol in the Northern Territory and what we must do to ensure better outcomes in this space.

They are asking some very hard question. They are independent of government and they are looking at the serious and real issue of what contributes to alcohol-related harm in our community and the measures that can be put in place to further reduce this harm. That is an extensive body of work that has been opened to the experts throughout the community to Territorians and industry, and they will deliver their report to government at the end of September.

There is an incredible amount of work happening, and it is important that as a government we do everything we can to tackle the issue of alcohol supply and alcohol abuse in our community. The consequences of it are devastating, as we have seen far too often in this community.

I have to come back to the point, the censure motion, and the fact we have some allegations from the Independent, the Member for Araluen, and the opposition saying there are issues that the government is trying to hide.

I cannot stress enough how serious it is to get to the point where we are establishing an ICAC. We have gone through the process of allocating \$3m in the budget to this. We have gone through the process of putting out an extensive exposure draft of the ICAC legislation so people can have their say to ensure we introduce the best legislation. We look forward to introducing that legislation to the House this week. It will be another important step in this process. It is important to remember what this ICAC will be capable of. It will be able to look back at the conduct of governments, of public servants, past and present.

The ICAC will look into what matters it sees fit. People will be able to refer matters to the ICAC. It will be able to look into what issues it believes warrant an investigation. It will be fully independent of government. It is important this is an open process, because Territorians want to have more trust in their government.

This is a step in ensuring that any serious questions and allegations can be looked at, and this government is committed to that process. We are committed to this ICAC; we are the government making it happen.

We will be the government that introduces an ICAC for all Territorians to make sure they can have more confidence in the decision-making of governments. The political donations inquiry will have the opportunity to look back at some of the serious allegations that have been raised over the years regarding the issue of political donations. There are some very serious questions that remain unanswered, particularly when you look at the history of Foundation 51.

You would expect that all parties will work openly with this inquiry into political donations, because it is important to give Territorians faith in the conduct of their government and that critical and important decision-making processes of government are not driven by political donations.

It is a very important item; we need to ensure Territorians have more faith, because after that horrendous run with the former CLP government, trust has been eroded severely. It is very important that we work to restore that. The only way that will be done is to allow full light to shine down and for these serious questions to be answered. It is very important that Territorians have their faith in government restored.

After what I saw in the previous government, we will not be supporting this censure motion. We have been very clear that this government does not make decisions based on donations. We are making this government more transparent than ever, and we are proving this through the fact that we have an independent inquiry into political donations and an ICAC. They will be able to go through the evidence, ask the serious questions and go through past and present decisions of government. This is a government that is committed to the process of transparency. We are delivering these important bodies of work for the Territory because we want to ensure that Territorians have more faith in the decision-making processes of government. As I said, after the previous term of the former CLP government, it will take time to restore that trust. These are important measures in that process.

We are committed to seeing the delivery of these important bodies of work, as well as the independent inquiry into liquor issues in the Northern Territory. We know it is the cause of so much misery in our community. It is important that this government does what it can to tackle alcohol-related harm, and that is what we are committed to doing. For a government not to do that would be irresponsible considering this is the number

one cause of misery and dysfunction in our community and, unfortunately, cuts short the lives of too many Territorians or sends them in the wrong direction, from which it is very hard to recover. It is important to ensure we have responsible policies to tackle the issues of alcohol-related harm.

The Health minister has been very clear on why we do not support this motion. We will continue to work, as a government, to restore faith back into the processes of government. After what we saw in the previous four years of the CLP government, with many questions remaining unanswered, we have some way to go. I believe that this donations inquiry and the work of the ICAC will go a long way in helping to restore trust in the decision-making processes of government.

They will be important bodies of work and we make no apologies for doing what we can, as a government, with our time when we stand in the Chamber, to tackle the issue of alcohol-related harm across the Northern Territory.

Mr WOOD (Nelson): Mr Deputy Speaker, I am always a bit wary of censure motions, although it gives me an opportunity to talk on these issues, regardless of which way people want to vote. I am fairly cynical of both political parties when it comes to alcohol donations. I remember standing in this parliament knowing both parties had received \$150 000 during the election campaign before last. When I requested that we look at lock-out laws for the Mitchell Street precinct, I lost that vote—I am not sure if the Speaker voted—23 to one.

I have a memory that political donations can make political parties do whatever is asked by whoever gave the political party that money. I am concerned that the government may have been influenced. My understanding is, yes, the Labor Party—I just looked at the donations from 2015–16. It does not show any donations from the AHA, but the Chief Minister received a donation. The question is, has that affected the decision by government to take up the idea of the 400 square metres?

I note the Attorney-General has said that the alcohol review will:

- advise the NT Government on the development of an evidence-based alcohol harm reduction framework for the Territory including for the safe, family friendly provision within remote communities and considers issues such as size, density and trading hours of alcohol outlets

And further down it says it will analyse:

- the density of liquor licences and the size of liquor outlets.

I expect the liquor review to not only look at the issue of 400 square metres, but perhaps dig deeper to see where that came from.

I would put that question to the person in charge of the donations review to investigate whether there is a connection with the 400 square metres, which was agreed to by the government pre-election, in the letter the Attorney-General said had been given to the Leader of the Opposition.

We also have the ICAC coming up. If there is an issue in relation to whether this decision was influenced by political donations, we have three opportunities to test it.

I am still concerned about the government making an arbitrary size of 400 square metres and then arguing there is some science behind it by mentioning the college of surgeons and someone else. I looked everywhere to find something which told me the size of an outlet would affect harm. I could not find anything.

I found that the density of outlets in an area results in concern that this will affect harm, but not the size. I am not here to support the idea that we should have Dan Murphy's. We are not dealing with any other substance but alcohol.

The first part of the *Hospitality Outlook* February/March 2017, the AHA's magazine, starts by saying:

Alcohol is certainly a different commodity to sell than hardware or groceries.

I agree. The government has gotten itself in a bit of a bind with the 400 square metres. If there was proof that the 400 square metres would cause harm, the Director-General of Licensing is the independent body you should have gone to. When you match the letter from the AHA and listen to your statements, it looks like you have been influenced by the AHA. You have made a promise and you have not provided evidence that it will cause harm if you go above 400 square metres in size.

That is where this debate falls in a hole, and why this issue should go before the liquor review. I hope the commissioner will thoroughly investigate this issue and perhaps find some scientific basis for the size. I could not find it.

People know my opinion on the amount of alcohol served in the Northern Territory. I understand the culture. Unfortunately I often see the effect of too much alcohol in my local sporting groups. At least five young people in my local sporting clubs have died as a result of alcohol; it had a major effect on the tragedies in our rural area.

I am not here to support the alcohol industry. I have said before that I do not want to see a Northern Territory economy that is arguing its case based on the alcohol industry. When we talk about Dan Murphy's, we forget it is a Woolworths product, which is a company that already has 11 BWS stores in Darwin. That is a lot of alcohol being served up by one company.

Be that as it may, they are entitled to put their bid in for a bottle shop. After all, we know what they are trying to do; they are trying to use the license they have in Stuart Park and bring it to the airport, and they are entitled to do that. Was the government fair in pulling out a 400 square metre limitation; what was the basis on that; and was it affected by the AHA?

The other thing that worries me is this: was there an influence also by the AHA, not necessarily on the promise, but also because the AHA came out in support of the government's banned—which goes against what the Leader of the Opposition has been saying about the free market; we should be helping companies like Dan Murphy's.

You have an opposite view—if you read Des Crowe's article in *Hospitality Outlook* February/March this year. Under the heading, 'Retail Liquor Restrictions' it says:

Alcohol is certainly a different commodity to sell than hardware or groceries. So it has been of some concern that vested organisations such as the NT Chamber of Commerce, NT Airports and Woolworths have been blindly seeking public support for a large box Woolies liquor store on airport land. Those with a knowledge of alcohol health policy have been shocked at the intention of Woolworths to introduce large volume alcohol at lowest price guaranteed into a region which is battling to deal with acute oversupply of alcohol.

The NT Government has taken the step to ensure large liquor stores do not exceed 400sq metres and they are receiving support from those advocates who understand the impact of increased volume of alcohol into an area. Specifically with large size alcohol stores, such stores create more harm from alcohol. A large size store means large volumes of alcohol are sold and consumed. Health advocates maintain that large volume of alcohol consumption is directly linked to social harm and limiting the size of alcohol stores limits the harm to our community.

Many of the liquor licensees understand the need for restrictions and have actively been involved in liquor accord programs around the Territory. The AHA (NT) has previously made submissions to look at minimum pricing/floor pricing on and off premise to ensure cheap alcohol is not readily available. We don't want cheap \$3 drinks sold on premise nor do we want \$4 bottles of wine sold off premise. A sensible floor price needs to be struck for both on premise and off premise. The community needs to be protected from greater risks of alcohol harm.

My concern is that the article does not provide any evidence when it makes a quote like:

Health advocates maintain that large volume of alcohol consumption is directly linked to social harm and limiting the size of alcohol stores limits the harm to our community.

In any scientific article you would have a little number there, which would lead you to the bottom of the page and tell you who said that.

I am a bit concerned that statements are being made that do not have any scientific backup. In fact, what I see here is the government saying that it supports the 400 square metres because we think there is a harm problem, but the AHA is really supporting the 400 square metres with, you might say, pretending that it is concerned about alcohol harm. What it is really saying is, 'We do not want competition. We are concerned about a big company coming into the Darwin region and affecting our sales.'

The best thing that would have happened here was that the types of statements being made should have gone before the Director-General of Licensing. It has not, and the government has now made this decision, which it now has to wear. It does not look good.

I introduced a motion to parliament once about restricting acceptance of political donations from developers and alcohol, gambling and tobacco industries, and it did not get past square one. Unfortunately it dropped off after the demise of the last government. It has not moved forward, but I hope the donations inquiry will at least reconsider that. That is the policy in Queensland. How that operates in the Northern Territory is worth debating.

It is a bit cute of the government that when the Member for Araluen simply asks if a party received any money from the alcohol industry—I do not have the computer in front of me. It appears on the website that the Labor Party did not receive any money from the AHA. I would have thought they would sprout about that, not deferring it under the excuse that it is the party's business.

It is as though nobody opposite knows anything about their own party. I know it is a technical argument, but it is an excuse that just gets more excitement on this side about trying to hide the facts.

I am not a great fan of either political party. I know the history of how this worked. The Attorney-General is well aware of the famous inquiry into political donations that lasted a while. I do not think I will ever forget that evening when we won against all odds. Then it was taken away after the Chief Minister of the time was interviewed by the *NT News* on the Friday before the Casuarina by-election and was asked if the inquiry into political donations would go ahead. He said yes. The election was held on the Saturday. The first sittings were on the next Tuesday. And I had the Chief Minister walk into my office saying, 'We will amend your inquiry. Here it is. What do you think?'

I had three-quarters of an hour to think about it because they would come in after lunch to defer Question Time and put this amendment to the inquiry, which ended up being an inquiry that had nothing to do with political parties collecting funds inappropriately. It just had to do with whether we could have new legislation borrowed from other states that might improve our legislative process in regard to political donations.

The history is that the amendment got through. The inquiry was a whitewash. I am not saying anything against our late Auditor-General, who conducted the inquiry, but it did not achieve anything. It was a sad day from that point of view.

I am happy we now have a donations inquiry and a liquor review. If the liquor review says that some of the promises we made to the AHA are unacceptable, I will be interested to see if Labor breaks its promise with the AHA and go with the recommendations of the liquor review. That will be an interesting issue in relation to the 400 square metres.

I am interested in a review of lockout laws, or closing times. I am also interested to see another area the government promised in relation to Sunday trading. I still find it amazing that you can have a bottle shop in a grocery store and one in a pub, and one can sell on Sunday and the other cannot. I prefer them to both shut down on Sundays to give us a bit of peace and quiet. If you cannot get your two cartons of beer on Saturday, you have probably had too much alcohol in your life.

There are some things that need to change. I will not say much more than that. I will be watching with great interest, because I know what the Member for Araluen was trying to say. She is concerned that there might be something we do not know in relation to what the AHA's influence was on this issue. On the surface it is difficult to tell. I must admit, I find it hard sometimes to say to individual people, 'I do not trust you'.

I know politics. I have known the Chief Minister for a long time. I understand politics can be a game which changes people. I remember a discussion many years ago with a previous Member for Arafura, Marion Scrymgour, who was accused of a number of things. Sometimes you have to stand up for what you believe—that the person is honest.

I take the Chief Minister's word. Obviously, we are in the business of political gamesmanship. There are other times when you look at an individual and say, 'That person is telling the truth'. I believe what the Chief Minister has said. It does not mean I am happy with the way the government, as a whole, has dealt with this issue because it has gotten itself into a muddle. That reminds me of some Laurel and Hardy statement, 'A fine muddle you got me into'. They have themselves ...

Mr Mills: 'A fine mess you got me into.'

Mr WOOD: ‘A fine mess you got me into’—this 400 square metres. In this debate I should have mentioned that when I asked about this in the committee stage, the Attorney-General basically said about the 400 square metres:

... at the time when we were discussing this, when 200 square metres was the largest venue, we felt that doubling it was generous. We felt that allowed for businesses to provide for additional space, but it upheld not going towards those far larger premises in terms of density.

There was nothing about science; it was just a mathematical figure. When I kept asking about it, eventually the Attorney-General said, ‘I am answering it’. I said, ‘No, you are not’. She said, ‘I already have answered the question’, which did not get me anywhere. There was no science, just an idea of an average size. To that they then attached the idea that 401 square metres could cause harm.

There is a new bottle shop out my way and the driveways are not included, but someone might answer me. Does that allow people to have bulk storage of alcohol in the middle of the driveway? Is that part of the 400 square metres or exempt from it? I am interested, if the Attorney-General hears that, in getting an answer to that. That was a question raised during the committee stage.

Mr Deputy Speaker, I will leave it at that and see where we go from there.

Mrs LAMBLEY (Araluen): Mr Deputy Speaker, I am astounded that the Chief Minister of the Northern Territory ...

Ms FYLES: A point of order, Mr Deputy Speaker! The Member for Araluen has spoken already.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Attorney-General, the Member for Araluen is closing the motion.

Ms FYLES: Closing the censure motion? That is fairly unprecedented in the House. Usually we have speakers from each side and we have a vote.

Mrs LAMBLEY: You do not want to hear what I have to say, Attorney-General?

Ms FYLES: You have already had your chance to have a say. I am highlighting that I do not think I have ever sat in a censure motion where we have wrapped it. Can I ask you for a ruling, Mr Deputy Speaker?

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Attorney-General, in response to your question, considering no one else jumped for the call, the Member for Araluen has the reply.

Mrs LAMBLEY: Mr Deputy Speaker, I am astounded that the Attorney-General wants to shut down this debate. It speaks volumes about the position of this government.

Ms FYLES: A point of order, Mr Deputy Speaker! I was not attempting to shut down debate; I was pointing out that a censure motion is not usually wrapped, and it is unprecedented to have it wrapped. I was asking you to provide a ruling and you have done so, and we accept that ruling. But it is unprecedented to wrap a censure.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Member for Araluen, please continue.

Mrs LAMBLEY: It is unprecedented, these circumstances, that the Attorney-General, who has had her say, would try to shut me down. I have been given the opportunity to wrap this debate and I have 20 minutes to do so, so I will make the most of it.

I am very surprised the Chief Minister of the Northern Territory has decided not to speak on this censure motion, which was mainly directed at him as the leader of the Territory Labor Party, the person who has appeared in most of the media surrounding the decision to implement this so-called policy in blocking Dan Murphy’s from coming to the Northern Territory.

Much discussion from the Attorney-General and the Deputy Chief Minister, who I thank for participating in this censure motion—they have made the time and effort to participate and contribute to what I think is a very important issue, a matter of public importance—was about the introduction of an ICAC and the political donations inquiry. I take this opportunity to commend the Gunner government on the progress made in instituting a political donations inquiry, and its continuing progress with the establishment of an independent commission against corruption.

The development and the progress of the ICAC has been a lot slower than I thought. It was not an initiative of the Gunner Labor government. We have heard an attempt by the government to try to rewrite history. This was instigated by the former government.

Ms Fyles: Rubbish!

Mrs LAMBLEY: You were right. They were dragged screaming and shouting, but it was the former CLP government that commenced this and instigated an inquiry.

Ms Fyles: They did not implement an ICAC.

Mrs LAMBLEY: You have had your say, Attorney-General. You can be quiet and listen to me again.

Ms Fyles: You cannot rewrite history.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! Attorney-General! Under Standing Order 49, I will not think twice to remove a member for an hour if this behaviour continues.

Mrs LAMBLEY: It was the former CLP government that instigated an inquiry to establish an independent commission against corruption in the Northern Territory. That report was tabled in parliament around mid-2016, prior to the election. I commend this government for being very passionate about the establishment of an ICAC in the Northern Territory.

I have been an Independent for more than two years now, which is longer than most in this Chamber have been sitting, especially from the Labor ranks. Although I originally stood in this parliament as a member of the Country Liberal Party, I feel I have earned my stripes as an Independent, and what I say is out of the mouth of someone who feels, operates as and is an Independent.

I reject the implication by the Attorney-General that because of my history with the CLP I speak on behalf of the opposition. That is not the case. I have sat back and listened to this debate about the banning of Dan Murphy's—the suspicious implementation, regulations and legislation by the new government to, very quickly and early in the piece, try to restrict the size of takeaway liquor outlets to 400 square metres in the Northern Territory.

I have not had a lot to say on the issue until last week when one of the Cabinet ministers publicly shared with the *NT News* their concerns about how it was a politically driven and motivated decision to ban the Dan, and how that speaks volumes about the internal dynamics and decision-making within this government.

It has been an interesting period given the very strong platform of integrity that this government has come to power on. This debate is not about what alcohol strategy is better than the other. I think we have done that in previous debates and we will continue to do that in the future. It is a healthy and good thing to keep debating what is an effective alcohol strategy for Alice Springs, Nhulunbuy, Katherine and Darwin, and what strategies might work across the whole of the Territory, like the Banned Drinker Register.

I do not think that this afternoon is about evaluating what has been better than the next; this is a censure motion looking at the procedure and process that this government used to come to the decision to regulate and legislate against allowing the likes of Dan Murphy's, or for that matter any other takeaway liquor outlet, to have a premises that is over the size of 400 square metres. That is the issue of this censure debate this afternoon.

The government has failed to do this all along. This afternoon government members have had ample opportunity to fully disclose the process and time frames of the development and implementation of policy and legislation to restrict the floor size of takeaway liquor outlets to 400 square metres, including their decision to make exempt driveways and storage areas. They have failed to fully disclose the process that they used.

They have also failed to provide proof that the takeaway liquor outlet floor restriction of 400 square metres and the exemption on driveway and storage areas policy was an existing ALP policy prior to being approached by the AHA to adopt this exact same policy in April 2016. They have failed today to table a list of all the donations made to the Australian Labor Party prior to the August 2016 Northern Territory general election by alcohol industry stakeholders of the Northern Territory, despite the fact they were given over 24 hours' notice.

You had every opportunity to clear the air and provide evidence of the fact that you have been open, transparent and honest and have operated with integrity, but throughout this afternoon you have chosen not to use this opportunity to your benefit to prove that you do not have a case to answer, that this was not a dodgy deal. You have failed yourselves and Territorians. You have spoken generically about the amazing opportunities that will exist in the future to refer this matter to the new independent commission against corruption and the political donations inquiry.

You have not taken up the opportunity to clear your name today and I have to ask why; why would you not do that? You could have put this whole thing to bed today, but you have chosen not to do that, and the only conclusion I can come to is that you are hiding something, that you do not and never have had an ALP policy to this effect, that you have accepted political donations from people within the alcohol industry of the Northern Territory, and that you were seduced into implementing a policy that was not your own at the bequest of the AHA and possibly other people within the alcohol industry.

You have turned your back on your commitment to being honest and open, operating ethically with integrity. You have turned your back. You have been seduced. You made a mistake, and you have not used this opportunity to clear the air. You have not used this opportunity to prove to me and the people of the Northern Territory that there is no case to answer. I can only assume that you have been seduced by political donations in making an opportunistic decision to ban Dan Murphy's, restrict the size of takeaway liquor outlets—and the rest is history.

There are inconsistencies in the stories you have told the media. The media are on to it. It does not matter what the former CLP government did or did not do, how terrible it was, how this or that it was. That is all irrelevant. Today, here and now, all that is irrelevant because the spotlight is on you. The spotlight has been put on you to come clean and give an explanation as to why there are inconsistencies in the stories you have told the media.

The story about when the Chief Minister, or your government, first heard about Dan Murphy's—we have heard October 2016, November 2016 and December 2016. What is the truth? Why can you not give Territorians a reasonable explanation? Was it a mistake? Did you get confused? We have not heard anything like that or a reasonable explanation. I get confused. We all get confused. But this government will not even own up to that—a simple confusion over when that occurred.

You are doing exactly what previous people in this place have done when they are hiding something. You have chosen to ignore the censure motion put on the table, the allegations that the Opposition Leader and I have put to you, the allegations being made to you every day in the media. This morning on ABC radio Adam Steer asked the Chief Minister, 'Where is your policy? Show us the policy you said you had before you were approached by the AHA at the beginning of 2016.' And the Chief Minister said the same thing he has said before, 'Oh, you know, we were under-resourced when we were in opposition, and we did not keep records'. That is implausible. It sounds like he is not telling the truth.

Why have you not used this opportunity to come into this Chamber and give an explanation, not some weird and suspicious response about not having enough resources? The only people in this place who do not have sufficient resources are the Independent members. We do not have staff. In opposition you had over \$1m in your budget. You had plenty of staff to help you record the minutes of your meetings.

You told Adam Steer this morning that it was in a shadow Cabinet meeting you created and discussed this policy. When was this meeting? Who was there? Why were the minutes not recorded? Why would you not record an important decision made about your policy, which you presumably took to the 2016 election?

You have used this opportunity to shut it down and try to deflect, as you have done at every opportunity in history, about how bad the former CLP government was and how you are so much better because you have put out this sparkling document saying you have integrity. Actions speak louder than words. If you do not operate with integrity then you do not have integrity.

I am very sad to be standing here today as an Independent member of parliament, executing this argument, presenting evidence to suggest that you have not, in this case, operated with integrity. You have not been honest. You have not used this opportunity this afternoon to clear your name and be honest with Territorians. You should all hang your heads in shame.

All this says to me and the rest of the Northern Territory is that there is a case to answer here. I, as the Independent Member for Araluen, will be referring this matter formally to the independent commission against

corruption next year, when it is established. As soon as you nominate who the commissioner is, I will be writing a letter referring this matter to ICAC. I will formally refer this matter to the political donations inquiry.

As I said on TV last week ...

Ms Fyles interjecting.

Mrs LAMBLEY: You have had your turn, Attorney-General. You can listen to me. When I was interviewed by Channel Nine last week, I said to the media, ‘If it looks like a rat and smells like a rat then chances are it is a rat’.

The Assembly divided.

| Ayes 3 | Noes 17 |
|-------------|--------------|
| Mr Higgins | Ms Ah Kit |
| Mrs Lambley | Mr Collins |
| Mr Mills | Mr Costa |
| | Ms Fyles |
| | Mr Gunner |
| | Mr Kirby |
| | Ms Lawler |
| | Mr McCarthy |
| | Mr McConnell |
| | Ms Manison |
| | Ms Moss |
| | Ms Nelson |
| | Mr Paech |
| | Mr Sievers |
| | Ms Uibo |
| | Mr Vowles |
| | Mrs Worden |

Motion not agreed to.

**PERSONAL EXPLANATION
Opposition Leader**

Mr HIGGINS (Opposition Leader): Mr Deputy Speaker, during the debate I was asked whether I would table the letter written by the previous Chief Minister to the AHA. Prior to doing that, I will read into *Hansard* the exact response:

The NT Government agrees in principle to preparing legislation limiting the maximum bottle shop size of 400sq metres of ‘public area’. The Minister for Business will consider this issue and advise.

I seek leave to table the letter and attachments. One is the position against the AHA request, and the second attachment is referenced in the letter, an update of the 2012 policy agenda items the Country Liberals took to the election.

Leave granted.

**PAROLE AMENDMENT BILL
(Serial 21)**

Continued from earlier this day.

Mr COLLINS (Fong Lim): Mr Deputy Speaker, I support the Parole Amendment Bill. I agree with the Member for Stuart when he said this is no simple piece of amending legislation. This bill represents a fundamental shift in attitude. I also agree that this bill goes to one of the main reasons the Member for Stuart and I decided to stand at the last election.

As the Member for Arnhem indicated, the incarceration rate in the Northern Territory is a disgrace. It is the highest among those jurisdictions for which we have recorded statistics. We do not even want to think about

the ones that do not. This cannot be anything other than a complete embarrassment to us all. I was heartened to hear the Leader of the Opposition confirming this embarrassment, and I hope this signals a future where we are able to work constructively on further developments that will inevitably be necessary.

We need to be clear that we are talking about parole, not bail. Bail occurs at the start of a criminal legal process when offenders have been charged but not yet convicted. Parole occurs after the offender has been convicted of a crime and sentenced by the court. The sentence may commence with a probation period rather than incarceration, but it mostly requires a period of incarceration prior to the commencement of parole.

The ultimate goal of parole is to assist the reintegration of offenders into the community. A clear measure of the effectiveness of the parole system is the rate of recidivism, and in that case we are clearly failing.

The recidivism rate of Territory prisoners who offended within two years of release from prison during the year 2012–13 was 57.5%. This means within two years of release almost 60% of former prisoners have failed to effectively reintegrate into the community and have reoffended or breached their parole conditions and ended up back in prison. These offenders continue to prop up our atrocious incarceration rate and be a drain on the limited finances of the Territory. We have to do everything we can to break this cycle to reduce this rate of recidivism.

The bill before the Assembly is a first step in reducing the overall incarceration rate. The Parole Amendment Bill allows for the compliance management or incarceration in the Territory COMMIT program to be extended to parolees, supporting a smoother transition from prison into the community. It is modelled on the HOPE program, which was implemented in Hawaii. In 2004 the first circuit judge in Hawaii, Steven Alm, launched a pilot program to reduce probation violations by drug offenders and others at high risk of recidivism.

This high-intensity supervision program, called HOPE—Hawaii's Opportunity Probation with Enforcement—was the first of its kind in the United States. Probationers in the HOPE program received swift, predictable and immediate sanctions, typically resulting in several days in gaol for each detected violation, such as detected drug use or missed appointments with probation officers.

About 15% of the HOPE participants complete the program, which can last up to six years without substance abuse treatment. In the 12-month follow-up study, 61% of HOPE participants had zero positive drug tests, 20% had one positive, 9% had two, 5% had three and less than 5% had four or more.

A randomised control study compared HOPE participants assigned to regular parole or probation. After one year, the HOPE participants were 55% less likely to be arrested for a new crime, 72% less likely to use drugs, 61% less likely to miss appointments with their supervisory officers and 53% less likely to have their parole or probation revoked than those on regular probation. HOPE participants were sentenced, on average, to 48% fewer days in prison than regular probationers.

When offenders are placed on probation in Hawaii, rather than being sent to prison, the probation period is now typically four years. If court at any point revokes probation then the judge may impose on the defendant any sentence that might have been imposed originally for the crime for which the defendant was convicted.

A recent study has raised a number of issues about HOPE probation. Without getting into the merits of that study, it serves as a reminder that we need to remain vigilant and cannot simply set and forget a program such as COMMIT or HOPE.

As I said earlier, the ultimate goal of parole is to assist the reintegration of offenders back into the community. In truth, the ultimate goal is to benefit us all, as members of the community, and not so much the offender. But we have to find a way to transition prisoners back into the community for the benefit of us all. We need to take notice of what is happening in other jurisdictions. There are good examples and we should be considering whether we need to amend or modify to suit our purposes.

As the Attorney-General has stated, over the past 12 months the Parole Board has noticed a growing trend of offenders declining parole when they become eligible. Offenders decline parole for a range of reasons. However, for the period of January 2016 to February 2017 approximately 47% of prisoners who declined parole stated the reason was due to not wanting conditions upon release or that parole was too hard. Under the current parole scheme, during the application process it is made clear to prisoners eligible for parole that non-compliance with conditions is likely to result in their return to prison, as there are currently limited options to address non-compliance.

Although the chairperson is able to make a decision regarding non-compliance with the parole order within a short period of time, the options available to the chairperson where non-compliance occurs are very limited. Currently when a parolee is non-compliant with his or her parole order the only option is to revoke the order. In practice this translates to the following options: take no action; issue a warning letter; issue a further stern warning letter; vary the conditions of the order; or revoke the parole order. In essence it is an all-or-nothing system.

When the parole order is revoked for non-compliance the parolee is returned to prison to serve the entire period of imprisonment that was outstanding when the parole was granted, not just the time outstanding at the time of the non-compliance. You can see why people would choose to take the option of not having parole and staying in prison so they can just be released, but ultimately, that does very little for the parolee in terms of assisting them to reintegrate into the community.

The vast majority of people who commit crimes are eventually released back into the community, so to provide the safe and vibrant communities Territorians want and deserve we simply have to break the cycle of reoffending. We are fortunate that there is a strong international evidence base to support the COMMIT program, and this evidence shows programs of this sort can lead to reduced recidivism and incarceration rates.

However, like the *Alcohol Harm Reduction Act* passed in this Assembly last week, and the BDR that was reintroduced by it, we need to keep an eye on how the measures imposed are performing and realistically assess whether they are achieving the desired outcome. We should never be afraid to critically assess what we are doing and look seriously at whether we can improve it.

Madam Acting Deputy Speaker, I commend the bill to the Assembly and I look forward to developing further legislation aimed at addressing the serious problems of incarceration rates and recidivism.

Mr WOOD (Nelson): Madam Acting Deputy Speaker, I also support this bill. I think it is a very important change in the way we deal with parole. Anything that can achieve better outcomes is worth trying.

When governments bring in new ideas they need to have some statistics at the beginning. I have been in this parliament a long time and have heard governments say, ‘We are bringing in this new program’. That is great, but I think you need to review it in one or two years’ time. You need a sunset clause, because if it does not work then you should go somewhere else and try again.

On the surface, this bill is one that is worthy of support and I will be giving it that support. It is a little different to a certain piece of legislation that, from memory, was the last piece of legislation the CLP tried to introduce on the last day of the last sittings in the House. It caused a fair bit of debate because, basically, the bail amendment by the CLP was intended to restrict what a magistrate could do in relation to someone seeking bail. The magistrate only had two choices. One was to put a bracelet on someone’s wrist, the other was to send them back to the prison. There was no thought of options such as taking them back to their community, to Loves Creek or to BushMob. There was no leeway; it was a tough-on-crime response to young people.

As the Minister for Territory Families said, in this bill we are not talking about necessarily youth justice; we are speaking about adult justice. But it left me with the impression that we have to be careful. If we put forth good policies, somehow you have to take that tough image that some parties put forward in the hope they will gain votes.

I will be the first to say that we need to not slip into the idea that rehabilitation is the only thing we should look at. I was listening to a talk about incarceration in other countries—it might have been Sweden or Finland—and they work on rehabilitation, but they also have a great emphasis on reinforcing that the person is in prison for something they have done wrong. It is not necessarily a pleasant day out in the fields.

There needs to be some way you are reinforcing the fact that person did something wrong. There has to be a requirement—‘You are in prison because you are being punished for an offence, and you need to know that is happening, but at the same time we do care for you from the point of view that when you leave here we hope you will not be back again.’ It is a double process—‘I do not want to go back to that place; it is not very comfortable. It is not a pleasant place. Not only do I lose my freedom, but I am limited in what I can do. I do not want to come back.’ There is that element.

I remember people saying to me when I visited the work camp at Wyndham—the minister might know that some of us have supported work camps. The Member for Barkly is also a great fan of work camps. I was talking to the superintendent at the work camp at Wyndham, which was surrounded by three strands of plain

wire, and everyone there knew that if they stepped over that wire they would end up in Fremantle. They knew what Fremantle was like and they did not want to go there, because it was a tough prison.

I am trying to emphasise that I support this piece of legislation because I think rehabilitation and giving people a chance to turn their life around is really important. At the same time I think we need to make sure we do not forget the fact people do bad things sometimes and need to be reminded that it was a bad thing to do. Life is not easy in prison because, to some extent, you are paying for your actions and you need to be reminded of it.

I am also told that the prison system in Sweden has the lowest recidivism of any prisons in Europe. We should learn from other places.

Be that as it may, the Minister for Territory Families raised some important issues in relation to this legislation. Another member raised the issue of being in prison for driving offences or not paying your fines. Parole for those people is relatively minor. You do not expect them to do anything too drastic when they are on parole because it is not a serious offence. But the minister mentioned DVOs. I am interested in the matrix that will apply for people on parole who have been in prison for domestic violence orders. Will that matrix take into account different levels of the seriousness of that person's imprisonment?

I also say that because if you are in for murder you are basically on parole for the rest of your life, so how will this matrix apply to someone who has been incarcerated for 25 years—serious murderer—and then they are given parole? What will cause that person to be put back in prison?

I know of a particular case—I will not say who it is—of a person who was a lifer. My understanding is that they might have taken some drugs at the lower end of the scale and they were sent back to prison for a period. I am presuming this legislation will also deal with this type of more serious offence and things will be graded according to what the offence was and then what the breaking of the parole was.

I am probably jumping ahead a little here—when a probation and parole officer believes that a person has been non-compliant while on a parole order that is subject to the sanctions regime, that officer must give a written report about the matter to the chairperson on the Parole Board and the chairperson may—my notes are slightly different to what is in the second reading—take no action, issue a warning letter, issue a further stern warning letter, vary the conditions of the order and evoke the parole order.

I referee soccer—it reminds me of a similar type of process. If someone does something that I think is a bit suss, I might walk over and just say, 'Steady down'. That would be taking no action. Issuing a warning letter might be one yellow card; issuing a further stern warning might be another yellow card; then evoking the parole order would be the red card.

That is, basically, the philosophy of what you are doing. It is similar to what you do when you are umpiring or refereeing a game of football. You are giving people a punishment according to what the offence was; you are also giving them a chance because you have warned them. In some games, like AFL, you give them 10 minutes so they can go off and have a think about it. That is exactly what we are doing here. I see some similarities in the way sport is controlled with the way we are dealing people who are on parole.

As much as I did not always agree with the previous Attorney-General—he went overseas looking at various things from time to time. He looked at the HOPE program. I will read a bit about the COMMIT program, which has been mentioned previously:

The Parole Amendment Bill extend the compliance, management or incarceration in the Territory COMMIT Program to parolees. The 12 month Darwin based trial of the COMMIT Program commenced on 27 June 2016. COMMIT is modelled on a sanction model introduced in Hawaii, HOPE, Hawaii's Opportunity Probation with Enforcement. HOPE aims to reduce probation violations by drug offenders and others at risk of recidivism. COMMIT's trial began as a sentencing option for adults on suspended sentence. Any breach of the conditions of their sentence resulted in an appearance in court, punishment according to a predetermined matrix, and fair, predictable and immediately sanctioned by court.

There is an allocation of \$2.1m is being made to expand COMMIT in the 2017–18 Northern Territory budget.

The government is spending that much money—it would be good to hear what the results were. You need to have those figures. You need to follow up with people to find out if those programs are working.

The bill went out to various people for comment. My understanding is there has been no commentary on this bill by prominent law and justice bodies in the Northern Territory such as the Central Australian Aboriginal Legal Aid Service, NAAJA, Criminal Lawyers Association NT, the NT Legal Aid Commission or the Law Society NT. Usually the Law Society NT writes about everything. The Attorney-General can tell me if my notes are wrong.

Victims of Crime NT has made no comment, nor have national prisoner rights organisations such as Justice Connect. That is interesting, especially when you are dealing with as many people as we are dealing with. The number of Aboriginal people in prison is alarmingly high. It is something many of us have known about for a long time. The Member for Barkly was involved in setting up the Holtze prison, and the CLP kept hammering on the doorstep that it was a Taj Mahal. It is amazing how those names stick and how many people have not been out there.

It is no Taj Mahal. It is new, so it looks fancy, but it is concrete and stainless steel. It has some bright parts and there are things for people to do, but that is an important part of the rehabilitation process for prisoners. I do not know what the government's program is in this area, but there are work camps. There is one in Tennant Creek, the first one, which I understand has been very successful. The community has accepted it, and I think they may have their own footy team. They might even have a few umpires out there as well.

There is also a work camp in Nhulunbuy. I have always hoped there would be one in Katherine. The original discussions about the prison, which I was involved in—I am not a great supporter of the prison because of its size. It is too big. We should have more people being incarcerated out bush instead of in a big concrete prison. They should be doing things out bush, working in national parks and working in their communities.

We need to change the way we think about prison, especially when it comes to Indigenous people. Unfortunately, Nhulunbuy was the last work camp. There were promises that there would be a prison industry and work camp set up in Katherine. None of that eventuated, which is sad. There was hope, for instance, at Mataranka cattle station. I remember the previous Attorney-General speaking about it. I spoke to him about how if the university was pulling out of the Mataranka cattle station then the prison should take over and train Aboriginal men in stock work.

If anyone visited Berrimah Prison some years ago they would have heard of mango station, a little cattle station next to Berrimah farm. It was called mango station because the barbed wire fence went around all the mango trees. That was the main paddock. There was a program there which had Aboriginal men get up early, prepare their horses and learn to ride them. To me, although it was an expensive program it was a fantastic one.

There was one person there who was in for murder. He had never spoken to anyone in the whole time he was in that prison. But that changed when he was put on a horse. These are costly programs, but they are the things we need to do. Mataranka Station would have been ideal. My understanding is that it has now been leased and is not used by the public. I think the government still owns the land, but it is not used as an educational institution. I would like to see Holtze prison as empty as possible.

I have questioned the Attorney-General and am disappointed she would not directly answer my questions about that prison. I have heard from many people that there is a presumption they will cut programs at the prison.

We can have discussions about the Parole Amendment Bill, which is fine, and we can say we are doing a lot of good things to help people not to be re-incarcerated, but if the right hand is doing something that will not help, that is, cutting programs—and if anyone has been out to the prison and knows how much money was spent on ensuring industries were a key part of that prison, they will be disappointed if we find out there will be severe cuts to those services.

There is woodwork, metalwork, art places, a hairdresser, music, educational facilities, a garden—which I hope to visit next Monday. There are the out-of-prison programs. I am unsure what happened to the previous government's policy on Sentenced to a Job; is that continuing? Are people still able to employ those who live in the prison? Are those programs going?

On one hand we have a Parole Amendment Bill which I support, but on the other hand I would be disappointed if I find out programs are being cut. We cannot take our foot off the pedal when it comes to trying to turn things around.

I have been here a long time. We have spoken about this issue so many times. I still do not think we have hit the nail on the head. Young people need to get out of the place. We had Wildman River—the Labor Party closed it down. We had Beatrice Hill—Gunn Point Prison—the CLP closed it down. We need places where people can clear their heads. Darwin and Palmerston are not places you necessarily clear your head, because they are full of noise and people who distract you. Young people get caught up on the wrong side of things, as do adults. They get messed up.

We have heaps of national parks and—I say this to the minister for Natural Resources—that is where we should be taking our people. I have seen the Western Australian model. A big caravan which is the kitchen, and the shower and toilets come along behind it in another caravan that goes out to national parks or to cattle stations. It might do weed control, feral animal control or fixing paths.

Can we say we do any of that in the Northern Territory? Why do we not take people out there, young adults et cetera, and give them a bit of space in their life; throw the mobile phone and iPad out the door. Let them understand that there are stars in the sky and birds in the trees; the sun comes up every morning and goes down every night. ‘I can do something really useful out here, I can look after the environment’—they can start to think about their purpose in life.

We do not do much of that. We might do a bit with school children when they go to school camps, but the people who really need these changes in their life need to have time to clear their head. You do not simply send them out doing things, you need to have the right people with them who can talk to them, help them through issues and follow up when they come back. If we have no follow-up and they go straight back to a house where mum and dad are on drugs or booze, or the house has 20 people in it and no one is employed, we are back to square one.

We put this forward today as one part, as the Member for Stuart said. There are a lot of other things we have to do. It has given me an opportunity to talk about one of my favourite subjects, that is, work camps, which I think we need to have more of. We are talking about adult offenders. There are opportunities to do some good things for the Northern Territory from the point of view of making the Territory a better place by making people better people, by giving them an opportunity to do something very useful. If they can see they are doing something useful and are achieving something useful then we are going a long way toward turning their lives around. We need to do things better. Not all concrete or steel—we need to give people space.

I have more notes here which I could read, but most people have gone through the technical issues in this bill. The statement at the beginning of the bill’s explanatory statement is:

The purpose of the Parole Amendment Bill 2017 is to amend the Parole Act to authorise the Chairperson of the NT Parole Board to, without revoking a parole order, impose a period of the person’s sentence of imprisonment as a sanction for non-compliance with a parole condition.

We hope this will result in fewer people who break their parole going back into prison. It may also mean people will decide it is not worth staying in gaol and realise these changes to the legislation will not punish them for minor offences while on parole and, to some extent, will give them a helping hand.

It will give them a yellow card and hopefully that will be enough for them to decide to pull their head in, finish the parole period and get on with their life.

I support this bill.

Mr GUYULA (Nhulunbuy): Madam Acting Deputy Speaker, I strongly support the government in tackling the issue of high incarceration rates in the Northern Territory. I look forward to reducing reoffending rates.

However, my concern is that until government sits down with clan leaders across the Northern Territory, these high incarceration rates for remote Indigenous people will not change because the government is not engaging in a real dialogue about the causes of high incarceration rates or what will reduce them.

In the case of this bill, Indigenous offenders in my electorate could be paroled to clan leaders to be rehabilitated by their own system, not a foreign system that is confusing, often meaningless and does not result in community-oriented rehabilitation. Or, ideally, Indigenous people living in remote communities will be held accountable to their people and their justice system.

In 2013, a Northern Territory court acted in consultation with clan leaders and ceremony authorities, and ordered that a young Yolngu man attend a Gunabibi ceremony in Arnhem Land rather than be sentenced to

prison. This Gunabibi ceremony is about engaging Yolngu men in *raypirri*, which is discipline, teachings and respect. I will endeavour to speak further about this ceremony another time.

This young man attended the ceremony for many months, and was rehabilitated in a culturally-appropriate setting. During the course of this ceremony Yolngu build their strength and pride in themselves and come to understand their rights and responsibilities to community. This is true rehabilitation.

In contrast, Yolngu who come out of prison feel branded as criminal, weak and unable to be part of any community, branded for life by a foreign system.

This bill may be an improvement on legislation, but it will not help to address high rates of incarceration because it does not recognise the needs of the majority of people who will be subject to it. Nor does it recognise the needs of the communities who would provide alternative and more effective approaches to rehabilitation.

Once again, I challenge the government to sit down with Indigenous leaders across the Northern Territory and create culturally-appropriate pathways for offenders; this is Yolngu and Balandia working together.

I commend the bill to the House.

Mr McCARTHY (Housing and Community Development): Madam Acting Deputy Speaker, I rise to support the Attorney-General and the Parole Amendment Bill 2017, and I thank the Attorney-General and the public officials the Attorney-General works with for their continuation of good policy initiatives that address some of our most vulnerable Territorians and the improvement of their life outcomes.

To quote from the Attorney-General's second reading speech:

The bill before the House will create a new, certain and fair system for dealing with non-compliance of parole orders.

...

It is anticipated that, over time, the policy will result in a decrease in the number of episodes of noncompliance considered by the Parole Board, a decrease in the number of parole orders revoked and will consequently improve completion rates and, importantly, encourage prisoners to apply for parole.

This is another good initiative in terms of correctional services legislation being based on common sense, the unique nature of the Northern Territory corrections systems and offending behaviours, and the very important element of personal responsibility. I do not think that can be ignored in any way, shape or form. The instilling, reinforcing and teaching of personal responsibility is what really strikes me in this legislation and the amendment to traditional legislation.

This debate is worth reflecting on, because I am a previous minister for Corrections in the Northern Territory and I did a lot of research into this subject matter and the portfolio responsibility. I remember learning that the original Berrimah Prison was built and commissioned for around 250 inmates. That was an interesting period, in 1979.

I remember living through a couple of decades or more of the CLP government, which was a very traditional, conservative government and punitive in regard to policy. In the corrections area, one policy that will go down in history and will always be reflected upon is the mandatory sentencing regime. Who can forget coming to a period when the government changed in the Northern Territory, a historical moment when the CLP came to the end of its 27-year regime and when a vulnerable Territorian, a homeless person, was gaoled for stealing a towel off a clothesline?

That was when Territorians said, 'Hey, there is something wrong here', and it resonated into a very powerful debate across all elements of our community, from the conservative to the more socialist and even more radical. That was when we said there was something really wrong. There was a change of government and there were significant legislative amendments taking place in the early years of those first two Labor government terms.

As the minister for Corrections I was sworn in in 2009 and served as the minister until 2012. In that time it was very apparent that things had gone very wrong in relation to better outcomes, reducing recidivism and addressing the vulnerabilities.

By 2012 the old Berrimah Prison had a population of in excess of 700. It had been what I call a conglomeration of cages. There was no other way to describe it. There were great people doing great work and some significant projects were occurring. We were running programs where prisoners were building accommodation—it was urgent. Essentially, the old traditional prison had been aggregated with inferior infrastructure. It was overcrowded, unsafe and was not delivering the outcomes. It truly was a national disgrace.

One of the important areas I researched and participated in was the planning for a new correctional service precinct in the Top End. But Berrimah, for me—it was a very stark experience, entering the portfolio. In the first week I said, ‘If I am the minister for Corrections, I had better get on the ground and start to understand this portfolio and all its aspects’.

At the first opportunity I had, I visited the old Berrimah Prison. I will not forget it because it was a memorable occasion. There was a very experienced superintendent who had vast experience in another jurisdiction. I could relate to that because I had an understanding of corrections in New South Wales, where I grew up; I had a grassroots understanding. This gentleman had worked on the front line, in big prisons in other jurisdictions, and was a wonderful recruit to the Northern Territory.

The superintendent and commissioner were there, and I said to them both, ‘What do you recommend a new minister for Corrections does on the first day?’ The superintendent said, ‘Minister, you would be very welcome to do a tour of the perimeter of this infrastructure’. I took that advice, and the superintendent and I lapped the old Berrimah Prison and toured the infrastructure.

That was a good strategy—to get the minister into a very good position, where he could advise this new lay person who now had enormous opportunities at their fingertips within government. This was a good opportunity to spend some quality time there. Thank heavens I was a minister who based my operations—and still do—on common sense and good manners. I did a lot of listening and not much talking.

What came of that tour was not only an appreciation of the failing infrastructure and the high security risks this officer showed me on my watch, which started my sleepless nights, but of the offenders and the prison cohort in the Northern Territory. He started to educate me, being an officer who had worked in some of the toughest prisons in the country and dealt with very high-level offenders, on the alarming statistics that have been shared in this debate today and that we are still working on as a government. In the Northern Territory over 80% of the prison population is Indigenous Territorians. More importantly, he started to qualify that with the fact 60% of that vulnerable cohort were imprisoned for low-level recidivist offences. The majority of that offending related to alcohol abuse and traffic offences. He essentially was telling the new minister, ‘You need to do something different with that cohort’.

He advised me very clearly of the other 20% of serious offenders that had to be maintained in regard to community safety as well as rehabilitated and re-educated, but he was very clear on that first day about this cohort that was very vulnerable—that was the majority of the prison population across the Northern Territory—and what prison officers and the justice agencies were planning. They were hopeful that they had a supportive government to link with.

That was, essentially, the basis of the New Era in Corrections. I was proud to be part of that policy implementation from the start. The Member for Brennan could testify this; it was the prison officers who gave the first round of resounding support when we announced that we were planning to build a new correctional precinct in the Northern Territory to deliver on this new policy and for this complex cohort that needed a new era in regard to correctional services. It was also to support the staff, their safety and the efficiencies in correctional service delivery.

It was great to join a team that was behind the minister, led by a towering superintendent who stood head and shoulders over me. That gave me a lot of comfort, actually. I made many visits to our correctional precincts. This New Era in Corrections came after a tyrannical regime of 27 years of mandatory sentencing, which became national and international news, and the results of a cohort of vulnerable people, who have been continually imprisoned in this traditional system—things were about to change, and they did.

The Member for Nelson touched briefly on some of those initiatives. If you explore the *Hansard* for his contributions to this House it would probably rival the Tennant Creek library at this stage, and you will be able

to see a lot more detail of what took place. The Member for Nelson was very much an active part in a partnership in a minority government during those four years, 2008–12.

One of the initiatives I remember well, which was planned in the New Era in Corrections, was a driver re-education centre on the precinct of the Alice Springs Correctional Centre. It was new infrastructure, a new building, so it would have the added opportunity of economic stimulus for Alice Springs. It had a layer of opportunity to incorporate prison industry and labour, and its target was to look at one of the areas causing the significant number of recidivist offenders in alcohol and traffic offences.

It would have been a targeted, new, innovative centre where we would cycle these recidivist offenders through and get them licensed and into supported employment and training, and then support their reintegration into the community and into jobs. It was a very exciting part of our new era. It was one small part, but for me it was very exciting because I lived in an area where I saw a lot of constituents going to prison for low-level motor traffic and alcohol offences.

One of the steps in delivering that policy was the passage of legislation—we were looking at how you could have a provisional driver's licence if you were working in a real job supported through the Alice Springs correctional system. Essentially, we would have inmates who began their rehabilitation and training, who were issued with a provisional licence that would allow them to operate motor vehicles for their employment.

The CLP opposition at the time—which was big, loud and aggressive—smashed me. They went to town on the old chestnut of 'Labor is soft on crime'. Passage of that legislation was not easy.

I was new to the requirements of the passage of legislation, but I stuck to my plan and we debated it. Unfortunately, when losing government in 2012, that innovative initiative which was recognised nationally, if not internationally, was scrapped.

I still regret that, because it could have addressed this low-level recidivist cohort working off the minister's platform of personal responsibility; common sense; applying reintegration strategies to real world events; getting something important like a driver's licence and keeping it; adding to your opportunities through employment; and delivering your life potential. That example would link with this legislation perfectly.

It was a good experience on the weekend, travelling with the Member for Lingiari to the Borroloola Amateur Race Club's 50th anniversary event. I have been involved in that event for a long time. The 50th anniversary event had a two-day campdraft with over 800 nominations, which was a record. The gymkhana and rodeo had a record crowd. The atmosphere was sensational. It was a good experience to be among a big crowd in a remote area, celebrating community, not only the traditional owners but the pastoral history they had been integral to.

It was a fabulous day. I wished I could have had three days there, but unfortunately I could only go down for the day. I thank the Member for Lingiari for supporting me. He had a good day as well. A lot of the constituents gave us some good challenges.

Amongst this community event, I noticed the Barkly Work Camp team. They were conspicuous in their uniforms and had two Correctional Services officers escorting them. One of these was a member of my rugby league development project for about four years. He was a gun half-back and five-eighth. He has been through a lot of different employment opportunities, testing careers in his formative years in Tennant Creek and the Barkly, and has graduated as a Correctional Services officer. And here he was in Borroloola with this crew. It reinforced to me the importance of personal responsibility, community engagement and pragmatic reintegration opportunities in community.

Those gentlemen were proud of what they do and where they were, and had the opportunity to take a breath in the middle of the day and watch a couple of the rough stock events. These guys do not do the glamorous work around community events. They do the set-up, rubbish and waste management and the bump-out. It is hard, hot, dirty work, and from time to time they get an opportunity to sit down and participate as spectators in the crowd.

It reinforced this legislation we are debating and passing through the parliament—if you target a unique Territorian hand up, you will achieve better outcomes. There is no doubt these gentlemen in the Barkly Work Camp were on that pathway. For any of those who were able to be continually supported through a parole process, it makes a lot of sense—ensuring we keep them on that continuum of success, as opposed to reinforcing a draconian, negative response to their rehabilitation and reintegration into the community.

I have written on my notes that contribute to the debate, an acknowledgement of the previous CLP Attorney-General, who went to Hawaii to research the theoretical framework around what underpins this legislation, and here we are amending the bill. This is to be acknowledged, and I know the Attorney-General has acknowledged that. However, I am on the public record on a number of occasions, challenging that minister of the previous administration where, in my opinion, there was far too much focus on the Sentenced to a Job program, and a lot of emphasis was taken off education, training, rehabilitation and those important reintegration programs.

You need a good balance. The minister got rather intoxicated with his own mantra around Sentenced to a Job, and it was quite evident in this parliament whenever there were questions, statements or speeches from the minister. It reinforced to me, an opposition member, continuing to learn, that an important balance was needed.

Like those gentlemen at Borroloola, it was not just about the work they were doing—that was volunteer work—but it was also about the other very important elements of education, awareness and reintegration into the community. Other members who have contributed to the debate have mentioned that in the real world of the Northern Territory, with very vulnerable Territorians in a correctional system, there has been a lot of resistance to accepting parole conditions, because people in the real world knew that to be paroled put them straight back into a very challenging environment. In some cases, a lot of people I know personally—an environment which supports offending behaviour in this low-level recidivous area of motor traffic offences and alcohol abuse.

It was evident for me as a minister, and in opposition, with my continuing research, that Correctional Services officers, justice agencies and the constituents themselves—the offenders in some cases—were telling me directly that we had to do something in this area, because people were not taking the opportunity to access parole because they found it was intimidating, too hard, and they feared they would fail. It was reinforcing negative stereotypes, when a lot of the New Era work was occurring—positive wellbeing and self-esteem.

If we could have got the driver re-education centre operational and had those young offenders going out the gate in utes and trucks, working in industry, it would have added to our strive to reduce this unacceptable recidivism rate across the Northern Territory.

That brings me to a very important point; this legislation has some very defined links to our policy as a Labor government. In these sittings we have seen a very constructive debate around the Banned Drinker Register, which relates to the Alcohol Harm Reduction Bill and policy—all of those elements of reducing alcohol harm.

We have a massive Housing and Community Development program focused on jobs. The Minister for Environment and Natural Resources is focusing very much on ranger programs, jobs on country and opportunities for regional and remote Territorians. The Minister for Primary Industry and Resources is travelling the length and breadth of the Northern Territory, trying to build these opportunities through the important investment arms that will underpin these projects that will step out of the Territory earth, once again offering jobs and a future.

I have the privilege of working with the Department of Housing and Community Development and local government, which has a sound policy regarding building local capacity and jobs.

When we talk about a low-level recidivist offender representing up to 60% of an 80% cohort in Territory prisons, which is completely unacceptable, going home to an environment where there are jobs will make a real difference to these policy outcomes. It makes a lot of sense to look at a supportive environment of parole and parole conditions to keep people on that continuum of progressing into achieving better life outcomes.

I am seriously proud of some of the very brief examples I have seen thus far, which is early work in the Room to Breathe program. We visited two remote Territory towns, and in one town there were four construction sites and about 12 local people involved in the work. As I have said before in this House, my best memory is the kids standing around watching their families and friends on construction sites, constructing housing infrastructure.

If we continue to aggregate these good policy outcomes that will intertwine and support each other, it will have a direct impact on our correctional services system; it will make a lot more sense and have a lot more meaning. We want people to know there is a real future and it is a lot better to be on country, have a real job and experience prosperity than to be on the continual treadmill of recidivism where your life potential is being eroded away. There is no doubt we cop a lot of criticism nationally and internationally, but it is good to see there is a government back in the saddle that is seriously focused on improving these areas.

When the Member for Nelson talked about the correctional precinct at Holtze and said he wants to see that decanted, fewer prisoners inside and more working across the Territory, this is what I see as the conglomeration of Labor's policies coming together to support that. It will not be overnight, and it will not be easy. The new plan for Housing and Community Development, engaging people in every layer of the housing sector towards that critical model of community housing, is planned over 10 years. It is planned to go beyond election cycles and to partner with the Commonwealth to achieve a significant investment from which we hope will be on the table by the middle of next year. It is about longer-term thinking.

It is our responsibility to get those messages out there to make sure Territorians understand who we are and what we stand for as a Labor government in the Northern Territory. As members have said, our plans and what we want to do are most importantly in partnership, based on local decision-making. I think the Member for Nhulunbuy's contribution to this debate, however challenging, also fits with the Labor government policy. It is also achievable by working together in partnership with this government, its policies, local people and local decision-making.

Ms FYLES (Attorney-General and Justice): Mr Deputy Speaker, I thank the members for their thoughtful contributions to this debate and their support of this bill. I will take a few moments to reflect on some of the comments and important points that have been made throughout today.

I thank the Member for Daly for his support of a matter that he is clearly passionate about. I am pleased that we can begin the conversations to work together on crime, incarceration and recidivism rates in the Northern Territory.

He spoke in another debate about the previous government not being acknowledged, and I think it is important that we point out that some bodies of work which we debate are not our bodies of work; they are not political. They are the department's bodies of work, and that is the public servants of the Northern Territory, who are there to put policy in place for all Territorians through government changes. It is important that the Member for Daly raised that. He felt that this was a CLP body of work.

I have been very open about acknowledging that this body of work started under the previous government. When I became the minister I looked at it in great detail conscientiously, but I could see the evidence that it was worth giving it a try in the Northern Territory. This body of work was not the previous government's work; it has been prepared by hard-working department officials, and I acknowledge them, especially Jenna, who has driven a lot of this work.

I wanted to clarify that here in the House. This is not a CLP body of work that we have picked up and run with while we pretend it is ours. I have given all credit where it is due, but this is the Northern Territory public servants, the thousands of them who are not here to serve the government of the day; they are here to serve the people of the Northern Territory.

The government agrees there is a need for proportionate and immediate responses to breaches of parole to encourage parole compliance and support prisoner reintegration into the community.

Member for Brennan, I thank you for sharing your insights on parole from your time working in correctional services. It is important that we encourage eligible prisoners to apply for parole and encourage a more structured transition back into the community.

The Member for Namatjira highlighted the need for offenders to make contributions to society upon release and be held accountable for their behaviour to break the cycle of reoffending.

The comments made by the Member for Katherine acknowledge the challenges we face in the Territory. With an increasing prison population these amendments aim to reduce incarceration and increase the accountability of offenders and minimise the financial and social impacts of the community. That was something the Member for Fong Lim also talked about, the increasing rates of prison population.

I was heartened to hear from the Members for Sanderson and Stuart, who spoke about the human element of this bill. These amendments have the ability to change lives and help the most vulnerable Territorians in our community to get them on a path to a better life. This is how we can start to break the cycle of reoffending and create a safer community.

I want to touch on the comments by the Member for Braithwaite on probation and parole officers. She acknowledged that they are not just there to impose sanctions and push paper, but they are vital to the

process and build relationships with parolees and other agencies to help transition prisoners to the community.

I forgot the Member for Nelson—my goodness! I do not know how I could forget him. I thank him for his contribution. I want to reiterate that when the sanctions matrix is finalised it will be available via the *Gazette*. The member spoke about this in some detail. The Chairperson of the Parole Board will lead the drafting to a well-considered matrix. In regard to consultation, the COMMIT steering committee has been meeting since January 2016, with representation from CAALAS, NAAJA, the Northern Territory Legal Aid Commission, the DPP, Corrections, AGD and police. In addition, a working group with the same representation exists for the Parole Amendment Bill.

The Member for Nhulunbuy raised questions which we are directly addressing through the Aboriginal Justice Unit, which has been set up to prepare an Aboriginal Justice Agreement that will be a partnership between the Northern Territory Government and Aboriginal communities to address the incarceration rates and facilitate local decision-making. That is something we are acutely aware of. I will update the House at another time on the Aboriginal Justice Unit.

What the *Parole Amendment Act* aims to do is part of the government's commitment to reducing incarceration and reoffending in the Northern Territory; however, we will not compromise the safety of our community whilst we are doing that.

When we talk about reintegrating people into communities and providing them with opportunities for volunteer and paid employment within our community, community safety is paramount, because all Territorians deserve to live in safe, vibrant communities. These amendments to the *Parole Act* will facilitate that by providing a smoother supervised transition from prison to community for eligible parolees.

The sentencing court is responsible for setting a non-parole period, and not all prisoners will receive a sentence with a non-parole period; this means they will need to serve their full sentence in custody. For prisoners who have been given a sentence that includes a non-parole period they must serve at least 50% of their sentence before being eligible for parole.

The Parole Amendment Bill is one measure aimed at reducing incarceration and reoffending rates in the Territory. It is clear that the current all-or-nothing approach to parole violations is not working. The number of options currently available for addressing an individual's non-compliance with a parole order is extremely limited. These changes will allow for certain and fair sanctions to be swiftly imposed without a parole order being revoked; this will support the parolee with their transition back into community while still holding them accountable for non-compliance with their parole order.

One of the intentions of this new legislation is to encourage individuals who are eligible for parole to apply for parole rather than serve their entire period of imprisonment in prison. Over the past year the Parole Board has noticed a significant number of eligible prisoners declining parole. Forty-seven per cent of prisoners who declined to apply for parole said they did so because the all-or-nothing system was too challenging for them. With these amendments, prisoners will know in advance the sanctions for parole non-compliance and will know that the sanctions will be proportionate to the breach of the parole condition.

The sanctions referred to in these amendments are short terms of imprisonment ranging from one to 30 days. The term of imprisonment is a portion of the prisoner's remaining sentence. After the sanction has been served the parolee will be released and continue parole on the original parole order. The expiry date of the order will not change. The parolee will know that the parole order conditions and the corresponding sanctions will be imposed for certain breaches; the parolee is informed and able to operate within a more structured, supportive framework.

Parole is an important reintegration measure that encourages individuals to transition from prison back into community with the support of Community Corrections as well as other support services, such as drug and alcohol counselling, rehabilitation providers, counselling, housing and employment services. The main advantage of the parole system is that it ensures offenders are supervised and supported during reintegration into the community. It is based on the notion that supervision in the community is conducive to rehabilitation, and that is preferable to releasing an offender unconditionally and without any support when the full sentence of imprisonment has been served.

If an individual declines parole they are released into the wider community at the conclusion of their sentence without the supervision of Community Corrections or the additional supports that are put in place with a parole order. Research shows that this increases the likelihood of reoffending and further incarceration; the key to

reducing incarceration levels in our prisons is to ensure that reoffending numbers are reduced. Parole is one tool that provides offenders with the choice to transition back into their community on release from prison with supervision and support from Community Corrections through their assigned probation and parole officer.

Parole can assist with an individual's successful transition back into their community, reducing the likelihood of reoffending by providing additional support, such as reinforcing skill development and therapeutic programs in prison. It also enhances the community's safety through close monitoring. When an offender is released on parole they are responsible for their behaviour; they must comply with the conditions set by the parole board and prove that they are successfully living in the community.

The support provided by the probation and parole officer can assist with their ability to successfully complete their parole order. Parole is an important step in a prisoner's reintegration into community. Imposing sanctions, as opposed to eligible prisoners foregoing parole or not being able to successfully complete a parole order, is beneficial for the individual and the community. Firstly, parole reduces the number of days an offender spends in prison and increases their time in community where they can benefit from additional support of family and friends. They will also have greater access to therapy and rehabilitation options that are available in the community. Additionally, parolees will be able to engage in training and employment in the community, which in turn can further reduce their likelihood of reoffending.

It is anticipated that these amendments will lead to a decrease in the incidence of lower level non-compliance of parole orders, and an increase in the successful completion rates of parole orders.

It is important to state these amendments will not alter an individual's eligibility for parole. The prisoner must have been sentenced by the court to serve a minimum amount of time in prison, known as the non-parole period, before they can apply to the Parole Board for release on parole.

The prisoner must also have stable post-release plans, demonstrated good behaviour whilst in police custody, completed relevant programs, and shown an appropriate level of remorse or insight.

The government believes Territorians have the right to feel safe and expect their homes and businesses to be secure. We expect to live in vibrant and safe towns, communities and cities. Community safety is the paramount consideration for the Parole Board when considering granting a prisoner parole.

In the Northern Territory, all parole applications come before the Parole Board, currently chaired by Justice Southwood. Membership includes the Commissioner of Correctional Services and representatives of police, victims' services, offender services and the broader community.

In the months prior to a prisoner becoming eligible for parole, NT Correctional Services begins working with them to prepare a report for the Parole Board. The report will include information sourced from the prisoner; prison staff; the victim; support and treatment services, including government and non-government providers; and community members.

These amendments to the *Parole Act* will not change the process for a prisoner applying for parole, or the eligibility criteria. It will simply provide an additional condition that can be included in the parole order. The condition will say that the sanctions regime applies where there is non-compliance.

All parolees are eligible to be considered for parole in accordance with the amendments; however, these changes target prisoners in the following categories: those with high needs as determined by a risk assessment tool; those who have previously breached a parole condition; and those who have previously been unsuccessful on parole.

The sanctions regime can be included as a condition of an individual's initial parole order, or it can be added to an existing order. If a parolee breaches an order where the sanctions regime is not already one of those conditions, the chairperson may choose to amend the parolee's order to include the sanctions regime, provided the breach does not warrant revocation of the parole order.

This bill ensures a sanction cannot be imposed prior to the parolee receiving an induction and warning about the sanctions regime, and the parolee will receive a copy of the sanctions matrix. The matrix specifies the sanctions that can be imposed for each breach of condition. The matrix will be determined by the Parole Board and published in the *Northern Territory Government Gazette*.

I will take a few minutes to explain what currently happens when a parolee breaches or does not comply with their order. The probation and parole officer detects non-compliance and reports it to the chairperson in writing as soon as possible. The Chairperson of the Parole Board determines whether the parolee has breached the conditions of their parole order, and has the option to take no action; issue a written warning; or revoke the parole order. In essence, it is an all-or-nothing system which provides the Chairperson of the Parole Board with few options for constructive intervention.

The current process does not provide the level of support, accountability and structure that some parolees require to successfully complete their order and reintegrate into the community. In some instances, the Parole Board may not revoke the order because of the consequence—that is, full restoration of the remaining period of imprisonment—is not proportionate to the breach.

Under the sanctions regime, the parole options and level of offender accountability are increased. The scenario I have just described would follow a very different procedure. For example, the probation and parole officer detects a lower level non-compliance and reports it to the chairperson in writing as soon as possible. The probation and parole officer may have been aware of the violation as a result of compliance surveillance, such as a drug test or the parolee self-reporting an act of non-compliance, knowing the consequences for their action.

The chairperson determines whether the parolee has breached one or more of the conditions of the parole order and imposes a sanction from the predetermined matrix where appropriate. The sanction will depend on the type of breach; whether or not they were honest and self-reported; the level of honesty and personal responsibility taken for the breach when questioned by their probation and parole officer; and the seriousness of the breach.

The chairperson then imposes a corresponding sanction ranging from one to 30 days' imprisonment. When the sanction is served, the parolee will be released and continue with the original parole order. That is, the expiry date remains the same.

The sanctions regime provides the chairperson with more proportionate options to address non-compliance—if you think back to what I explained in the first instance. The sanctions regime encourages parolees to be honest about their acts of non-compliance and to take responsibility for their behaviour. It ensures consequences proportionate to following violations of their parole while continuing to assist people transitioning back into the wider community.

If a parolee has multiple acts of non-compliance in what would be considered a single breach episode, the sanction imposed cannot exceed the duration of the longest individual sanction. This is to ensure, as far as possible, confidence and certainty in the application of sanctions. At the same time, it does not encroach on the chairperson's unfettered power to revoke parole.

As is the case already under the *Parole Act*, a police officer may arrest a parolee and bring them before the Local Court if the officer has a reasonable belief that the parole order has been breached. If the parolee is subject to the sanctions regime, the Local Court may refer the matter to the Chairperson of the Parole Board for determination. In addition, the amendments will allow a parolee to appear before the Local Court without having to be arrested.

It is important to note that the provision for police to arrest remains. However, the amendments are to allow a probation and parole officer to direct a parolee to attend Local Court in order for the warrant of commitment to be issued to give effect to the sanction. This mechanism is currently used under the COMMIT program and early indications demonstrate that offenders usually follow the directions, saving time on administrative processes and police resources. If the parolee fails to attend the court after being directed to do so and is subsequently arrested, the sanction to be imposed will be greater.

This model acknowledges that people make mistakes. They must be held accountable for their choices and behaviour, but it also encourages and provides for honesty and personal responsibility. The model aims at encouraging parolees to make good choices and to take responsibility in the wake of bad choices. It is worth noting that while these legislative amendments can apply to youth offenders, very few youth are subject to parole and the legislative is unlikely to be provided to youth offenders; the primary function of parole is to assist an offender to transition back into the wider community.

The amendments are being designed to ensure that a sanction does not extend the date of a parole order. For example, if an individual has only 12 days left of their parole order and they breach the order in a manner usually resulting in a 14-day sanction being imposed, the chairperson can only impose a sanction of the

remaining 12 days. This means the person must be released into the community on the day their parole order expires, and the amendments have been drafted to ensure a sanction cannot result in the parole order termination date being exceeded.

Under the sanctions regime, the time spent in community and the time served in prison serving a sanction counts toward the completion of the parole order. However, if the parole order is revoked, no credit is given for time served in the community, but the days served in custody under the sanctions regime will count toward the term of imprisonment remaining at the commencement of the parole period.

I am happy to provide explanation through example. An individual is released on parole with 12 months left on their sentence, that is, the duration of the parole order is 12 months. After a few weeks on parole, the person engages in low-level non-compliance, attracting a sanction of 14 days. The sanction is served in custody and the paroled is released to continue with the original parole order. The paroled may be returned to prison to serve other sanctions for non-compliance; however, as long as parole is not revoked, the person is moving toward the expiry date of their parole order, with the supervision and support of Community Corrections.

If the paroled then engages in behaviour that sees the parole order revoked, the prisoner will serve the 12 months outstanding, minus the 14 days they have already served in prison as a sanction. No time is given for time in the community on parole when a parole order is revoked. That is the position currently in the *Parole Act* and there is no intention to alter that.

Parolees currently in the community on parole will not automatically transition to the sanctions regime. However, this legislation does allow for existing parole orders to be amended and for the sanctions regime condition to be added to their order. For this to happen, the paroled must be advised that the condition has been added and be provided a copy of the sanctions matrix before the regime condition can come into effect.

Initially it is expected that there will be an increase in the acts of non-compliance reported to the chairperson under the sanctions regime as probation and parole officers will be required to report all breaches that attract a sanction under the matrix. However, with the swift, fair and certain nature of the sanctions regime, it is anticipated paroled will change their behaviour and make better, more informed choices and reduce the number of breaches.

These amendments are important in that they provide the opportunity for paroled to take responsibility for their behaviour, bringing about lasting behavioural changes that will hopefully see a reduction in reoffending and incarceration.

The government is committed to reducing incarceration and reoffending. It is vital that we break the cycle of reoffending so we can have safe, vibrant communities. I point out that these amendments directly target individuals who are already involved with our justice and corrections systems. This initiative will encourage eligible prisoners to apply for parole and better ensure that paroled are held accountable for their decisions while being supported in their transition into community. This will occur on a case-by-case basis, with a working relationship between the paroled and their probation and parole officer.

This government is committed to addressing not only the consequences of offending behaviour, but the causes. It is only in this way that we will make long-term changes. We have already announced record investment in children, especially in the first few years of their lives, to ensure that parents and children are supported to live healthy lives. We know the benefits of early support can last a lifetime. We are investing in housing to address a number of concerns related to overcrowding and the flow-on effects, particularly in remote communities.

We are investing in health education. Only last week the government very proudly passed legislation so the Banned Drinker Register will be put in place from 1 September to reduce the supply of alcohol to problem drinkers. We know that so many incarcerated people would point to alcohol as being a factor in why they are in prison.

I will also take a minute to refer to some of the other initiatives that will work in conjunction with these amendments to encourage individuals to successfully complete their parole orders. The whole-of-government justice reform framework will break down the information silos that currently exist and better equip all departments to work together to address key issues that influence our justice system in the Northern Territory. This is particularly important here where we have a significant proportion of our population that resides in remote areas with very limited access to facilities and services, yet have the same, and often additional, needs as those living in urban centres.

I was very proud to recently launch the Aboriginal Justice Unit that is already consulting with Aboriginal communities across the Territory on a range of issues, such as how we can build trust in our justice system, lower the extremely unacceptably high rates of Indigenous incarceration and examine ways of increasing local decision-making to communities. These are all measures that will play an important role in reducing incarceration and reoffending rates in the Northern Territory.

We want to make sure we do all we can to keep the community safe. We know that for many prisoners parole is deemed too hard and they choose not to apply. This means they are released into the community without the support of Community Corrections and often without the appropriate measures in place to assist them with their transition back into the community. For many who are used to the structure and routine of prison, when they are released into the broader community without a supportive and certain plan for reintegration they return to prison, not due to further offending but for a breach of their order.

Currently the parole system in the Northern Territory is underused and lacks the mechanisms necessary to help parolees reintegrate into the community. By adding the sanctions regime to a person's parole order, they will be provided with additional guidelines to help them stay on track, and for those who make mistakes—which is the reality for most people according to the statistics—there will be certainty of consequences. This, over time, will develop a parolee's ability to make informed decisions and encourage compliance, honesty and open communication with their probation and parole officer, while affording them the opportunity to reconnect with family and make a positive contribution to society.

These amendments do not change who is eligible for parole, nor the ability of candidates. They simply provide an extra condition that can be added to a parole order, where appropriate, that supports the parolee and maintains community safety.

The Parole Amendment Bill directly targets our commitment to reduce the high rates of incarceration and reoffending. The vast majority of people who commit crimes are eventually released back into the community. To provide the safe and vibrant communities that all Territorians want and deserve, we have to break the cycle of reoffending.

I acknowledge the staff from legal policy, Community Corrections and the Department of the Attorney-General and Justice, who have worked tirelessly on this legislation, as well as the Office of Parliamentary Counsel for drafting this bill.

I thank His Honour Justice Southwood, the Chairperson of the Parole Board, for his contributions to these amendments. The program will be closely monitored and evaluated over the coming years and I look forward to sharing this information with the House.

I thank everyone for the time they have taken to speak on this bill. We provided a number of briefings to government, Independent and opposition members. I appreciate everyone's contribution to the debate and I commend the bill to the Assembly.

Motion agreed to; bill read a second time.

Ms FYLES (Attorney-General and Justice) (by leave): Mr Deputy Speaker, I move that the bill be read a third time.

Motion agreed to; bill read a third time.

**PAPERS TABLED
Travel Report – Member for Daly**

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable Members, I table the travel report from the Member for Daly.

Ombudsman NT Investigation Report, Women in Prison II – Alice Springs Women's Correctional Facility

Mr GUNNER (Chief Minister): Mr Deputy Speaker, I table the Ombudsman NT Investigation Report, Women in Prison II – Alice Springs Women's Correctional Facility.

I have today tabled a report by the Ombudsman of the Northern Territory, Mr Peter Shoyer, following an own motion investigation into the conditions at the women's correctional facility, Alice Springs Correctional Centre, which commenced in December 2015.

The report is in two volumes. Volume one of the report considers the environment and socioeconomic issues that present the conditions that lead women to commit offences, as well as highlighting this as a growing problem for the Territory and Australia as a whole. It outlines the current situation and discusses the need to change, including the need to differentiate services for women, and highlights national and international standards that should provide the foundation for this reform.

Volume two discusses the specific issues raised through the investigation and relates these to the national and international standards as a way of background and supporting information. The report includes nine broad recommendations relating to:

1. A whole-of-government approach to reduce offending and recidivism and to promote rehabilitation
2. Local approaches to crime prevention and community safety in disadvantaged communities
3. Rehabilitation and reintegration as the primary focus of the correctional system
4. The different needs of women compared with men in correctional facilities that require targeted policy and programmatic responses
5. Further development of non-custodial options for dealing with female offenders
6. A reconsidered approach to the custody of women with emphasis on decentralisation, community and family support
7. The development of a detailed plan to address the recommendations
8. The provision of a copy of this plan and the regular monitoring of its progress
9. A requirement for consultation on the recommendations with Indigenous communities and elders.

The recommendations of the report align strongly with the government's policy in relation to reforming the justice system in order to reduce unacceptably high Aboriginal incarceration and recidivism rates and increased focus upon rehabilitation. The whole-of-government justice reform framework the Attorney-General announced on 19 October 2016 is already under development and will address in particular recommendation one, which relates to the need to adopt a whole-of-government approach to the reduction of offending and recidivism.

The framework will set out principles, values and reform goals which will underpin the work needing to be done in the justice area, including improving the justice environment for women in prison, with the ultimate objective being a safer community through reduced offending. It is important to understand the response to this report and other related recent reports, including the anticipated report of the Royal Commission into youth detention and child protection, are integrally connected and therefore require coordinated whole-of-government action. For this reason the justice reform framework will be finalised after the report of the Royal Commission into youth detention and child protection is received.

A further key piece of work being developed alongside the justice reform framework is the Aboriginal Justice Agreement. This innovative project, which will deliver practical justice outcomes and partnerships between Aboriginal Territorians and government, is a key policy and implementation platform. The Aboriginal Justice Agreement will focus on what communities want. Consultations for the agreement are under way and will continue for the next 12 months.

Addressing the needs for Aboriginal women in prison is part of the work of the Aboriginal Justice Agreement and is particularly relevant to recommendation two, which addresses local approaches to crime prevention and community safety. The government has already commenced implementation with a local decision-making agenda, a commitment that also supports recommendation two. We are working with local communities, police, Housing, Health, Education, Attorney-General and Justice and other agencies to work out ways in which communities can be supported to make decisions in these areas which will work for their specific community.

The Aboriginal Justice Agreement is facilitating the conversation for communities about how law and justice matters might be impacted at a local level. Correctional Services have already started work on a number of the broad things which are commented on in earlier reports, including a safer Northern Territory through correctional interventions, known as the Hamburger Report and the Commonwealth Prison to Work Report.

The Correctional Services purpose and direction strategy provides the strategic directions and core foundation for change at the operational level. Planning undertaken as part of the continuous improvement program has already highlighted areas that will specifically target women's needs, women's rehabilitation programs, women's reintegration services and the differing needs of women in prison compared to men.

The work is particularly relevant to recommendations three and four of the Ombudsman's report. Northern Territory Correctional Services is making considerable progress towards operational reform agenda. Of particular note is work under way in the new through-care framework, which aims to enable a case management approach in relation to each individual, ensuring an individualised approach tailored to specific criminogenic risks and rehabilitation needs. This work builds on the existing sentence management and through-care framework and is an exciting development which will fundamentally shift our approach to reintegration and rehabilitation.

In line with developments and through-care, a specific approach to address the needs of women in prison is being addressed through a management of female offender's reform program. This will be a change management program which will develop the plan to implement the recommendations of the Ombudsman report.

Working groups have already been established, including management level and consultative forums. Consultative forums engage women in prison to jointly problem-solve and get a firsthand understanding of issues facing women in custody.

Elders from the Elders Visiting Program and non-government service providers such as the YWCA, which provides the Women of Worth program in Darwin, also provide crucial information and feedback. Although it is essential that we address the needs of women in prison, it is fundamentally clear that unless we have alternative non-custodial approaches, and unless we work sooner with young people and adults at risk of entering the justice system, the unacceptably high levels of female and male incarceration in the Territory will not be reduced.

The Department of the Attorney-General and Justice is, as part of the consultation for the Aboriginal Justice Agreement, working on the alternatives to prison. This work responds to recommendations five and six of the Ombudsman's report. Matters to be considered include whether legislation should be reformed to broaden the range of available sentencing options and what is a possible way of diversion restorative justice approaches.

Communities will be consulted upon whether there should be non-custodial rehabilitation centres upon their land managed by community, and if so, how they will be set up and run. Consistent with decisions being made locally, one size will not fit all and centres in other areas may run differently. We are hoping to partner with the Commonwealth and local communities to run pilot programs in the next 12 months to build the evidence base so we can invest in solutions that work into the future.

Recommendations seven and eight refer to the development of a detailed plan to address the recommendations with robust arrangements and regular monitoring of its progress. The issue which the Ombudsman identifies—overcrowding, housing, education, rehabilitation programs, employment, healthcare, basic amenity, underlying supports, and children and prison—are all priority areas.

We look forward to working with the Ombudsman's office on the development and presentation of this plan—it should be key to making significant change for women in custody in the Territory. However, as I have already said, deep and lasting change will depend upon us all working together to address the issues which we know need attention in our justice system.

Last, but by no means least, the Ombudsman has pointed out that due to the shocking overrepresentation of Aboriginal women in prison it is necessary to consult with Aboriginal women, communities and elders in developing plans in these areas. The government has demonstrated that we are committed to this consultation. It is not only the right thing to do, it is the smart thing to do.

As I have already stated, the Elders Visiting Program in corrections and the community-level consultation with the Aboriginal Justice Agreement are part of that engagement. But they are not the only part. We look forward to working with APONT, Aboriginal Legal Services and medical services, land councils, Aboriginal organisations and individuals at all levels in order to progress is vital work. In order to succeed we must work together.

I am pleased to report to the Assembly that addressing this report's recommendations will be included in the work this government is already undertaking on justice reform. I have outlined a number of activities and projects are already under way as part of that reform. This work will ensure that ongoing statements to justice and Correctional Services meet the specific needs of women who unfortunately come into contact with our justice system so that our services support their rehabilitation and effective reintegration back to the communities where they belong.

Debate adjourned.

Remuneration Tribunal Report and Determination No 1 of 2017
Entitlements of Assembly Members

Mr GUNNER (Chief Minister): Mr Deputy Speaker, I table the Remuneration Tribunal Report and Determination No 1 of 2017, Entitlements of Assembly Members.

By 31 July each year the independent remuneration tribunal is required to conduct an inquiry and issue a report and determination on the entitlements of Assembly members. The remuneration tribunal has now conducted its annual inquiry and provided me its report and determination which, subject to a 10-sitting-day disallowance period, will take effect on 1 January 2018.

Members have been provided with a copy of the determination and I now outline the key aspects of the Remuneration Tribunal Determination No 1 of 2017.

These include the following:

- Basic salary: a 2% increase to the basic salary of Assembly members, providing a salary of \$159 506 effective from 1 January 2018.
- Travel entitlement: the basic allowance for professional development has now been abolished. The electorate allowance will be increased to allow members to undertake professional development and travel at their discretion.
- Electorate allowance: Assembly members are entitled to an electorate allowance at the annual rate specified in the determination. This allowance covers expenses arising during the servicing of their electorate. In addition to other expenses outlined in the determination, the electorate allowance will now also cover the cost of airport car parking, membership of airline lounges, costs associated with Wi-Fi in committee meeting rooms and interpreter services.

Through the basic allowance, travel entitlement has been abolished. The electorate allowance will be increased by \$10 000 per annum. I am happy to report that this is a reduction in the total liability of the Territory for Assembly members' entitlements.

In order to recognise the redistribution of Milingimbi from the Arafura electorate to the Nhulunbuy electorate in the last redrawing of electorate boundaries, the electorate allowance for Arafura has been decreased by \$5000, and the electorate allowance for Nhulunbuy has been increased by \$5000.

The current NT parliament comprises 18 government members, two opposition members and five Independent members. The current allowance of 30 intrastate trips a year for shadow ministers has been reduced to 20 trips a year. The remaining 10 trips will be allocated to the five Independent members, who will receive two intrastate trips a year and access to six nights of travel allowance each year.

This additional travel entitlement for Independent members recognises the unique membership of this parliament and is only available until the proroguing of the current parliament. Members will refer to the determination for full details of all their entitlements and allowances.

Travel allowance rates for office holders and Assembly members are based on rates determined by the Australia Taxation Office and appear to be reasonable, except for the rate of travel allowance that applies to office holders who will stay in their own accommodation or in accommodation in a long-term rental arrangement. The travel allowance rate of \$350 a day was set in 2013, when rentals were extremely high in Darwin. Now that rental prices have reduced, the tribunal has reviewed this rate and reduced it to \$300 per day.

The provision relating to ownership and renting has been tightened to ensure accountability and transparency. The travel allowance rate for office holders and Assembly members who stay in private accommodation has been increased from one-third of the daily rate to 40% of the daily rate because the former amount was less than the amount for meals and incidentals.

The liability of the government for travel expenses is significantly less for members who stay in accommodation they own or rent or who stay in non-commercial accommodation.

The tribunal also considered the adequacy of staffing levels in non-urban electorates. Currently the electorates of Arafura, Arnhem, Barkly and Daly are entitled to a liaison officer for 15 hours a week away from the electorate office. The liaison officer position for those electorates will now be full-time positions, with no allowance for the 104 hours per quarter electorate officer assistance and no allocation of personnel for relief purposes.

Some Assembly members may become mothers during their parliamentary career, which is fantastic. The tribunal has considered how best to assist members during their child's first year, especially when the member is required to travel and young infants are being breastfed. For Assembly members who are mothers of a small child up to 12 months old and are travelling, this child, pursuant to this determination, may be accompanied by a spouse, nominee or designated person during the travel, and the accompanying person's travel costs will be paid at the same class as the member.

Members are also entitled to claim reimbursement for childcare services outside standard business hours when the Assembly is meeting, or when the member is working or attending an event associated with their duties. An upper limit of \$5000 can be claimed per year.

Members who were first elected in 2005 or later and who are not entitled to receive a pension or superannuation benefit are entitled to the equivalent of one month's salary for each year served in the Assembly, subject to a minimum entitlement of four months' basic salary and a maximum entitlement of 12 months' basic salary. This affects 23 of the 25 members.

This allowance, however, does not apply to Assembly members who retire from office to be a candidate for another seat in the Assembly or Australia Parliament and are elected into that seat. In addition it does not apply to Assembly members who vacate office due to disqualifications outlined in the *Northern Territory (Self-Government) Act*, section 21(1)(c).

I thank the tribunal members, Mr Michael Martin and Mr John Flynn, for their work on this inquiry and the determination. Of significant note is that John Flynn tendered his resignation for the Remuneration Tribunal this week. Mr Flynn has been a member of the independent Remuneration Tribunal since 11 December 2007.

I take this opportunity to publicly express my appreciation of Mr Flynn for his tireless efforts in taking inquiries into the entitlements of key NT office holders over the past 10 years, and I wish him all the best with his endeavours in his life outside the RTD. On behalf of parliament, which he has served for a very long time, we recognise that outside the RTD and other issues—because he is a long-term Territorian, he has worked on many things beside the RTD—he is someone who has genuinely worked in the best interests of the Territory, and we wish him well.

Madam Acting Deputy Speaker, I move that the Assembly take note of the report.

Debate adjourned.

ADJOURNMENT

Ms FYLES (Leader of Government Business): Madam Acting Deputy Speaker, I move that the Assembly do now adjourn.

Mr GUNNER (Fannie Bay): Madam Acting Deputy Speaker, I rise tonight to inform the House of a significant feature film to be produced in the Northern Territory next year, *The Line*. It is story of epic achievement and intimate tragedy set in Central Australia in the 1870s and based on the laying of Charles Todd's overland telegraph line from Adelaide to Darwin. The OT Line, as it is known, in the 1870s was the equivalent of space travel or the internet in our time, but ultimately led to the almost total decimation of a timeless culture.

The Line is a production from same team that brought *Last Cab to Darwin* such domestic and international success. The director and screenplay writer is Jeremy Sims and the producer is Greg Duffy. The film is set

in 1870 when John Dunraven, a surveyor and enlightened thinker, was a section leader of Todd's construction team. He led a motley crew of workers charged with the building of Barrow Creek Repeater Station.

Beset with hardship and terrified of the local Kaytetye people, Dunraven's men turn against him in favour of Muska, his embittered, racist and violent second-in-command. To prove his mettle, Dunraven rides ahead to plot a new course for the line, avoiding the Kaytetye sacred spring, but disaster leaves him in the care of the Kaytetye. Whilst with them, he gains a new perspective in the love of a Kaytetye woman, Prue. Dunraven returns a changed man and soon finds himself in a desperate and ultimately tragic battle to save the Kaytetye from the destructive power of the modern world he formerly worshipped.

The Line will be an official Australia and United Kingdom co-production, with investment from both countries and an international cast. The budget is anticipated to be between \$10m to \$15m, with production spent in the NT at around \$6m to \$7m. Spectacular locations around Barrow Creek, Alice Springs and the Western Macs will feature a production office located in Alice Springs for approximately six months. The total production crew will consist of between 100 and 150 people with a cast of more than 30, including Kaytetye locals. Local Alice Springs businesses will be utilised for crew employment, services and facilities, food, accommodation and entertainment.

The proposed pre-production shoot and post-production is between March and November 2018. At present, script consultation is being finalised with the Kaytetye people resident at Ali Curung, Tara and Neutral Junction. Preliminary responses regarding the script from the Kaytetye are very positive. I am informed that the Kaytetye are treating this film very seriously and look forward to their further involvement in it. For that, I congratulate them and look forward to seeing them on the big screen.

We are all aware of the stunning potential of the Territory landscape for the big screen, as everyone equally knows beneath every rock and blade of spinifex lies a great Territory story. I am confident The Line like Charles Chauvel's Jedda, Stephen Johnson's Yolngu Boy, Rolf Deheer's Ten Canoes, Baz Luhrmann's Australia, and others before, will confirm the beauty and fascination of the Territory, its locales and our history. I wish the producers who have invested in The Line all the best and, knowing their track record with the excellent Last Cab to Darwin, I am sure it will be a stunning success.

I recount the astounding successes of Australian football development in North East Arnhem Land. The sports minister and I have spoken many times in this House about our government's commitment to grow the participation of women and girls in sport. Our belief in the Territory Crows women's team was matched by an investment of \$400 000, double what the previous government was willing to invest.

Our commitment was matched by the wholehearted support provided to the Crows by the entire NT sporting community. The Crows' historic grand final victory could not have been achieved without the tremendous efforts of the Territory contingent, and these great role models have served Top End and Centralian women athletes well.

A new generation of women AFL players have risen to follow in the footsteps of their sisters from Darwin and Alice Springs. I speak of North East Arnhem Land, where a new women's football competition has begun in the Geelong Cats next generation academy zone, centred in Nhulunbuy.

The four-team Gove AFL women's league began in mid-June, with an historic match played at the Yirrkala Oval between Djarrak and Gopu football clubs. Djarrak won the game, but in truth football, and particularly women's football, was the winner. The Nhulunbuy Saints and Nguykal football clubs are the other teams participating in the inaugural women's competition, which consists of a 12 game season culminating in grand final day on 23 September this year.

This great new footy development could not have occurred without the ardent support of the Geelong Football Club and AFL NT. I acknowledge the hard work of AFL NT's Remote Development Manager, Nick O'Reilly, who is committed to football in the region and thereby creating positive community outcomes for all.

The Gove football league is thriving with not only the implementation of a women's league, but under-16 boys' and girls' leagues as well. These junior footballers represent six communities across the region. The junior competitions are run in conjunction with the redoubtable Clontarf Foundation, which continues the good work they have done in the Territory over many years.

The Geelong Cats next generation academy is offered to 40 boys and girls every Tuesday afternoon. The academy, designed by Paul Hood from the Cats, works to encourage school attendance and healthy living, as well as to develop the football skills of participants.

The principals of the Australian Football League national executive may attend this year's grand final day to witness the senior men, senior women and both under 16 grand finals. They will undoubtedly see some outstanding football played hard and fast, but fair, in the best tradition of Territory football.

Two weeks after grand final day, six teams in each division from six different east Arnhem communities, including Groote Eylandt, will compete in the Chief Minister's cup carnival over one weekend in Nhulunbuy and Yirrkala. Representative teams will be selected from the carnival to play against Darwin junior teams in November for the Michael Long cup.

Players identified as talented, five boys and five girls, will then be selected to participate in a week long intensive training camp conducted by the Geelong football club at the famous Cardinia Park. The Cats are hoping some outstanding football talent, both male and female, will follow in the footsteps of Yirrkala local Nathan Djerrkura, who represented Geelong under the coaching of Bomber Thompson.

I look forward to informing this House about the next North East Arnhem Lander to wear the famous hoops of the powerful Geelong football club. I congratulate Geelong, AFL NT, other AFL clubs working in the Territory like Essendon in the Tiwi Islands and Wadeye, Hawthorn in Katherine, Collingwood in Barkly and, of course, the Melbourne Demons, who have a long standing commitment to grow Territory footy, especially in Central Australia.

The funding provided to remote footy projects by organisations and companies like GB on Groote; Rio Tinto and Rirratjingu Aboriginal Corporation in Nhulunbuy; (inaudible) at Lajamanu; the Tiwi Islands Regional Council; (inaudible) at Ntaria; and Malabam Health Board at Maningrida, complement that provided by the Australian and Northern Territory Governments, and make remote and regional football a reality.

The AFL's, the above clubs', organisations' and companies' investment in Australian football is welcome and will be repaid many times over. I am confident of that. I know this to be true because, to paraphrase the words of the Geelong football club's song, 'We in the NT play the game as it should be played at home, or far away'. Thank you.

Ms FYLES (Nightcliff): Madam Acting Deputy Speaker, I was delighted to launch the Northern Territory's Donate Life week at the Royal Darwin Show on Saturday 29 July. On display at the show was a Darwin bus wrapped in Donate Life advertising, and I was joined by DonateLife NT state medical director, Dr Sarah Jones. It was a pleasure to talk to her and some of the transplant recipients and donor families.

DonateLife NT is located within the NT Department of Health and is part of the national network of Donate Life agencies that coordinate organ and tissue donation, support donor families and raise community awareness about donation.

There are approximately 1400 Australians currently on transplant waiting lists, and a further 12 000 people on dialysis, many of whom we know, sadly, are Territorians. One organ and tissue donor can save and/or improve the lives of 10 or more people. Organs like heart, lungs, liver, pancreas and intestines can be donated. Tissue such as heart tissue, skin tissue, eye tissue, tendons and bone can be donated as well.

Organ donation is rare. Only 1% to 2% of people that pass away in circumstances that allow them to become organ donors, do so. We need to optimise every donation and the opportunity to save more lives. Organ donation rates have been increasing in the Northern Territory. In 2016, six Territory donors saved or transformed the lives of 18 Australians. We exceeded the national donor rate target but we know we can all do better with organ donor registration.

I encourage all Territorians to register as organ donors, something I did at the Royal Darwin Show. It is very simple. You can go online or fill in a form. With the new registration process it is now faster and easier to register your donation decision on the Australian Organ Donor Register. It can be done electronically on your phone, tablet or computer at the Donate Life website using your Medicare card.

It is interesting as your registration status is not listed on your driver's licence. It is important that everyone understands the need to register for donation. This is important because it leaves your family in no doubt of your decision to save lives as an organ and tissue donor. It is vital that you discuss your decision with family and friends and encourage others to register, as I have done.

Half of Northern Territory residents are willing to donate their organs and tissues but only approximately 12% have registered on the Australian Organ Donor Register. This is the lowest registration rate in Australia. It would be great if we could turn this around. Registration counts, with nine out of 10 families agreeing to donation proceeding when their loved one is a registered donor.

Donate Life has produced educational resources for Aboriginal Territorians, including the brain story and the organ donation story—a DVD featuring Aboriginal transplant recipients. These resources have been very popular in the Territory and across Australia.

I am very fortunate that families I know have shared their very personal and intimate stories. I know the story of a family whose father passed away suddenly and unexpectedly, but they made the decision to donate his organs. As hard as it was for them—and you can see the pain and impact of losing that person every time you speak with them—they derive joy from knowing that person's life made a difference. I also have a very close friend whose brother received a heart transplant three or four years ago. He had a wife and two small children at the time.

It is a difficult conversation but I encourage people to have it. I have made it clear to my family that I am very keen, if possible in the circumstances. I can provide that to other people. I encourage Territorians to have the conversation, particularly Aboriginal Territorians. It can make a difference.

I encourage everyone to head to the website, talk about it and think about it. If they need additional resources, contact the hard-working team. I acknowledge the hard-working team, not only from Donate Life, but also the nurses at the hospital and those staff who work with families when they make this decision.

In early August, I had the pleasure of visiting a number of our Darwin-based non-government disability service providers. Assistant minister for disabilities, the Member for Karama, joined me for the morning, and we met with providers and learned about their progress in transitioning to the National Disability Insurance Scheme.

As the Minister for Health, I acknowledge the hard work and dedication of our NGO sector. On a daily basis, we see the amazing and tireless work of improving the lives of people with a disability, their families and carers.

The transition to the NDIS represents the largest social reform process in our nation's history since the introduction of Medicare. Its success will largely be attributed to the dedication of our NGOs working closely with the Northern Territory Government and the National Disability Insurance Agency to support a smooth transition.

We had the opportunity of visiting Life Without Barriers where we met with the Northern Territory director, Carlie McWilliams and her team of Florence Henaway and Sarah Thurgood. Life Without Barriers is a national organisation which has 24-hour supported accommodation services in Darwin, Katherine, Tennant Creek and Alice Springs. They are well on the way to transitioning to the NDIS.

Mr Paech: Hear, hear!

Ms FYLES: I pick up on the Member for Namatjira. He engages with NGOs in his community.

We met with Anglicare and had a good look at its facilities. They are participating in the transition to the NDIS with clients in East Arnhem and Katherine and accompanying NDIA director coordinators on planning visits throughout East Arnhem, linking local services, such as Miwatj Health, to ensure participants receive the appropriate services.

We also had the opportunity to visit TCSS, Territory Care and Support Services, and I thank Sharm Bali who is the director and Steve. It was a wonderful visit outside. The resident dog joined us. Rhonda Dunn, who is a consumer representative, was there and is as parent of one of TCSS's clients and a member of my electorate. We heard firsthand from Rhonda about the high-quality services TCSS provides to her daughter which is very reassuring to those Territorians who may need that support.

We also visited Carpentaria Disability Services and met Annie Riley, the new CEO. The Henbury Avenue site, as many of us are aware, is a hive of activity with the development of a new service hub. This will enable services to come together to provide easy access for a shared client base as well as sharing infrastructure such as meeting rooms and common areas, reducing overheads and the cost of service provision.

It was wonderful to have a flyover presentation of what the hub will look like when it is complete. I encourage everyone to make sure they are up to date on the changes there. Carpentaria has transitioned 13 of its houses in Darwin to the NDIS, so it is very well aware of the body of work.

It was a pleasure to have the Member for Namatjira join me yesterday to launch the Northern Territory Disability Service Awards. These awards formally recognise and acknowledge the commitment of organisations, businesses, non-government and government services that demonstrate outstanding commitment to improving the lives of people with a disability. I urge every member to get behind the awards. If you know of someone who deserves recognition for the work they do, then please nominate them. Nominations are open until 29 September, so there is plenty of time to put in a nomination.

I look forward to continuing this collaborative relationship with our disability service providers as they progress and transition to the NDIS. It was a very rewarding day visiting the services and hearing of the support they provide to people with a disability—Territorians who need that support and the NGOs.

I encourage all members to get behind the Disability Service awards, share it on your social media pages, put it in your community newsletters, and we can have booklets delivered to electorate offices if people contact my office. It was very exciting to launch those awards and I look forward to acknowledging the hard work of many Territorians.

Mr VOWLES (Johnston): Madam Acting Deputy Speaker, some things go beyond politics, factions and political parties. I speak about the Pink Stumps Day in February. It was a fantastic fundraising day held by the CFMEU NT social club and organised by the Pink Stumps subcommittee, which consists of members from the MUA, AMWU, ETU and CFMEU.

Many of you would know that former Australian fast bowling legend Glenn McGrath's wife, Jane, was a victim of breast cancer. The McGrath Foundation is the foundation she and Glenn set up before her passing.

Pink Stumps Day is an initiative of the McGrath Foundation to raise money, provide enhanced services and assistance to breast cancer sufferers as well as the families and carers of breast cancer sufferers. The intent is to establish and place care nurses in communities around Australia.

I thank the McGrath Foundation nurses at Royal Darwin Hospital for looking after someone very dear to me, on behalf of my family. The nurses are amazing people and they do a fantastic job, so I will always support things that support them.

All that is required to hold a Pink Stumps event is to register, pledge a fundraising goal, get together a couple of teams, make the field pink and have a game of cricket. Once you pledge a fundraising target, the McGrath Foundation will provide a Pink Stumps Day kit.

To make the day a success, it is important to get the word out and encourage as many people to participate as possible. The MUA, AMWU, ETU and CFMEU did a brilliant job of this through their memberships. The purpose of the day was to raise money for the McGrath breast cancer nurses to aid them in the wonderful care, companionship and general support they give women undergoing treatment for breast cancer. Breast cancer nurses assist women in their greatest time of need and support. This is what makes this such a wonderful cause.

The CFMEU social club and the Pink Stumps subcommittee did not muck around. They set an ambitious fundraising goal of \$50 000. The day consisted of teams in the four participating unions competing against each other in a social tournament held at Howard Park, and a fundraising dinner afterwards at the Virginia Tavern. The entry fee for each participating union was \$3000. The cricket was played in good spirits and all participants had a good time; the AMW took out the prize of the day. I also note the Member for Nelson popped down to check out the fun and made the Nelson Notes, his electorate newsletter.

The dinner at the Virginia Tavern which I attended, as well as the Member for Fong Lim and the Member for Drysdale, raised a lot of money for the McGrath Foundation with raffles and auctions as well as the money made through ticket sales. The draw cards for the night were former AFL player and Hawks legend Robert DiPierdomenico, and champion jockey Peter Hutchinson. Both guest speakers provided very colourful entertainment on the night.

The day was a raging success. Congratulations to all those who participated, especially those who made this great day happen. They are, from the (inaudible) Social Club Committee, Mick Hardy, Blake Cornell, Dave Banes, Rod Promnich, Dean Matis and Craig Tate; from the Pink Stumps subcommittee from AMW, Justin

Craig, Simon Wells, Lloyd Pumper and Terry McConnell; from MUA, Thomas May and Brett Melsner; from ETU, Dave Strawbhayes and Daniel Burns.

What is best about the Pink Stumps Day event is the organisers reached their target of \$50 000. This is a phenomenal amount of money and such an effort for such a wonderful cause. Getting involved in charity and helping where you can is bigger than any form of politics; it is simply about being a good person and supporting causes that mean something to you.

Mr PAECH (Namatjira): Madam Acting Deputy Speaker, I take tonight's opportunity to speak on local government as we are heading to the polls on the weekend. I use this opportunity to place on record the support and acknowledgement of local government, particularly in the electorate of Namatjira, which is home to the Alice Springs town council, the MacDonnell Regional Council, the Central Desert Regional Council and a small part of the Barkly Regional Council.

Decisions made in local government do not filter down from a house on a hill or the House on the port in Darwin. They are meetings that are held in local halls and committee rooms right across the outback in the Northern Territory. It is important to raise that tonight and speak on that particular issue.

Local government elected members or councillors in the Territory and alderman in Darwin are often the elected members you know and interact with; you do not see their face on television and so forth. They are usually your neighbour or the local member you see at the community events and town hall when you are having a meeting. They are the front line people for delivering services in regional and remote parts of the Northern Territory and in out municipal towns.

In regional and remote communities local government is a solid employer that provides a lot of local jobs. Every day, in a hundred different ways, local governments build on our civil communities and towns and put the life and energy into our remote communities and towns. They keep our streets clean and looking vibrant and renewed; look after the communities when natural disasters occur in the bush, such as flood events and so forth; run classes in the halls; look after schools, gardens and maintain ovals and so forth.

None of this is easy work and it is usually not high profiled work; it is not flashy or attention-grabbing and yet people are committed to making sure they are a strong voice. I take this opportunity to thank them for their hard work and dedication; it has been noted and many people across the Northern Territory every day are thankful for those services.

I want to name the members of my elected councils in the electorate of Namatjira, for the MacDonnell Regional Council. I extend a great thanks and appreciation to the outgoing president, Roxanne Kenny, Braydon Williams, Barry Abbott, Lance Abbott, Marlene Abbott, Sid Anderson, Louise Cavanagh, Richard Doolan, Jacob Hoosan, Selina Kulitja, Irene Nangala and Greg Sharman. From the Barkly Regional Council, I thank Ada Beasley, Noel Hayes, Lucy Jackson and Tim Price. The elected members for the Central Desert Region in the electorate of Namatjira are Sandra Peckham, Elizabeth Bird, also known as Liz Bird, Benedy Bird and Malene Tilmouth.

I acknowledge their hard work and dedication over the last term of local government. It has been an extended term in excess of five years. That is a long time on local government and I thank them all for their tireless work and community service to the people in the bush. It has been a fantastic opportunity. I know many of those people I have just named and thank them for their warm welcomes every time I visit a local community, for pulling together and being sometimes the strong advocate and voice to the Territory and federal governments to make sure the local voice of the community is heard.

Those elected members also attend the regional authority meetings and are able to talk to every community across the Northern Territory that has local authorities to make sure the views and aspirations of people are represented. I wish them all the very best. For those who have decided their time has come and they do not wish to run, once again thank you sincerely for your hard work, commitment and dedication. It will be greatly missed.

For those who have nominated and are running again in the local government elections, I look forward to working with the incoming councils. There are many good conversations to be held and agenda items we can discuss to make sure we continue to empower local government and listen to the local councillors and their presidents. I particularly thank Barb Shaw of the Barkly Regional Council. She is not contesting at this election. Barb has been a fierce advocate for the people of Barkly. She will be greatly missed. I thank her for her service.

I also take the opportunity to thank members of the Alice Springs Town Council—which I have had the privilege of serving on for the last four years before coming into this Assembly—for their commitment and work to the people of Alice Springs. I particularly highlight and thank Councillor Jade Kudrenko, who is not contesting at this election, for her solid commitment to the people of Alice Springs, always being a voice of reason and a strong progressive voice on the Alice Springs Town Council.

I also extend thanks and acknowledge the hard work of the Mayor, Damien Ryan, the Deputy Mayor, Jamie de Brenni, Councillor Jacinta Price, Councillor Dave Douglas, Councillor Steve Brown, Councillor Eli Melky. Obviously I cannot thank me because I am not there anymore. I extend a thank you to them. It is hard in local government because being a councillor is not a full-time job. There is a fine work/life balance that needs to be achieved. They have all done an exceptional job doing that.

Whether you are in a municipal or regional council, it has been a fantastic few years. I am very optimistic and looking forward to working with the incoming councillors on the Alice Springs Town Council, the MacDonnell Regional Council, the Central Desert Regional Council and the Barkly Regional Council. I wish them all the very best.

Ms UIBO (Arnhem): Madam Acting Deputy Speaker, I pay acknowledgement to three wonderful women who have supported me over the last 12 months. It is an ode to my electoral offices. I would like to—particularly because there is the electoral officer forum happening in Parliament House this week—talk about some of these special women and the ways they have supported my journey over the last 12 months, transitioning into the role as Member for Arnhem.

I have my electoral officer, Brooke Brenner, who is based in Katherine; my electoral officer liaison, Cara Burgoyne, who is based on Groote Eylandt; and also my electoral officer assistant, Ms Helen Lee, who lives in Barunga and works in Katherine.

Firstly to Brooke, her organisation, patience, foresight and planning. It has been wonderful to have Brooke come on board and support me as the full-time electoral officer based in the Katherine office, particularly her being a single mum with her lovely son, Cash, who is three years old. He will be turning four years old next month. Cash regularly comes to events and helps us working the electorate. He has his own work camping chair, which he brings out when we have a stall. He is very good at walking around, handing out some of our electoral paraphernalia, which people cannot say no to because he is a gorgeous little boy. It is great to have some youth at our stand, but also for Cash to see the work his mum does; it is wonderful.

I said to Brooke when we travelled out for her first community visit, having a child is not a deficit when in remote communities, it is actually a huge asset and a very good talking point. A lot of people are interested in meeting little Cash when they travel with me. I told Brooke it was really cute when the students at Urapunga first met Brooke and Cash in November last year.

When I travelled out again this year, they quizzed me very sternly asking, ‘Where is that lady and her son?’ I said ‘Who?’ ‘That lady who came with you last time.’ I said, ‘Oh Brooke, the lady in Katherine’, ‘Yeah, where is her little son? What is his name?’ So it is really wonderful that these children and adults in our electorate community recognise Brooke and her son when they travel in the Arnhem electorate. It is wonderful to have that support and also the support of Brooke’s family, who are in Victoria.

This week, to be able to attend the full week of training with the electoral officers, her mother has flown up. I thank Brookes mum as she is looking after little Cash in Darwin while Brooke is doing her full-time training this week. Then her dad will come up to tag-team and then travel out to Jabiru for the Mahbilil Festival this weekend. So poppy will be looking after Cash, while Brooke helps me out at the stall in Jabiru. Thank you again to Brooke’s family for allowing her to be able to partake in the EO Forum this week. She is eager to learn and works extremely hard. It is wonderful for her to have the professional development opportunity this week.

Thank you to Brooke and little Cash for their hard work in supporting me over the last 12 months.

Next, Cara Burgoyne, who is my electoral liaison officer based at Groote. She is a strong Anindilyakwa woman—the daughter of Grant Burgoyne, who many people know and who is a long-time Labor supporter, and her recently passed mother, Miss Ann Lalara.

Cara is a strong, independent woman as well. She is the single mother of five children, Travis, Cassius, Skye, Zavian and Kate. They had often given up bedrooms for me during the campaign period and were able to

squeeze me into their house. That support in the previous year was very special to me and it is wonderful to have Cara working in the Groote, (inaudible) and Numbulwar region of the electorate.

Thank you to Cara, who is also here this week and to (inaudible) Grant, who is looking after the kids over at Groote Eylandt so Cara is able to join in with the Electoral Officer Forum in Darwin for the week. I thank her especially for taking the time away from her children, who are very special and wonderful kids. They are a good laugh when I get to spend time with them at Groote, and I thank them for allowing their mother to go away for the week to join in the professional development in Darwin.

I phoned her yesterday and she really enjoyed her first day at parliament and has been learning a lot. Thank you to Cara for her support in that part of the electorate. I would not have been able to do the campaign without her support and, of course, the rest of the family at Groote.

Lastly, Helen Lee is based in Barunga, 80km south of Katherine. Helen is my electoral office assistant and works with the Member for Stuart as his liaison officer based in the Katherine office. Helen has three children; Antony, David and Huia. She is a fierce, strong lady in her community. I feel privileged to be able to get to know her family and community along the Central Arnhem Road in the wonderful communities of Manyallaluk, Barunga, Beswick and up to Bulman. Helen has a lot of connections in the area and knows a lot of my own family in the Numbulwar side as well.

Helen is running in the local government elections this year and I wish her the best, as well as all the other candidates, especially in the Nyirrunggulung Ward. There are 12 candidates for three positions, and it will be wonderful to see the involvement of the community in voting and who they elect as councillors in the Roper Gulf Regional Councils.

Thank you to Helen who travels an hour every day to Katherine, and another hour back to her community, to support me as my EOA for the Arnhem electorate. I thank her for her knowledge and wisdom, in particular for her family background and stronghold along that Central Arnhem road, for her ongoing support in bush trips and travelling for a couple of days at a time. She has grandchildren and I thank her and her family for giving me the time and support as the Member for Arnhem.

They are three fierce, strong, independent women, and it is a privilege and humbling to have these women supporting me. I thank the women who are here, leaving their families for the week. It is a big deal to be away from your children for four or five days at a time or to have family help you look after them while you are at training all day.

Thank you Brooke Brenner, Cara Burgoine and Helen Lee. I could not do this job without you and I look forward to the next three years with your support. Thank you for trusting, supporting, organising and helping me plan to do my best for the Arnhem electorate. Thank you.

Ms PURICK (Goyder): Madam Acting Deputy Speaker, when I rose last week in adjournment I spoke about poultry and you will be pleased to know I am going to speak about these things again. I am expanding it a little by referencing ducklings, rabbits, guinea pigs, horses and things of that nature.

I thank all the people involved with the Freds Pass Show, in particular the animal nursery I coordinate and organise for the Freds Pass Show, which I have done for about four years now. My mother did it for something like 20 years before me. I am not sure if I am in it for that long, but it is a good, fun time. It does not feel like that when you are setting up, spending hours putting cages together and other things of that nature, but the Freds Pass Show is a wonderful show. It is truly an agricultural show with the real flavour of where the rural and town communities come together. As you know, Madam Acting Deputy Speaker, being the cupcake champion—I tried hard but you were the winner, and well done.

I thank the people who helped me pull together and display the animal nursery, which was very popular. Some people provided animals, some volunteered their time and some did other things to help make it what it was. We took a donation of about \$900. Some of that goes to the Freds Pass Show Society, some goes to the adventurers, who are the young people who helped me organise it.

I place on record my thanks to the people who not only helped me, but who provided animals and items to make the show, and my display, what it was. To Kelly Clark, thank you for Patches, the small pony. He was a big hit. He was well behaved and did not bite anyone. He did get a bit testy because he was locked in a yard for a couple of days, but he went for walks so he was all right. He is a beautiful pony, so thank you Kelly.

Rhonda Macintosh provided me some little ducklings that could be put on display. They were a bit scared and they escaped on the first day, but we managed to round them all up and put them back into their pen so they were pretty safe. Alana Opperman provided and gave me Megs the rabbit, who was beautiful, well behaved, very calm, loved being patted and did not try to escape at all.

Deidre Fitzgerald, some people in the Legislative Assembly may remember her; she was in the HR department here—her beautiful sons Eli and Gabe brought in their thorny devils and things of that nature. They were very shy to start with but by the end of two days they were speaking like professionals about these wonderful pets they have. To Deidre, thank you for allowing your boys to be part of the nursery and thank you to your hubby, Justin Lukidge, for being there to talk about not only their reptiles and their pets, but also snakes and answer questions. They were really wonderful and added to it. For such young fellas, they are a real tribute to their parents. So well done and thank you.

To Roslyn MacMillan, she provided her grandchildren's guinea pigs that were on display. They hid most of the time. I am not surprised why given the number of children that kept tapping on the pen, but thank you, Roslyn, for organising that.

We also had Greg Sinnott and his partner Tania Chin. They provided an incubator and had timed it for the show so the chickens would hatch on the Friday, Saturday or Sunday, which they did. It was brilliant to see people standing around watching these little eggs hatch and—I am not surprised but some members may be surprised, perhaps they are not surprised—the number of people that do not quite realise that a chicken comes out of an egg, but anyway, that is another story that eggs can actually make chickens.

It was fascinating and everyone gathered around to see the egg start to crack, and it would crack a bit more. It was just this mass of people watching this little baby chicken come out of its shell. It was really wonderful. Thank you, Greg and Tania, for timing it to put the eggs in the incubator so they could hatch just for the show; it was really good.

Ann Evans, thank you for coming and helping and also judging the pet section. Jenny and John Crumbeck, thank you for helping man the display. Emily Hubble, who is an equestrian rider and a dressage person in her teens, helped by walking Patches—he got a bit testy being locked up two days, so thank you, Emily.

Jenny Jones and Ruth Hanson provided saddles, which we put on hay bales and attached a horse head on a stick to it. I do not know what you towny people did, but you broke those horses' heads. I have had to replace them completely. But everyone had a lovely time especially little tackers; who it was designed for.

Jacinta McInerney from Smile a Mile provided the horse heads to go onto the hay bales to go with the saddles, which broke, so then I had to replace them. But she was kind enough to donate them in the first place, so thank you. Shay Cooper also helped man the display. Shay is a lovely person in the rural area, a big polo cross player and a real community minded person; thank you.

Big sister Melissa helped and loaned me her caravan to sleep in so I did not have to sleep on the ground like my mother used to do. Thank you to my sister, Melissa Purick, and Steve Russell for setting up the caravan; and to my sister Plaxy who helped out.

Mary Wilson, a friend, also helped out at the display. Becky Miers and the Venturers, who are the older scouts, have helped me three years in a row and are really nice, young people who will go places. Some of them are still at high school, some have left, but I want to place on the record their name because they really are lovely people. Nothing was too much trouble for them—'get in there and get the horses poop out'; 'it's your turn'; 'no it is not my turn'; 'well sort it out. Find the next Venturer to get rid of the horse poop, you have to get rid of it, it does not look good'—they all did it and they did it well.

Thank you to Jackson Thomas, Jacob Gates, Eli Fall, Brody Casburn, Holly Penris, Hannah Gates, Jamie Dash and Erica Cox. Thank you for doing what you did at the Venturers. I know you will keep doing things and you will be back either as a Venturer or perhaps when you become a rover. Your help is always much appreciated, very obliging and polite. Good rural folk—picking up from the Member for Namitjira's comment—lovely kids, boys and girls. Thank you to everyone that helped. I do not think I have missed anyone.

Perhaps I should thank my mother—it is called Noels Ark—for having me. It was a great weekend. I congratulate the Freds Pass Show Society people. I thank everyone who came along and supported the animal nursery and provided a donation, which goes to the show people.

Mr KIRBY (Port Darwin): Madam Acting Deputy Speaker, I have a few animals to mention in my speech. There may be a hint of a unicorn later on, but there are not as many animals as Madam Speaker covered. I wholeheartedly thank a great team of people who helped me pull my first Port Darwin family fun day together over the weekend. It was a host of fun, apart from a few minor injuries, but I will explain those in a second.

We used the great big new playground on the Esplanade. It is a fantastic space. I have mentioned before that it is well used and lots of families get to that playground not only during the day, but into the evening as it is well lit. There will be families there when I drive home; I can guarantee that.

It is fantastic to see people getting out and about. A healthier lifestyle is a great thing for Territorians and it is great to see so many kids there. We took advantage of the playground. By the time we got there to set up there were already a couple of kids' birthday parties set up around the playground. I apologised to one of the mothers for taking up a part of the playground area when she had her son's birthday party planned, but she thanked me because her son now believes she is the greatest mum in the world because there was face painting, a jumping crocodile and a petting zoo. He had a fantastic birthday and she is now claiming to be the best mother in the world.

It was great that everybody interacted nicely. There were hundreds of people in that space. It is a very well spread out grassy area with shady trees, so there was plenty of room for everyone.

Yenz face painting was a big hit, as always, and there was a constant line-up under the face painting tent. Not too long, and not to such an extent that kids were getting upset or taking too long. There was the normal amount of fairy faces and crocodile faces; there were some nicely done snake heads coming down one side of some children's faces and the tail going over the other side. It looked like there was a snake curled up in the kids' hair. There was also a sand art project where kids pulled some stickers off the pictures they wanted, they spread sand stuck across the sticky area and it made some beautiful art, which they were able to take home so they had something to remember the day by.

We also had the kids' petting zoo there. This is where the unicorns come in. There were reports that there were unicorns in the petting zoo. I looked and did not see any, but I was led to believe they were there. I saw my lovely daughter, Layla, carrying her favourite unicorn in the afternoon, but whether they were there or not, we will have to wait and find out.

Alison and the lovely helpers from the Port Darwin soccer club helped give out some drinks. They were very good helpers. Strawbs and Jamie from the ETU spent close to two hours on the barbecue. Thanks very much to those guys for keeping everybody well fed. Heather is a fantastic volunteer who lives across the road from that area and gets involved in lots of things that happen in and around Port Darwin. She came and volunteered her time for a few hours.

It was great to see Evo from Sailor's Brew. We got some of their lovely, cold iced coffees to give away. They are locally brewed and it is a fantastic small business. I understand they are taking a break from brewing their lovely iced coffees because of some family commitments. I thank Evo for all of their support; we have done a number of events and you usually get rid of all the iced coffees that we get from the Sailors Brew. They are very popular throughout the Top End.

I thank Belinda and Andrew from the Darwin jumping crocodile, and the other castles they have available; they always do a fantastic job; my son, Jake and his lovely girl, Bree for helping with that. They were in charge of running security out the back of the crocodile, so as the kids ran out the back of the croc they did not run back in and hurt anybody else. They were all guided back to the front to have another go and as Belinda does, she encourages the kids to keep going as long as they can. There were a lot of kids who would have slept very well on Sunday night thanks to Belinda and her lovely team of people.

I thank Ryan and Nicole as always from Bec and myself; they are a fantastic help and support and they do anything from helping on the day to babysitting Layla, to make sure everything goes smoothly; I thank them very much. Siobhan and Jodie were a fantastic help in getting things organised and also volunteering on the day. Most especially Karen, from my electorate office—she always goes above and beyond to make sure things go very smoothly. It is the mark of how well things have been organised if the organiser can be not at the event and things run smoothly anyway. That is certainly what happened on the day.

We also had a lolly jar. We need to respond to the lucky winner of the lolly jar to let them know they guessed the right amount of lollies in the jar and to make sure they get some tummy aches over the coming weeks. Just to fill people in on what happened to Karen and her little girl, I got a phone call before I even got to the playground explaining that Karen's oldest little girl had come off one of the swings while Karen was getting things set up and had hurt her neck.

Thankfully, Mila is okay; she had to go to hospital and get some scans and X-rays done, so that is where Karen spent the afternoon instead of enjoying the family fun day with us. After she had done all the hard work to set it up she was in the waiting and recovery rooms at Darwin hospital. She did receive just the right amount of sympathy from her younger sister, Stella, who was most upset only because she was missing out on the petting zoo and thought it was most inappropriate that she had to stay with her sister while she was getting her X-rays done.

It all worked out well, though. There is nothing but a bit of bruising, and Mila will be once again scaling the great heights of the swings at that and other playgrounds. I hope it is the first of many successful Port Darwin family fun days that I have the honour of putting on. I thank everyone who came and helped to organise it.

Ms NELSON (Katherine): Madam Speaker, I wish to thank you, the Member for Goyder, and Lisa, for opening up your home on Sunday for the fundraiser garden party to raise funds for the NT Working Women's Centre.

Although women have made incredible advances in social status and overcome many disadvantages, our society is not an equal one. Working women's centres exist as a resource in addressing the specific challenges women face. They are also a resource for the continuing intersectional fight against oppression in all its forms.

They educate our communities by bringing awareness to issues important to people of all genders and by amplifying the voices of those speaking up. They are a hub for social progress and promote furthering equality. They know disadvantage experienced by even one woman affects everyone, but most importantly, they are here to level the playing field for Territory women and women everywhere.

As a working woman, and a friend of the NT Working Women's Centre, I thank you, Madam Speaker, and Lisa, for opening up your home and hosting the fundraiser. The garden party was fantastic. I loved the Territory twist on the guess the jelly beans—it was guess the salty plums. That and the Irish wolfhounds were my favourite things.

I also want to say well done and congratulations to Anna Davis and Rachael Uebergang. It was great to hear of the training that they are offering and the advocacy work they are doing. I encourage everybody to check out the NT Working Women's Centre website and donate.

Motion agreed to; the Assembly adjourned.