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To: [LA Committees](#)
Subject: Submission to the Legislative Scrutiny Committee on the Territory Coordinator Bill 2025
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To: Secretary, Legislative Scrutiny Committee

The Territory Coordinator Bill 2025 represents a fundamental shift away from democratic governance and community-led decision-making in the Northern Territory. It centralises power in the hands of a single unelected official, enabling decisions that bypass regulatory safeguards, override environmental and cultural protections, and diminish the role of community voices in shaping the Territory's future.

This Bill is not what the Territory needs. Instead of empowering communities and respecting local knowledge holders, it hands control over to a bureaucratic position designed to prioritise external investment interests over the rights, needs, and aspirations of the people who live here.

I vote for a democratic government to work in partnership with the community—not to create a mechanism that fast-tracks projects without accountability, transparency, or meaningful public consultation.

Fundamental Concerns with the Territory Coordinator Bill

1. Undermining Democratic Governance

This Bill shifts decision-making away from elected representatives and local communities, consolidating authority within the role of the Territory Coordinator. This individual is granted significant influence over land, water, and infrastructure decisions, with limited checks and balances. This is not democratic governance.

The government should not delegate such power to a single coordinator. Decisions that affect land, people, and communities must remain in the hands of elected representatives, Traditional Owners, and local knowledge holders.

2. Disregard for Community and Cultural Rights

The Bill removes previous limitations on overriding sacred sites, heritage protections, and Aboriginal land rights. The Northern Territory Aboriginal Sacred Sites Act 1989, the Heritage Act 2011, and other protections exist for a reason. Removing safeguards means:

- Projects can be approved without proper consultation or consent from Traditional Owners and custodians of the land.
- Existing cultural protections can be weakened or ignored in favor of private interests.
- Local communities are sidelined, with no formal power to stop projects that harm their lands, waters, or livelihoods.

This erodes the ability of communities to determine what happens on their own Country—a direct contradiction to the principles of self-determination.

3. Expansion of Powers Without Accountability

The Bill grants the Territory Coordinator unchecked powers, including the ability to:

- Declare 'Infrastructure Coordination Areas' (ICAs) over land and water without clear public accountability.
- Influence and override statutory decision-making through prioritisation and fast-tracking processes.
- Exempt projects from legal requirements, allowing for approvals without proper scrutiny.

This effectively removes community safeguards, making it easier for private interests to push through projects without public oversight. There is no democratic recourse for communities to challenge or appeal these decisions.

4. Flawed and Biased Consultation Process

The consultation process that led to this Bill was deeply flawed and biased toward industry and investment interests. The Consultation Report confirms that while some industry groups supported the Bill, many community members and Traditional Owners opposed it due to its disregard for environmental, social, and cultural concerns .

- The government did not genuinely listen to local voices.
- Industry interests were prioritised over meaningful community consultation.
- The Bill was introduced without addressing key concerns raised during consultation.

The people of the Northern Territory deserve genuine community-led decision-making, not token consultation designed to justify a predetermined outcome.

Conclusion

The Territory Coordinator Bill 2025 should not be passed. It is an undemocratic attempt to centralise decision-making power, remove existing safeguards, and prioritise external investment over the rights of the people who live in the Northern Territory.

Communities in the NT have a long history of working together to manage land, water, and development in ways that respect culture, environment, and future generations. That is the model of governance we should be strengthening—not replacing it with a bureaucratic position that exists to fast-track projects without meaningful accountability.

The government is elected to make decisions in partnership with the community, not to hand over control to an unelected Territory Coordinator who can push through projects that override local voices, cultural heritage, and environmental protections. This Bill is not in the interest of the Northern Territory and must be rejected in full.

Sincerely,

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ACCOMPLICE

connecting northern australia
community consultation
contemporary art
cross cultural collaboration

ACCOMPLICE would like to acknowledge the Larrakia Traditional Owners of the land on which we create, and pay our respects to Elders past, present and future.

We would also like to acknowledge the Traditional Owners and Elders past, present and future from across the Northern Territory where we spend time creating, developing and sharing.