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Madam Speaker Purick took the Chair at 10 am.

VISITORS

Madam SPEAKER: Honourable members, I advise of the presence in the gallery of Year 5/6 students from Durack Primary School, accompanied by their teachers, Amy Grego and Amanda Courtney. Welcome to Parliament House. I hope you enjoy your time here.

Members: Hear, hear!

PAIRING ARRANGEMENT Members for Daly and Barkly

Ms FYLES (Leader of Government Business): Madam Speaker, I advise that the government has agreed to pair the Leader of the Opposition with Minister McCarthy today. Although he is in the Chamber now, Minister McCarthy will be absent from lunchtime onwards. We will advise before Question Time who will take his questions.

MOTION Leave of Absence – Leader of the Opposition

Mrs FINOCCHIARO (Spillett): Madam Speaker, I move that the Leader of the Opposition be granted leave today, as he is attending his son's wedding. I am sure we wish Rhonda and Gary all the very best, along with their son and his wife-to-be.

I also want to say Durack is the best school ever. Great to see you guys.

Motion agreed to.

Madam SPEAKER: There is a competition going on with rural schools, I can see.

SPEAKER'S STATEMENT Seventh National Day of Action against Bullying and Violence

Madam SPEAKER: Honourable members, on your desks are wrist bands such as this for the seventh National Day of Action against Bullying and Violence, which is on Friday 17 March 2017. This is a nation-wide movement to say, 'Bullying, no way!' It is a great opportunity for schools to share their anti-bullying strategies and programs with the school community and the general community with staff, students and parents.

We all want our schools to be safe and supportive learning environments to minimise the risks of all types of harm and for all members of the school community to feel respected, included and confident that they will receive support in the face of threats to their safety and wellbeing.

CONSUMER AFFAIRS AND FAIR TRADING LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL (Serial 17)

Bill presented and read a first time.

Ms MANISON (Treasurer): Madam Speaker, I move that the bill be now read a second time.

The purpose of this bill is to amend the *Consumer Affairs and Fair Trading Act* to provide the legislative basis to establish a mandatory fuel price reporting scheme that will require fuel retailers in the Territory to report the price of each fuel type offered for sale to the Commissioner of Consumer Affairs; and allow for the regulations to implement standards for the information displayed on retail fuel price boards.

Fuel remains a major influence on the cost of living here in the Territory. It is an unavoidable cost for most, if not all, Territory households as well as a key input in production and the cost of doing business.

The price of retail fuel in the Territory is generally higher than other parts of the nation due to our remoteness; however, in 2014 prices reached almost 30c per litre more than the Australian average. This prompted an investigation by the Australian Competition and Consumer Commission into the Darwin petrol market, which revealed that lower levels of competition were the main driver of higher prices.

The government strongly believes that the market behaviour displayed by many fuel retailers in the past has been unacceptable and recognises that a change in the local market is needed. The government strongly supports achieving an improved level of competitive fuel prices for all Territory motorists.

Under the proposed legislation, the government is implementing MyFuel NT to encourage fuel retailers to price competitively. Consumers will be empowered to shop around, using real-time, site-specific fuel price information across the Territory to locate the lowest price for fuel in their region.

To complement MyFuel NT, the government will also introduce minimum standards that will prohibit the display of discounted fuel prices such as those only available to consumers with loyalty cards or shopper dockets. Under the proposed changes, the price advertised on price boards will have to match the price of fuel at the register and bowser before any discount is applied. Fuel retailers will still be able to advertise such discount offers available to consumers, such as, 'Up to 4c off per litre'. This will aim to reduce consumer confusion about what prices apply when they are shopping around for fuel.

I strongly encourage Territory motorists to do their part and take full advantage of the information that will be available through MyFuel NT.

If we can increase the number of consumers shopping around as a result of MyFuel NT, this will increase competition in the retail fuel market. Consequently, this will place downward pressure on the cost of fuel and potentially lower the cost of living for all Territorians, particularly in the larger retail fuel markets. A one cent per litre reduction on the price of fuel could save Territory motorist millions of dollars per year.

MyFuel NT also addresses the key recommendation of providing current retail fuel prices to motorists to help improve competition from the Australian Competition and Consumer Commission's Investigation, which this government has committed to implementing.

Government recognises there are a range of fuel price services and smart phone applications available to motorists. Government is not looking to compete with or undermine current data providers. Instead, MyFuel NT will adopt an open data approach and provide comprehensive and up-to-date fuel price data free of charge to third parties, such as mobile application developers as well as current data providers. This may also help to drive innovation and new digital business opportunities in the Territory.

MyFuel NT will also provide increased fuel price transparency and availability for government and regulators. It will alleviate data gaps and ensure government can be responsive to cost-of-living pressures across the Territory.

The introduction of this bill will also align the Territory with retail fuel market transparency legislation in other jurisdictions, in particular to the New South Wales FuelCheck scheme implemented in 2016.

Similarly, regulations for fuel price boards that prohibit the display of conditionally discounted fuel prices have been adopted in South Australia since 2013 and Victoria as of January this year.

The bill amends the *Consumer Affairs and Fair Trading Act* by inserting Part 11, which will provide a statutory basis for the scheme. This includes provisions to establish a retail fuel price reporting scheme by way of regulations, provisions to directly regulate retail fuel price display boards and offences for non-compliance.

Under this bill it is the responsibility of the fuel retailer to ensure its service station is registered for the scheme, that fuel prices offered for sale at the service station are reported as part of the requirements of the scheme, and that the price board at the service station complies with price board regulations.

The definition of 'fuel retailer' is dependent on the service station business model, with the intent of legislation to target those responsible for the retail fuel business, including setting prices.

In some instances, such as independent service stations, the fuel retailer will be the service station's site owner and the entity that carries on both the business of a convenience store and retailing fuel at the service station.

In other instances the fuel retailer will be the entity solely conducting the retail fuel business at the service station, such as the franchise owner or large retail brands. Businesses may be retailing fuel at a number of different service stations across the Territory and will need to comply at all outlets.

The bill includes reasonable defence provisions, which allows for situations where the fuel retailer had a reasonable excuse for not complying with the legislation. This protects fuel retailers in the instances where they are unable to report prices in a timely manner due to circumstances out of their control, such as telecommunication breakdown or constraints, an unfortunate but recognised issue faced by regional and remote Territorians and businesses.

The reporting requirements for MyFuel NT and the new minimum standards for fuel price boards will be detailed in the new regulations, which will be finalised following the assent of this bill.

The regulations are anticipated to be drafted in the first half of 2017. Informal industry consultation about the proposed regulations will also be conducted.

The finalisation of the regulations and the soft release of MyFuel NT, including software development and testing, is planned for the second half of 2017, prior to the proposed compliance date of 1 November 2017.

Consultation for the MyFuel NT scheme was conducted over three weeks, with the final submissions due on 3 February 2017. The Department of Treasury and Finance has received submissions from fuel retailers, consumer representative groups, data service providers and other stakeholder groups.

Responses to consultation have been considered as part of the legislation development and will be used to inform the implementation process of the scheme.

The main outcomes of the consultation include:

- reasonable defence provisions to cater for circumstances in regional and remote parts of the Northern Territory
- development and testing prior to the proposed mandatory compliance stage of 1 November 2017
- use of mobile applications to easily update fuel prices by retailers
- allowing sufficient time for fuel retailers to update price board infrastructure.

To stress the importance of the introduction of the bill to the Legislative Assembly, the bill will provide the legislative basis for the first mandatory reporting scheme of fuel prices by all fuel retailers in the Northern Territory. MyFuel NT will result in many benefits for local consumers and improve the cost of living for all by helping to address the lower level of competition here in the Northern Territory.

This scheme will also benefit the holiday and business visitors to the Territory by supporting more informed planning about availability of fuel and the prices retailed in the Territory, in particular those travelling into central and remote areas of the outback by vehicle.

This government is committed to keeping the pressure on fuel companies to keep the cost of fuel down for Territorians.

I commend the bill to the House.

Debate adjourned.

BAIL AMENDMENT BILL (Serial 18)

Continued from 15 March 2017.

Mrs FINOCCHIARO (Spillett): Madam Speaker, I am very pleased to stand on behalf of the opposition to make our contribution to the Bail Amendment Bill brought forward by the government.

Whilst we have to acknowledge that it is a good measure, it is not a silver bullet, but there is no such thing. It will come part way in solving the crime crisis, but a true opportunity has been missed by this government to make extensive amendments to the *Bail Act* that will help in a holistic sense, give police the tools they need and send the message to repeat offenders that it is no longer acceptable for them to continue to do the wrong thing.

The government made the announcement that they would be bringing this bill forward in on urgency during the February sittings, and we fully anticipated on the Wednesday and Thursday of those sittings that the bill would be brought forward on urgency, but was not. The government has taken the last month to spend time preparing this bill and, unfortunately, its lack of detail and wraparound amendments to what we are dealing with today—electronic monitoring—shows that it has been rushed and that the government has not spent the time to utilise the opportunity before them, that is, to make a significant change to deal with crime now.

We anticipated this bill coming before the House on Tuesday and yesterday, but here we are, debating it today. It is better late than never; that is for sure. We support the bill because, as an opposition, we support any measure that could have the impact of decreasing crime. Electronic monitoring is something we have been calling for for a very long time. It already exists, but we have been calling for increased use and increased powers for police to be able to utilise something that evidence shows has a very strong effect.

Unfortunately, I will say again, there has been a missed opportunity, because the evidence shows that electronic monitoring—coupled with a number of other things, including dealing with repeat offenders and breaches of bail—has a very important impact on driving down repeat offending or offending in the first instance, as well as other issues that deal with the mitigation of crime.

Nonetheless, the bill before us today essentially provides police with the power to require a person to be electronically monitored when police bail is issued, pursuant to Part 3 of the *Bail Act*. That is a commonsense decision. Previously how is operated was that only a court could mandate whether someone was required to have electronic monitoring as part of their conditions of bail. Broadening that scope right out and taking it not only from the courts, but into police bail—and allowing police to, essentially, GPS track people on bail—will provide some measure of protection to the community to help ensure that those on bail do not reoffend. I will go into the details later about why we believe it is not as effective as it could be.

We have concerns about the way the bill will be administered. Whilst this crime spree has been happening over the last six months—you can only presume the government has had six months to work on this idea, but it is evident in the detail provided to us that it has not. Whilst government was late to the party, it decided to start working on this last month, and that was in response to mounting public pressure from the media and this side of the Chamber.

Due to its rash nature, which, in our view is unnecessary, ultimately this bill has taken the length of time of an ordinary bill. It is being passed on urgency because it lacked detail a month ago, despite the announcement. Work should have begun on this bill last September. If it had been done earlier a lot of the details on the implementation would have been worked out.

My first concern regarding the use of bracelets for police to issue during police bail is that it is only a provisional measure. During our briefing from the Attorney-General's office—and I thank the departmental officials and everyone who was at the briefing for making their time available to us and answering our questions. What happens now is, police are in receipt of someone and they have four hours to determine whether or not to bail someone. During those four hours police will make a determination based on an oral conversation with the person regarding their suitability to have an electronic monitoring bracelet placed on them.

If police determine the person is suitable to wear the bracelet, it is put on and the person is returned, pursuant to whatever bail conditions police have determined. That person will still have to appear at their first court mention, whether it is a couple days or weeks later. At the first court appearance the ordinary process for electronic monitoring will kick in.

For example, police arrest Johnny, bail him and give him an electronic monitoring bracelet. Johnny wears the bracelet for the next week and then appears at his first court appearance. At that point the judge can decide to remove the bracelet or keep it on. If they decide to keep the bracelet on, or if they decide to take it off but still want to explore the option of a bracelet, they trigger a report that comes from Corrections. The report can take up to two weeks to determine the suitability of that person.

Police have the power to give someone a bracelet for a provisional or short period of time until that very first court mention. Corrections will then conduct a report which will come back to court, and at that point in time the judge has the information available to them to decide whether or not the person is suitable for electronic monitoring, and an order will be made that is more permanent in nature. All of the wraparound services of GPS monitoring will kick in at that point.

I would be grateful if the minister could answer in her contribution if government has considered cutting down some of that time line. When police bail someone with an electronic monitoring bracelet, can there be a trigger that goes directly to Corrections to start to commission the report. The first time that person goes to court, the court and the judge would have that information available to them to decide whether to keep the electronic monitoring bracelet on them. Was that considered? If so, why was it ruled out? We would like some clarity regarding that because it sounds like we could have cut down the court process at least by a week or two. That was one of the concerns we had with the bill.

The second concern we have is that when police bail someone with an electronic monitoring bracelet it will not incorporate any type of geofencing. The person will be monitored and is then part of the system, but police will have to proactively monitor that person to seek information as to where that person is at any particular time; there would be no automatic triggers to police if a person has breached their conditions of bail. In the current process, when a court has a report from Corrections it can determine that the person is suitable for geofencing to be set up.

For example, if Johnny cannot go outside 100 metres of his home as a condition of bail and he does, the system will be triggered and police will be notified. Our understanding from the Attorney-General office's briefing is that geofencing will not be set up for the provisional period of time that police have bailed a person with an electronic monitoring bracelet. We understand that geofencing will kick in once the Corrections report is released and the court is satisfied that the person is suitable a few weeks down the track, but, until then, there will be no geofencing.

We recognise that this is still an important tool for police and should create efficiencies. Instead of physically having to go to someone's house to check that they are where they are supposed to be, if that is a condition of their bail, they can remotely check because the electronic monitoring bracelet will have GPS tracking ability. If the minister can confirm that it would be very helpful.

The third concern we have is with the policy work regarding this legislation. It has been left to police to determine how this will roll out. I have full confidence in police, but it raises a question for us on resourcing and whether the government should show more leadership, be more prescriptive in the bill or have policy settings and guidelines on how they see this being implemented. Therefore, police would be able to implement a government policy as opposed to the government saying, 'We want you to have this power; you work out the rest.' We have full confidence in police to do this extremely well.

We question the government's leadership and its lack of a policy framework on the bill, and the fact it is being left to police to create policies on which offenders will be fitted with electronic monitoring bracelets and under what circumstances; whether repeat offenders will be given priority; if the offender needs an electronic monitoring bracelet; whether previous breaches of bail should be considered when determining whether to fit a bracelet; which breaches should be responded to and when; and other important issues that should have been worked out prior to bringing this bill to the House.

Our fourth concern is in relation to tampering with or cutting off an electronic monitoring bracelet, which can and does happen from time to time. Tampering with a bracelet in itself is not an offence; it becomes a breach of a bail condition. If you are outside your curfew or perimeter zone—cutting off a bracelet is a breach just like any other. If offenders can cut off and tamper with the bracelets with relative impunity it undermines the effectiveness of this bill.

We thought the bill would be accompanied by other changes to the *Bail Act* so the electronic monitoring alone would be more effective. As I indicated at the beginning of my contribution, the research shows that when we use electronic monitoring as part of a more comprehensive justice framework it reduces recidivism, deters crime and makes the community safer. In the research we have conducted, studies show that a reduction of non-compliance with bail conditions can be reduced as much as 50% or more.

The impact of this is almost cancelled out if offenders believe they can violate the conditions of their bail or their electronic monitoring without consequence. We have more questions on the bill: why was that not incorporated; was it considered; and if it was ruled out for a reason, can the minister advise us?

Yesterday I mentioned an exercise I described last month; we looked at the daily listing for the Local Court in Darwin. There were 22 listings on the daily court list for breach of bail or non-appearance. These types of incidents are occurring and they need to be addressed. If we do not attach serious consequences to breaches of bail, no amount of electronic monitoring on its own will solve the crime crisis we are currently experiencing.

We were looking forward to seeing the bill, and we hoped it would create provisions to try to end the revolving door of bail offending and subsequent further bail. If we do not look at that it means that what we are doing has a diminished effect. Any person, youth or adult, should forfeit their right to a presumption in favour of bail once they have breached a bail order. Once a person has breached his or her bail they have forfeited their right to the benefit of the doubt, and we need to look at the consequences of that. We feel that it is a missed opportunity that the government has not incorporated an element of that into the amendment before us today in whatever form it would have seen fit.

Equally, for recidivist offenders seeking bail, we thought it was an opportunity for the *Bail Act* to be amended, especially because approximately 90% of property offenders arrested by Strike Force Trident in 2016, youth and adults, had previously been arrested or convicted of a property crime. In instances where a person has two or more convictions for serious property or violent crime, they have shown that they have no respect for the justice system and, equally, no respect for Territorians, who are their victims.

Again, we question why the government did not take the opportunity to make changes to the *Bail Act* to deal with repeat and recidivist offenders, and why bail conditions and other court orders were not looked at as part of this measure.

We need to address the core reasons for youth offending. We talked about that at length last night in the opposition's motion before the House.

As I said at the outset, the bill is worthwhile and necessary; however, because it was only put together in the last month, a huge opportunity has been missed. It lacks the detail and policy framework that you would expect from a bill like this. Importantly, corresponding changes to the act to help the electronic monitoring be a more useful tool has been missed. For breaches of bail and recidivist offenders, it is questionable how much of an impact this measure will have on crime. We know it will have a phased roll-out.

The people of Palmerston will be very pleased that Palmerston has been identified as one of the sites to roll out electronic monitoring on police bail. I welcome the government's decision—or perhaps the police decision—to identify Palmerston as a community that would benefit from the trial. However, we feel that more needs to be done to prevent crime, and victims of crime deserve to know that putting an end to the lawless behaviour we have witnessed over the last six months is a top priority for the government. It is a huge priority for the opposition.

Mr GUNNER (Chief Minister): Madam Speaker, I support the urgent amendments to the *Bail Act*. We are acting now against crime and antisocial behaviour. I took some notes on the Deputy Leader of the Opposition's comments, which I am happy to address. Some were questions and some were errors, which I am happy to clarify. I may not have all of them, and I am sure the Attorney-General will capture all other comments that are made during this debate.

One of the first points was about the trigger at the time of police bail, and that there should be wraparound services at that point. There may be some confusion between what you do with legislation versus what you do operationally—the 52 youth workers that we have been talking about, and other services such as Community Corrections, will see this as a trigger point for youth and families to be involved. It will be important to see police bail and electronic monitoring bracelets—bringing all the services together.

In the conversations and briefings I have been involved in when I have been talking to stakeholders, I have said that the bracelets are a tool. What they trigger will lead to this being successful. It feeds into what the government has done strategically, with the clusters and all the other work we will do to bring services together. We see the bracelet as a tool in itself—and at a moment in time it can trigger other things. I am happy to clarify that.

There was also some confusion about triggering versus geofencing. I can provide confirmation that triggering notifications will be sent to police from the bracelet. Let us not confuse the triggering with the geofencing issue, which will be picked up through the courts and require the monitoring unit—a bit more technological stuff needs to happen, but notifications will be sent to police. I will explain that in more detail later. That is important to clarify because the opposition said police would have to actively monitor and not be notified, but there will be notifications to police. I have seen how that works.

On the question of the work we are giving to police—there is a difference in approach between us and the CLP regarding what decisions should only be made by police. Temporary and permanent beat locations, point of sale interventions—whichever phrase you want to use—are a classic example of us saying, 'That is a police operational decision'. Police in Alice Springs, Tennant Creek or Katherine—locally, on the

ground—should be making intelligence-led decisions, not politicians in Darwin. This is something I want police working on, not politicians.

The last point was about tampering, cutting the bracelets—it is a breach of bail conditions. There are a couple of things that need to be clarified. Territorians have the right to feel safe. They rightfully expect their homes, businesses and properties to be safe. Our government shares the community's frustration and anger. We see, hear and feel it in our electorates, and we will change it. We have started the process of tough short- and long-term reform. We are investing in police resources, providing certainty around recruitment for four years—120 extra police officers were not delivered last term. We are overhauling our broken youth justice system, investing in our kids and removing grog from the hands of those who wreck businesses, homes, families and themselves.

The Attorney-General is doing a significant amount of work with her department. I pay credit to the department; it is doing incredible work on the Banned Drinker Register and many other things.

The purpose of the Bail Amendment Bill 2017 is to amend the *Bail Act* so electronic monitoring can form part of the conditions of police bail. It is important to note that this amendment to police bail applies to youth and adults. Expanding electronic monitoring to police bail means bail conditions can be more effectively tracked and policed. It is an extra tool for police to prevent crime before it happens and the escalation from offender to repeat offender. We have heard police, in recent days, say it is a very powerful tool.

I was recently informed by police of an example of someone in their early teens, who ran with a slightly older crowd, who was picked up for various offences and bailed to appear later in court. In the period between being identified by police, charged and appearing before court, the young person went on to commit dozens more serious offences with that crowd. Sadly, there is evidence to suggest that young person has now been exposed to methamphetamine.

These are the kinds of examples where police would say that an electronic monitoring bracelet on that young person could have made a powerful change to behaviour. A bracelet on that young person in the first instance could have prevented their involvement in the dozens of crimes that occurred later. If that young person was not where they were supposed to be, or tried to remove the bracelet, the police would have known. A bracelet would have provided this person an out from that peer group pressure, an excuse not to run with the crowd, a reason to say, 'I cannot join in', a reason for that crowd not to want that person with them, and a reason to say no.

To clarify a concern from the Deputy Leader of the Opposition, police will receive alerts directly from the monitoring company in the event of a strap tamper, the wearer being absent from a zone at the start of a curfew, departing a zone during a curfew, entering an exclusion zone or being in area where the exclusion zone commences. Police can immediately access this data and use it in court proceedings if necessary.

Monitoring will operate using GPS tracking that can be used for broad tracking. There is powerful software behind this, which is why the police like the idea of the bracelets. Some of the Deputy Opposition Leader's concerns are being addressed by police. Police-applied bracelets will be monitored the same way as existing bracelets. There is monitoring of movement, battery life and so on.

I have visited the Community Corrections centre to see how it works in practice—the moving dots, the lights that show up when there is a concern. When I was there the lights that came up were in regard to battery life. I did not witness any breaching of conditions. I saw how it works and how the notifications are sent to police. This will need to be monitored diligently and police will need to respond quickly and decisively to breaches. This is about real accountability and taking responsibility. It is really important that the community knows that active notifications are sent to police.

A breach of bail condition shows a disregard for our justice system and the community. We need to show that the community will not stand for it. After an arrest police will have four hours to decide if electronic monitoring will be useful in encouraging positive behaviour before an offender embarks on a pathway to repeat offending or becomes part of an offending group.

There will be controls; police will only use this new power where a person is suitable for monitoring and if that person is not homeless. There is a need for power in this situation, which highlights another circumstance we need to address regarding physically safe places. We will be working with the Minister for Territory Families, the Corrections minister, regarding this.

Electronic monitoring will only be considered when a person would otherwise be held on remand—and the bracelets are easily applied. An individual will be left with no doubts about their conditions and requirements for charging and care of the device. This is not about police taking the court's role or sentencing; it is about filling the gap between police bail and the first court appearance. It is an immediate short-term measure for each individual.

Police bail runs until the time someone has to appear in court, and at that point the courts take over. The courts can order the continuation of the electronic monitoring condition, and they have the power to seek more detailed reports and suitability. It gives us an opportunity for us to get involved—from the moment of police bail to the court process starting—with wraparound services and the use of the bracelets, and for police bail to be seen as a trigger point for youth workers, Community Corrections and others. That is an important point in time when we can see the trigger come into effect. It is very important for the future success of this program and creating change.

It is not just about the bracelet being on the ankle. There comes a point in time for other wraparound services to be involved. We are cognisant that this tool may be considered for very young offenders who may be of school age. Police will conduct a risk assessment and we will work with our colleagues in Territory Families and other support agencies to consider the risks and implications. There may be options for some young offenders to attend re-engagement centres so they do not miss out on education. We believe children should be learning every day. The bracelet should not become a hurdle or obstacle to education.

A person on bail who is electronically monitored may also stay in training or work, and connected to their families and support systems. Police will implement these changes and approve the devices being used, as well as setting up operational criteria on how they will be used. Once passed, the legislation will be gazetted on urgency so the reforms can come into effect as soon as possible.

Electronic monitoring will reduce cases where police are required to physically attend homes for bail checks. This will reduce their workload and free up resources for crime hotspots. It will reduce tension caused by physical intervention, such as bail checks. I have spoken with police who are physically required to go to homes at certain times of night. Depending on the bail conditions, they are physically required to ensure the person is home after a certain hour. This can cause a heavy workload on police; we can all recognise that because it is intensive manual work. It can also cause an impact on other people in that house, which we should be mindful of; someone may have work the next day or there may be young children or others impacted in that household. This will have an important flow-on effect as well. I have spoken to the police officers who have to do that work.

We are breaking down silos and bringing together support services from across government and the NGO sector. We are getting police the responsibilities and capabilities they need to respond effectively to crime and antisocial behaviour. Police have confidence in the 120 new police in the recruitment plan. Smarter technologies, a new Palmerston police station—we are building wraparound services that will achieve most of the good results of police work, not undermine those results by failing to address the endless cycle of bail and reoffending.

We are re-establishing youth diversion services that were defunded by the CLP. We will give victims a voice through victim conferencing so they can have a say. We are putting the attention, resources and time back into all the things that the CLP took away. It took away the voice of victims, diversionary efforts and services that ensure youth do not go off the rails in the first place. We have put all this stuff back in—it is a lot of work to ensure we get ahead of the problems caused by some very bad decisions during the CLP's term of government.

We are building stronger links between police and Territory Families. We have funded 52 new youth justice officers and bail support officers to provide case management, individualised support for bail accountability and pathways for rehabilitation. We know that diversion can turn offenders around. We need to capture and respond to trigger points—the indicators that families need help—so we are building links between our services to put intervention strategies in place.

It is a very big area of attention for us. Speaking about electronic bracelets today as a potential trigger point—but there are other trigger points in our systems that have not received attention in the past. They are a signal that a family is in trouble. Too often the point of intervention is at the crisis point, so we have to get involved much earlier.

The Minister for Territory Families is working on the dual pathways, for example—phone calls that are taken but are not serious enough for child protection intervention. We have to get involved much earlier and identify all the trigger points in the system to make sure we get ahead of the problem. We are stopping crime and not constantly debating what you do after the crime occurs. We have to do everything we can to reduce crime in the Territory.

This is not just about youth offenders; electronic monitoring also provides real opportunities to stop domestic violence. That is a very good example of how these bracelets could work in practice. Police have real-time knowledge about breaches of domestic violence orders, and they have evidence and support. It takes a lot of pressure off victims and is an example of an area where there can be repeat behaviour, and often will be. These bracelets can be very powerful in causing change in this area; domestic violence orders will more than just a piece of paper. This is about protecting repeat victims, our most vulnerable Territorians.

Work is currently under way to procure the necessary equipment to complete the tool kit. Government is paving the way of legislation on urgency. Once this first step has been completed we can look at implementing phase one in Palmerston and Alice Springs. That is the process police often take; they are given body-worn cameras—they phase it in to make sure the technology is used as best it can be as they roll it out across the Territory.

The program will incur the cost of the devices and the necessary support systems, mostly relating to training and deployment. Scoping of costs is under way and we are testing this new tool under a phased approach so interim costs provide a greater indication of ongoing costs. It is important to note that we will offset costs by reducing the burden on the police front line and reducing offenders in remand, so there is a positive pay off. It is a much better approach and we can make those savings.

Not all offenders will be suitable for electronic monitoring, so we cannot yet anticipate the number of people it will be used on. We have a good indication of what the courts do and we will use that as a guide. In the majority of cases the priority for youth will be diversion and other options to deter from the pathway to repeat offending. I often see this legislation as electronic diversion; I think it can be very powerful in diverting youth away from repeating offending, the wrong side of the tracks and a life of crime. In many ways I see electronic bracelets as diversion. We can get these kids away from a dangerous direction.

The language of this bill covers offenders and repeat offenders, but at its heart it is about victims and repeat victims, especially with the current domestic violence situation. This bill is about prioritising victims of property crime, violence and domestic violence. I thank the departments of the Attorney-General and Justice and police for the considerable amount of work they have done to get this bill ready for the parliament. I thank the Attorney-General for all the work she has done in getting this bill ready.

A considerable amount of work goes into legislation like this. The opposition has made unrealistic time demands on the work that has gone into this. That work never happened during their term of government. I thank the Attorney-General and her department, the police, Community Corrections—which has a great deal of experience in this area—and Territory Families.

Lots of work has been done by many people to see this legislation pass and to see us putting victims first, which is very important. Victims need to be front and centre of how we approach legislation and the decisions of government to make sure achieve long-term change for Territorians.

Madam Speaker, I support this bill.

Mr McCARTHY (Housing and Community Development): Madam Speaker, it is an honour to follow the Chief Minister, who made a very good contribution to this debate and has also led the debate around youth services in partnership with the Minister for Territory Families and our Attorney-General. For those government members sharing in this important debate, it has been a very good, constructive debate in Cabinet—sharing what we have learned in Caucus and coming to a united position.

The Chief Minister has outlined a suite of resources, being led by the Minister for Territory Families, in a significant investment to youth services across the Northern Territory. It is important to acknowledge and understand that. It is like when the political interference with the BDR takes over the debate on alcohol reform. It is about the previous CLP opposition, in the time that we were in government, hijacking the debate and focusing in on the Banned Drinker Register, making sure the public were not informed about the holistic package of the Enough is Enough alcohol reforms and the linkages between initiatives to achieve the appropriate outcomes.

I thank the Attorney-General for bringing forward the *Bail Act* amendment on electronic monitoring. This, as the Chief Minister outlined, is one initiative in a package of initiatives. I am inspired by the Minister for Territory Families, who has now put it to the Northern Territory that this is a significant investment. We are working off evidence-based solutions and encouraging the community to be part of this and provide the minister with ideas. I am putting that message out to the electorate; let's be part of this process, put ideas to government and be proactive.

This tool, as the Attorney-General and the Chief Minister describe it, is important for a number of reasons. It looks at technology support, which we need to focus on in this post-modern age. We need to look at all the opportunities. From my point of view, this electronic monitoring is about accountability. It is about an important part of the justice process, where the offender is now told, 'You are on a pathway of assessment, on bail. You will be facing the formal processes of the judiciary to decide your outcome. While on bail you need to have a good think about your position and your accountability to this process.'

It provides the offender with the opportunity to face the judiciary with a clean slate in that period of monitoring—'Yes, I accept this monitoring; I will conform to the conditions I have been offered and will represent myself in front of the judiciary to get the best possible outcome.'

This is a great strategy to keep people out of gaol. We talk about the unacceptable rates of incarcerated Indigenous Territorians—this initiative is a good move in the right direction. I also see this tool, the electronic monitoring technology, as a support mechanism for the family.

I acknowledge my wife, who is sitting in the gallery. She tells a lot of stories in the family about her monitoring of our teenage sons. Some of that monitoring involved police activity. Mrs McCarthy was always very good; she had great relationships with the local police wherever we lived in this interesting intersection, between our juvenile sons growing up in the Wild West and us trying to find balance as parents. We can testify the difficulties in raising dynamic, diverse, lively Territory children, and so can other families. Some other families have not been as fortunate as ours; some have struggled.

This initiative from our ministerial leadership team—the Chief Minister, the Attorney-General and the Minister for Territory Families—was presented to support those vulnerable families. I know some families in Tennant Creek who will feel a lot better having this process explained—the offender then conforming to the conditions and being able to go back to the judicial process feeling comfortable that there have not been any more breaches or offences, while trying to get some runs on the board for a good outcome and a fresh start. There are some human dynamics within it, but it is challenging legislation because it deals with challenging issues in our society.

The Chief Minister has outlined, after the opposition's commentary in the debate, all the new youth initiatives coming forward from the Minister for Territory Families' package. There will be opportunities for more, and it is important to focus on that as part of this package.

There has been much talk about youth offending and crime, particularly from the opposition members. Their position in this parliament is to challenge the government. We are fully accepting of those challenges and are working towards solutions to these issues. It is interesting when this debate takes on a historical context. I will dwell on Central Australia—Tennant Creek and Alice Springs—because there is some serious mischief around its history and challenges.

The Member for Araluen is very much a great contributor to debate and most recently has been seriously challenging members in this House with her interpretation of the history of these challenges, particularly youth offending. For those members who were not around, it is good to reflect on that history, because when the Country Liberal Party took government in August 2012 it commenced an evaluation process of the Northern Territory budget. It employed a collective of old-guard, male CLP operatives, who were paid considerable funds. I remember, as opposition members, we immediately challenged that remuneration. They became known in the Territory colloquially as the million dollar men. We were challenged about our approach to debate and—it must be on the record somewhere—I was called ageist. How dare I mention the fact they were 'senior men' ...

Ms Fyles: The good old boys.

Mr McCARTHY: Yes, 'good old boys' was a lot better in a colloquial approach.

We challenged that on a number of levels: the exercise; the old-guard thinking; the jobs for the boys; and the appropriate use of the taxpayer dollar in the remuneration they received. We must remember that the

Member for Araluen was the Treasurer at the time. It was a political strategy; I will not criticise that. We confidently challenged that as an effective opposition representing the people of the Northern Territory. But the Treasurer accepted that financial report.

At the time, when I first saw that—I remember better financial accountability and reporting from the Borroloola Community Education Centre AGM than what was presented to this House. The report that came through after an expenditure of in excess of \$1m was a disgrace. It also had this endorsement that they accepted no responsibility for their reporting, in a manner of speaking. It was a strange type of exercise adopted by the then Treasurer, the Member for Araluen.

It is important to reflect on what that generated. It generated very much a liberalist economic rationalist position where there were wide-ranging cuts to services on one side of the sheet, and on the other side there were significant increases in tariffs for Territorians. That coincided with the plan to sell public assets. The Government Printing Office went first; the Darwin buses went next; the TIO was after that; and then the port. This is all reflective of history, but where does it relate to this debate? It relates to very specific cuts to youth services across the Northern Territory. This was of major concern to the then opposition and Territorians.

We hear this historical commentary about how bad Labor was, how difficult it was in Central Australia, and no one is denying that. I live in Tennant Creek and we had our share of those significant challenges, particularly in the warmer months, when kids who are unoccupied and not engaged are roaming the streets. Unfortunately masses of kids can fall into the control of minority leadership groups and get themselves in trouble.

We need to acknowledge that this was bad government policy that effectively will have long-ranging implications for juvenile justice across the Northern Territory, and, in this respect, in Central Australia.

The Member for Araluen does not want to highlight the previous Labor government's initiatives in addressing youth issues in Alice Springs and Central Australia—essentially across the Northern Territory, but let us focus on Central Australia because there was a significant rise in youth crime in that summer period of 2010–11. There was a specific targeted investment and policy direction implemented by the then Labor government regarding the Alice Springs community safety plan. I was a member of that committee. I was privileged to be part of that debate and policy development.

When you reflect on what was created just for Alice Springs—I remember it well because I had been there on many occasions; I toured junior rugby league sides to Alice Springs many times. We stayed in the gym at ANZAC Hill High School. I knew that campus well; it was decanted with a combination of schools in Alice Springs. The Alice Springs campus became a precinct of youth services. There was some significant investment in youth service development on that campus, including one of my favourites, an alternative education program, which our current Minister for Education is returning to the suite of initiatives for education and supporting Territory youth.

That was an initiative from the previous government that is rarely mentioned by the local member in Alice Springs. It needs to be mentioned because, when you go down the path of the historical CLP economic rationalist cuts, that precinct of youth services was directly impacted. We saw an immediate erosion of services. I remember the debates in this House very well, in which it was put very clearly to the then Chief Minister, Adam Giles, and to the government that it was a bad move and would create problems. There were pleas from the other side that it was not good governance, but that was completely ignored.

Then we saw a prolonged period of a reduction in frontline youth services in Alice Springs. We also saw the same impact to a smaller degree in Tennant Creek. I say a smaller degree because we do not have as many youth services. We were clinging on to what we had. We had very little, but we were doing the best we could with what we had. That was taken away. We saw our youth links precinct—suddenly the lights were off and the doors were closed.

We also experienced this turnaround of idle kids and kids distracted by bad role models, and there was nothing happening at the time. This then spiralled into more serious issues and more serious offending. We saw that in Alice Springs and Tennant Creek.

You can talk about the ANZAC Hill precinct and the initiative from the previous Labor government when you want to examine the services provided. It was a suite of youth service providers and a transport component to manage the kids roaming the streets. There was family liaison and counselling as part of

those services. It was not about engaging kids, putting them on a bus and taking them home. There were further wraparound services delivered for the high support needs of children and their families.

At that time, as a government, we set up the Owen Springs juvenile detention centre in Alice Springs. It was a temporary measure. There was a bigger plan that was, unfortunately, a train wreck in August 2012, when we lost government and the CLP took over. There was a plan to address juvenile justice, but it was an interim initiative that provided a centre in Alice Springs where offenders could be monitored. They could have family visits, they remained on country and they could be connected to their supportive adults. It was not the best outcome but it was part of the suite of initiatives our government brought front and centre to the Northern Territory. It always seems to be neglected in the contributions from the Member for Araluen, the Treasurer at the time this policy was being driven. This had significant longer-term effects. That is part of Territory history.

We saw an example of more reactionary politics from the then CLP Chief Minister. In around 2015 we saw spikes in youth crime, offending behaviour and antisocial behaviour. There was a lot of youth offending and the then Chief Minister started to react. It was his style of governance. He had no fear of dipping into the Treasury coffers to finance his ideas of what should be done. It is quite ironic that he responded with an injection of funding back into youth services. 'Well, Chief Minister', we said. 'That might be a little late.' But you give credit where credit is due. As an opposition we gave credit, but we made him very aware of the train wreck he created between when the CLP took over in August 2012 and 2015.

As the Member for Barkly, I was lobbying strongly on this front with the Chief Minister announcing in excess of \$1m for Alice Springs youth services. I commended him on that. 'But Barkly, sir?'—I had my hand out; I pleaded. He gave us \$500 000. There was significant investment across Darwin, Palmerston, Katherine and Alice Springs, and Tennant Creek was on the end of the line. We got \$500 000. But that money did not change hands. I am on the public record in speeches and adjournments, pleading with the Chief Minister to release the funds.

The lights are still off at Purkiss Reserve; we still do not have any youth services functioning; we have great challenges in our community; we want to support our young people as they are our future, yet the Chief Minister at the time almost made it personal. That bank account was closed. I pushed and pushed. I rallied the troops at home. We tried every lobby opportunity that was available.

In 2015, over the Christmas and New Year period, the Chief Minister released \$40 000 for Tennant Creek. We had a balance for \$500 000 sitting in the bank, making interest for the then Chief Minister, and he released \$40 000. That money went into infrastructure enhancement of our YouthLinx building. It was also meagrely applied to employing a couple of youth workers for a very limited time over the Christmas and New Year period. I am on the public record speaking about the volunteers that rallied, including my wife, Mrs McCarthy, who prepared a number of meals and participated in activities as we visited that centre. Those activities supported the youth members and volunteers, some friends and neighbours. We were part of that.

I remember Dawn cooking meals and providing nutritional support to complement some of those activities. We showed the town, the youth workers and the volunteer team what Tennant Creek can do when we step up, and we did it on a meagre \$40 000 budget. It concluded that year with a colour splash on the town's football oval under lights. It was an amazing event and I can remember about 400 people turning up, families and kids, in a great culmination and celebration.

We had put our shoulder to the wheel over that Christmas and New Year. We had demonstrated to the government how we could do this. We proved that targeted youth investment will work, and what was the result? It was me, once again, in this House, arguing with the Chief Minister, 'Please release the rest of the funds'. For history's page, those funds were released—the \$480 000-odd—at the Tennant Creek Show in July 2016, before the general election. That was the mark of the previous Chief Minister. That is why I believe this was personal, and that is disgraceful politics. Never take any example of that style of political bullying.

This was about our community. It was about Tennant Creek and our youth. Those funds were released and the Barkly Regional Council now manages those funds. We have a full-time youth worker and a coordinator, an ex-resident of Tennant Creek who has come back to work with our youth and is doing an excellent job. The opportunity now of employing some part-time youth workers ...

VISITORS
Durack Primary School

Madam SPEAKER: Member for Barkly, while you are speaking about young people—honourable members, I advise of the presence in the gallery of more Durack Primary School Students, Years 5 and 6, accompanied by their teachers, Jacqueline Edie and Ros Stewart. Welcome to Parliament House. I hope you enjoy your time here.

Members: Hear, hear!

McCARTHY: Madam Speaker, I will be on my best behaviour today, I will not take your lead to be a little more creative.

We demonstrated what a meagre investment can do, and that is representative of the suite of initiatives that the Minister for Territory Families, the Chief Minister and the Attorney-General are bringing back to the Northern Territory. That is evidence based, and I am looking forward to working as part of executive government and the wider Northern Territory Government, and with our Caucus colleagues, to make sure we target that investment to get the best possible results.

I thought it was important today to make sure we get that history back on the record, to learn lessons. If there is one thing we should all fess up to, it is about learning lessons; that is the role and the duty of members. We can learn some lessons from each other and be honest and open in debate about those findings.

This amendment will be a tool of technology. I see it as not only supporting the justice system, but it will also be supporting vulnerable youth and their vulnerable families and significant adults, who are part of the process in trying to keep them on the right track.

It has been mentioned and should be acknowledged that this is an evidence-based tool, researched by the previous Labor government as far back as 2010, but more focused on adult correctional services. It is acknowledged as a respected tool, recommended by the police. These are our frontline officers who are proactive in alternative solutions to solving the issue of this unacceptable level of crime.

As the Attorney-General has mentioned in a number of contributions to debate, the police have advised that the current spike in crime that we are experiencing in Darwin and Palmerston—we have had our traditional challenges of the summer spikes in Central Australia—has been a worrying trend over a number of years. It has not just been over the 2016–17 Wet Season; this has been building and is of concern. This would have been on the previous government's books.

I am pleased to see bipartisanship in this House. There is good debate in regard to these initiatives, but there is bipartisanship in trying to achieve the outcome.

I remind members in this House of the contributions that came from members of parliament regarding alcohol policy in the previous government. Remember, four years is a significant, compounding period where policy outcomes can be assessed over a more defined research period. I said to the government of the day that the scrapping of the BDR, and the appropriation of over \$100m by 2016 into some chaotic alcohol policy, was not a wise investment. We did not see a turnaround. In Darwin and Palmerston we saw a spike in crime, because the problem drinkers from the regions ended up on the doorsteps of the capital.

We warned the government about this, but the political arrogance and mischief around the BDR ruled the agenda. Let's not bog down in that again. Let's be bipartisan where we can. In regard to the solution to Territory crime and the support of Territory children and families, this is an area where we must be bipartisan.

The arrogance that came off the election campaign and carried into government, the refusal to listen, the appropriation of over \$100m over four years, and the serious increase in crime that represented the dysfunctional constituents from the regions—ending up in an environment where alcohol was freely available at a corner shop—was real. I felt terrible shame when I heard about significant crimes committed, reported through our media, where the offender was identified as coming from Tennant Creek. That was not me making things up and pleading with government; that was the reality of the situation.

There have been some policy outcomes which have not benefited Territorians, and some significant lessons have been learned in the last four years. On the table now is a very proactive suite of initiatives into justice reinvestment, and I really look forward to working with the ministers, executive government and our Labor Caucus colleagues on the roll-out of new initiatives that will be based on evidence and which will pitch to the unique nature of Territorians.

I am a firm believer that Indigenous kids on country will achieve better results. I have taken a lot of advice from the Member for Nelson over the years. We researched the New Era in Corrections together.

This government is brave and bold, and bringing legislative reform to this House. This legislation represents one element of that.

I thank the Attorney-General for her work and the work of the department, and I look forward to being able to participate in proactive, positive debates in the future, when we will realise the good outcomes from this government addressing juvenile justice, crime and community safety.

Mr WOOD (Nelson): Madam Speaker, to say I am disappointed would be an understatement. Yesterday we argued whether this should be an urgency debate. We have six days of sittings, and to bring this on today is outright arrogance on the part of the government.

I support what the government is trying to do, but we have what is meant to be a parliamentary process which allows us to adequately look at what has been put forward to see if it will achieve what the government is trying to achieve. I am not against what the government is trying to achieve.

The Member for Barkly might remember that there were days when the Attorney-General was talking about putting bracelets on prisoners. I gave examples from South Dakota, where they use bracelets to check on people who have been caught for DUI or domestic violence offences, especially where alcohol was involved. We have had this discussion before.

The issue we have now is slightly different. The issue in South Dakota and in our legislation is that, generally speaking, we have a process of putting bracelets on people, which is supported by a magistrate. Here, we are asking for the police to be approved to put that bracelet on people ...

Ms Nelson: That is directed by the court.

Mr WOOD: Regardless of your opinion, which is important, if you want to debate this properly and hear all sides' opinions on it, I need more than one day—which was General Business—for my preparation.

I thank the department for the briefing I received, but it occurred without the legislation. That is not done normally. Normally, the government introduces a bill and makes the second reading speech, and then I get the legislation, the second reading and the explanatory notes. I go back to my office and read that. I then talk to people whom I think may have a vested interest in the legislation. When would I get the time to look at this legislation in one day when it was General Business Day in parliament?

You could have at least brought it on next Thursday. I might have been able to talk to people on Friday and Monday. You expect me to come here just to support legislation. I do not want kids running amok in the streets either, but that is not an excuse to shove legislation through that honestly looks more into the politics of how you are doing a terrific job and have heard what people had to say. I understand that, but you still have to make sure your legislation has been thoroughly checked. That is what this House is about.

I do not want to see kids continually breaking bail—but you introduced something and said, 'This will solve the problem'. I take up what the Member for Spillett said, that it is only one small part of a bigger issue. It is a pity we are not discussing the broader implications of bail. If you are saying this will solve it, you should expect someone in parliament to test you and see whether it will actually do the job.

You expect me to analyse this bill—I had a bit of time yesterday. I downloaded the sections of the *Bail Act* which are affected by the bill. It also affects the *Surveillance Devices Act* and the Surveillance Devices Regulations. I did not have time to check out where it affects the regulations.

I find this incomprehensible, especially when the current government was sitting on this side and the CLP government members argued exactly the same thing. They said, 'We need this legislation to combat ice, and if you do not pass this now you will be accused of supporting the ice drug traffickers'. Of course, you know what happened then. There was an ad in the paper and all the people in the Labor Party and

Independents who allegedly did not support the legislation because we stopped it going through on urgency were described in the paper as people who were on the side of drug trafficking. What is the difference between that situation and this one?

As you said, it has taken months to get this legislation up and running and to get it into parliament. If it is taking that long there must be issues you had to look at before you put the legislation together.

The Member for Spillett raised a number of concerns. Whether they are right or wrong is irrelevant. That is the very reason one has time to look at legislation and talk to their legal people—NAAJA, CAALAS, other legal services, the Police Association or other groups which may be interested in this and which represent young people—to see how it will work in practice.

I only got one day to look at this. It is impossible because it is General Business Day, in which most of the day is required for Independents and the opposition to run with the agenda. It is totally unfair for the government to bring this forward now. It should be debated next Thursday, if you have to have it on urgency. Can someone tell me why it is not happening next Thursday? Do you want to go home early? You do not have much on during this sittings. I do not understand why.

I ask the government to at least put this on hold until next Thursday so I can have a chance, as an equal member of this parliament—you are alright because you have a team you can rely on and umpteen hundred advisers; even the CLP has about seven people. I do not have anyone at present, although I was offered some people yesterday—we got told that someone had been appointed. I do not have other people.

I try to do my job properly in all legislation. Yet you ask me to support legislation which I have had not had the chance to thoroughly analyse to see if there are any faults in it. If I thought there were any faults in it I would bring them to a briefing and it might be clarified that I am wrong, but I have not had that opportunity.

I cannot support this bill as it is. I am not will vote against it, because I know what is in the bill. I know the theory around what has been put forward and I think it has merit. I do not want young people running amok in our suburbs when they should be at home or their bail requirement says they should be in school.

The government has disappointed me. After four years of sitting on the side here, listening to the opposition go crook at the CLP about the way it ran the way it ran the show, you come here and do this. Honestly, it lets me down; it seems to me that words do not mean anything. This is not the way you should operate in this parliament. You can have urgency bills, but to put this through in two days is not on. It is not the right way.

I am sorry. I know you have the numbers. The opposition likes urgency bills, so you would think this is right up its alley after all the stuff we had to put up with regarding the ice ads. Obviously it supports this one. Some of us try to think differently, and I think you could have done this better. I still ask that you adjourn this debate until next Thursday so that we have a chance to ask the people who know more about this.

The police have put this forward, but they are not the only ones involved; there are legal implications, and those implications should be tested as well.

Ms NELSON (Katherine): Madam Speaker, although I support the bill, I have some reservations. I agree with you, Member for Nelson. Just like you, I like to do my research and get things in order, so I empathise.

As the Attorney-General declared in her second reading speech, every Territorian has the right to feel safe at home and at work. No one should ever have to feel insecure about their safety while in their own home. In my electorate in Katherine I am told about homes being broken into, and vehicles and items being stolen from their private yards.

I have ridden with police officers on night patrol to get a firsthand look at the problem. I witnessed firsthand how challenging it is for police in Katherine to conduct bail check-ins while also having to respond to call-outs. Our police are doing an amazing job in often extremely difficult circumstances.

I take this opportunity to express my gratitude to the hard-working police officers and support personnel in the Katherine region. I am in weekly contact with the Northern Commander, Matt Hollamby, about crime in Katherine.

The Territory Labor government is determined to break the cycle of crime which has been going on for far too long. We want to give police the tools they need to effectively do their jobs. Offences are being

committed when offenders are on police bail. An offender is caught and in the time between their arrest and their appearance in court they continue to commit crimes; this has been proven. We know this, as do Territorians, and this adds to increasing levels of frustration.

Presently, the *Bail Act* does not provide for electronic monitoring as a requirement on police bail. Only the courts can issue these GPS-enabled services.

I share the frustration and anger of many Territorians, particular my fellow neighbours in Katherine. No matter what we respond with, it does not seem to be enough. When we came to government we knew we would have to make tough reforms in youth justice and corrections. Irrespective of the opposition's criticisms and opinions, our government has started strongly without our historic youth justice reform package. The \$18.2m reform package includes 52 youth diversion workers and an additional \$6m for NGOs to deliver evidence-based diversion programs.

Yesterday Minister Wakefield announced that new and improved training has begun for 25 new recruits that will take up key roles as youth justice officers in the Don Dale Youth Detention Centre in Darwin and Alice Springs Youth Detention Centre. These officers will provide supervision, guidance and support to young people in detention to help get them on a better path. They will be actively involved in a range of rehabilitation programs for the young detainees, including life skills, training, education and personal development.

These are big step towards fixing our broken youth justice system in the Territory. We have a responsibility to act urgently to deal with the situation we face today. There is far too much property crime and vehicle theft.

This amendment will allow police to impose an electronic monitoring device as a condition of police bail. Bail conditions will be more effectively monitored and policed. Electronic monitoring gives police an extra tool to encourage positive behaviour change. This approach will support the youth diversion programs. Encouraging positive behaviour is one step toward helping to prevent the escalation of offenders into repeat offenders. Any initiative or change to legislation that allows us to collectively reduce rates of recidivism is a far better approach than a lock-them-up-fast approach.

Although the purpose of electronic monitoring may differ depending on the stage of the criminal justice system in which it is used, the ultimate goal is restricting an individual's movement and to protect the public. Overall, electronic monitoring programs appear to consistently result in low recidivism rates for both adults and juveniles when used as a pre-trial intervention or post adjudication sentence.

The available evidence that I have read indicates that electronic monitoring offers two distinct advantages over incarceration. Firstly, for adults, electronic monitoring reduces the public tax burden by allowing the offender to work, and juveniles are required to continue their schooling uninterrupted. Secondly, it has proven to greatly reduce the human and financial costs associated with incarceration.

It is no secret that I support a far more holistic and whole-of-community approach to addressing youth justice and crime. I have spoken about that at length. The Katherine electorate has shown that to effectively address youth justice we need to take on a collaborative approach. The Katherine youth justice reinvestment working group knows this and has put it into practice. The working group knows that it takes the entire community to work together to stop the revolving door and reduce recidivism. I support the *Bail Act* amendment, which will allow the expansion of electronic monitoring.

Based on evidence I have read and statements I have heard, electronic monitoring can and does assist with the reintegration of offenders into the community far better than conventional parole or prison programs. I support the argument that electronic monitoring provides great potential for approved rehabilitation of offenders. It allows offenders to maintain employment and enjoy much closer relationships with their families, and these aspects are far more conducive to behavioural change than a prison setting.

There are many jurisdictions in Australia and other countries that have also found higher rates of successful completion of electronically monitored sentences. Mr Wayne Jarred, who is a senior Queensland parliamentary research officer highlighted in his Electronic monitoring: Corrective services Bill 2000 legislation brief that rates of 80% compliance in the United Kingdom and 90% compliance in Sweden have been reported in regard to electronic monitoring. Gibbs and King also reported that in New Zealand completion rates were high and recidivism rates very low.

At the very least, modern forms of electronic monitoring make non-compliance easier and quicker to detect. The use of electronic monitoring has the potential to improve the cost effectiveness of correctional programs, provide enhanced opportunities for offender rehabilitation and extend the range of sentences available to the courts.

I agree with the Member for Nelson that we need to further understand the legal, ethical and practical issues surrounding electronic monitoring and that, despite that, electronic monitoring has been in use for at least two decades. I have some reservations. There are still some legal, ethical and practical issues we need to resolve. If the alternative is remand then this is a good enough argument for me to support this bill. An awareness of the implications of these developments is important, as is the creation of policies to ensure that if such technologies are adopted, they are used in the most productive and ethical ways.

In regard to the bill, I support the approach taken by our government in ensuring the existing rights under the *Bail Act* are maintained.

Further, I note the Attorney-General's second reading speech, which described how the government is conscious of the risk of net widening and is therefore ensuring that NT police develop robust protocols for the use of electronic monitoring, including guarding against risks. The opposition might feel, by some of us saying we have inherited a broken system, that we are laying blame and are playing party politics. The system is broken. We did not walk in to a system which is efficient, effective or just. For that reason we have to establish these policies and protocols. We are looking at long-term effects and not resorting to knee-jerk reactions.

Because the previous government did such a fantastic job of misleading the public and, dare I say it, each other by painting a picture of tough boys and regurgitating the 'tough on crime' rhetoric—about which my colleague, the Member for Fong Lim so correctly said, "Tough on crime" rhetoric is a political statement, and a cheap one at that—we need to continue to highlight that the system is broken. I am not one to keep beating the drum about how it is the other person's fault. That is counterproductive and, quite frankly, is not in my nature.

The proposal given effect to in this bill is to expand the use of electronic monitoring to bail granted by police, which is what we are doing. That is what the bill is stating.

I commend the bill to the parliament.

Mr GUYULA (Nhulunbuy): Madam Speaker, I stand here not as a member from the government or opposition; I am here as an Independent member from the Yolngu Nations Assembly. Things that I hear and things I want to say—I want to try to attract to the ears of government and the law to try to have better communication between us and my people, with our law that we live by.

Whilst I understand the perspective of other members who will support this bill, I do not support it, because, once again, I fear that we are making laws to suit non-Indigenous society. That is the point I am trying to make.

Most of the people in Northern Territory gaols and remand are Indigenous. Many Indigenous people are in gaol because NT law lacks the idea of legitimacy. The other central reason Indigenous people are in gaol is due to severe communication failure by the parliament when it creates law, police in their enforcement of these laws, and courts in their judgments of these laws. This is particularly true for people in my electorate.

The ability to electronically monitor people will not assist legitimacy or communication. I predict it will make these issues worse. It will increase fear and dislike of the police. For example, if a police officer wants to find someone skipping bail, they can ask a man or woman clan leader. If we want a solution it is not with greater enforcement powers—powers which dehumanise justice. Justice dependency must be dealt with.

In our community we want police discretion handed back to elders. We want our sovereign right to punish and rehabilitate our people ourselves.

I know it is a little hard, but, from my cultural perspective, in this parliament we want the clear message that we have a system where we can punish and go through justice. Through this system it is a bit hard, but I need this government to understand that I have views that not many people would understand. As I said, I am not standing on either side of government, but as an Independent member, and this is my view, which leaders in the community would understand and see as achievable.

Ms LAWLER (Education): Madam Speaker, I want to spend some time today explaining why I support the Bail Amendment Bill, as well as thank the Attorney-General for all the work that has gone into this bill.

I am sure every member in this House has a story about how crime has impacted on them or the people in their community. In my electorate of Drysdale I have heard many stories about the impacts crime is having on the Palmerston area. We have had two community meetings recently, which I attended, at Driver Primary School. I heard loud and clear the issues that people are facing in our community.

There was a real and understandable degree of passion at both meetings. In addition to expressing their concerns about their property and sense of security, people also offered views on what the community and the government might do together to address juvenile crime.

I heard loudly and clearly that people are concerned about crime and want to look at solutions. There is a genuine feel in the community that we have all done things in the past but, as Minister McCarthy said, for the grace of our parents and carers we were able to get back on the right track. Our concern is that in Palmerston there are some young people—and it is concerning that offenders are getting younger and younger—who are not getting back on the right track.

What can we put in place to ensure if someone offends early on, in those younger years when they are led astray very easily—how do we get them back on track and keep them on track? It is one part of a whole. We are looking at wraparound services, but we also need deterrents. The ankle monitoring is about that.

I hear loudly and clearly at those community meetings that people were concerned and want to be part of the solution. One of the most consistent messages expressed to the Minister for Territory Families, the Member for Brennan and me at those meetings was that there is a need to address the problems with the Territory's bail system. People feel that our current bail system is being treated with lack of regard by too many offenders, particularly young offenders.

The truth is, there has been a distinct lack of accountability by successive governments over the years, and now is the time to do something about it. It is views such as those expressed at the community meetings that have guided the government's decision to amend the *Bail Act* on urgency. People have had their say, and the government is listening and acting. We are amending the *Bail Act* because we think it is an important step in putting the victims of crime first and breaking the cycle of crime.

Despite the frustrations expressed at those meetings, the people of Palmerston made it clear they want young people to be helped to avoid a life of crime, rather than being allowed to simply slip between the cracks and become lost in the justice system. We need to talk to the kids committing crimes, and their families, and ask them why they are making these choices to offend.

It starts with young kids. I am supportive of this government's work in the early years because it is about boundaries for kids. Parents need the ability to say no to children and bring their children up with clear boundaries so they understand right and wrong. A saying I like is, 'It is easy to say no to a four-year-old, but it is much harder to say no to a 14-year-old'.

As families and caregivers, those consistent, clear boundaries and understanding what you can and cannot do—what is right and what is wrong—need to start when your child is a toddler. It is very hard to change those boundaries at 14 if you have not enforced them with your four-year-old.

The reasons for a young person offending—this *Bail Act* is not just about young people; it is about all the people involved in our justice system, but I will focus on young people with my Minister for Education hat on. In the electorate of Drysdale, some of the major issues we face regarding crime involve young people.

The reasons for young people committing crimes are complex. That is why we are employing youth workers, to work with families and individuals. They need to be case managed. This is anecdotal, but some young kids commit crime because they are hungry. If they are breaking into somewhere to get food—the only thing taken during one of the recent break-ins, at Moulden school, was some lollies. It is highly concerning to me if there are families in which children are not being fed.

Anecdotally, in our remote communities some of the break-ins into teacher housing and government employee housing are for food. That is one thing we can and need to work on. You can work on it when you case manage and understand the reason for that child or young person committing the crime. It is about working with those families to address some of the bigger-picture issues which the Member for Barkly talked about, such as alcohol. If money is being spent on alcohol, gambling or whatever else, it is

not necessarily being prioritised to be spent on children for food and clothing. Why a person breaks in and commits a crime is very complex.

I have concerns about foetal alcohol syndrome as well. When there are young people who do not know the cause and effect, or the reasons, and cannot see the right from the wrong, it is a very complex issue. Education then plays a key part in working with and supporting those children with additional needs, special education sport and inclusion support assistance. Education makes sure those children have boundaries and the families have support with those children.

There can be some clear reasons why. There is obviously the thrill of it, peer pressure and issues around young people's drug use. All those things are very complex. There are no simple answers, such as continuing to lock them up. We need to work on addressing anger issues in young people and supporting people with no hope. There are issues surrounding mental health as well.

We think crime can be sorted very simply. The opposition members think they have some or all of the answers, but there is no silver bullet. It is about place-based, individual-based and whole-of-community solutions—working with our young people to make sure they avoid a life of crime rather than being allowed to slip through the cracks and become lost in our justice system.

Commander Brent Warren attended the second forum and told the audience electronic monitoring would have a positive effect on efforts to break the cycle of crime, as well as pushing young people away from the prospect of reoffending. That is what is so important—getting young people away from the prospect of reoffending. We are concerned about the victims of crime, and that is the big picture. This is about addressing those issues around crime so we do not see occurrences of reoffending.

As Commander Warren said at the meeting, having round-the-clock monitoring of electronic devices will mean that any breach of a person's condition of bail, such as leaving the area they are restricted to or going to places where they are not supposed to be, will be detected at the monitoring centre, allowing police to act immediately.

Police will be alerted if someone tampers with their ankle bracelet. He said that any information of this nature could be used by police to prosecute the offender. When we talk about changing behaviours, that message needs to be made loud and clear. If you have an ankle bracelet on and you tamper with it and break the conditions of bail, then the full force of the law is required and the police will then prosecute.

Commander Warren described the monitoring device as a powerful tool for police. This government wants to support our police to do their job of keeping our community safe. The bill seeks, for the first time, to give police the power to fit monitoring devices to people on bail awaiting court appearances. This will give police the power to monitor those on bail in real time. Until now, only courts could direct people to be fitted with monitoring devices as a condition of bail.

Fitting electronic monitoring devices to those on police bail will reduce the prospect of reoffending between the time someone is arrested and when they appear in court. The Chief Minister spoke anecdotally about a case where a young person had continued to offend while on bail; we know that story.

Before being fitted with monitoring devices, people will be assessed for suitability to enter into an agreement to have a device fitted. This is likely to include young offenders, the very group the community wants to see prevented from coming off the rails and finding their way into a criminal environment.

Once these amendments become law it will be up to police to determine what type of device will be used, as well as their exact operational needs, which will guide their use. Giving police the choice to use electronic monitoring will reduce the pressures on police. They will no longer need to spend so many hours policing people's homes and disrupting families late in the evening to check where people are. This information will be available to them in real time electronically.

As the Attorney-General said, this government is committed to addressing the cycle of crime in our community in a holistic way. The research from England and Wales on the use of electronic monitoring of youths on bail indicates that electronic monitoring improves compliance, especially when part of a support package. We are a government that will look at evidence, so it is good to see that the evidence in England and Wales is supporting the use of electronic monitoring devices. It has to be part of a whole package; it is not a one-off silver bullet. It is part of a support package for families and young people.

Our move to expand electronic monitoring follows a number of initiatives by this government in recent months aimed at tackling crime and putting the victim first. We talked about the short-term, medium-term and long-term responses. This is an immediate response and it will have a long-term effect. It will change the behaviours that we want to see changed.

In February we introduced an \$18m juvenile justice package, which will invest in 52 youth diversion workers and put a greater focus on victims and fund diversionary programs, including wilderness camps. Twenty-five of the new youth diversion workers will be based in the Darwin and Palmerston region, and training for those new officers is already under way.

Talking to the Minister for Territory Families—that training is needed. When you work with these children—they are complex young people. The large majority of our young people do the right thing all the time. We have all been to awards ceremonies and school assemblies where we see the kids who know what school is all about. They attend every day and do very well in our education system, but there are disadvantaged kids who have complex needs and often are the ones we see getting into trouble.

To have our youth diversion workers trained, especially in the area of trauma—some of these young people committing crimes have seen some traumatic events and have been witnesses to domestic violence or other things that happen in their homes. For our youth diversion workers to have the skills to work with those young people is vital. Our school staff and teachers are being trained in managing kids dealing with trauma as well.

The package will also see an expansion of youth justice and victim conferencing, something people want to be more accessible. Some people may not be interested in victim conferencing, but there are many who are. It gives the victims the opportunity—but the perpetrators also hear, loud and clear, the impacts of their actions. This government believes giving victims of crimes a greater voice in the justice process is important.

Victim–offender conferencing provides victims the option to speak with offenders of the impacts of their crime on them and their family. It can also help the offender take responsibility for their offence and give them the opportunity to try to put things right.

In January this year 18 frontline officers were assigned to the job of tackling youth crime. This government has already promised to recruit and train 120 additional police officers and build a new police station in Palmerston. All of that is part of the bigger picture.

We talk about a holistic approach to crime and education. All those things need to work together to address the issue of crime. We know it is not a simple, silver-bullet solution, but a holistic approach—with the carrot on a stick—is vitally important.

Education will play an important role in our response in developing a better and safer Territory. However, as with so many sectors in the Territory, education requires long-term generational change, which means supporting families and their children from birth. Many families need a range of supports to provide the best possible start in life for their children. This requires initiatives that are evidence based, well-coordinated and provide the support that children and their families need. As part of this plan we will expand the Families as First Teachers program, which has been running in a number of our remote and very remote communities.

Two weeks ago I visited the Ludmilla Families as First Teachers program. It is about working with the little ones and providing parents with the skills of managing their children and setting boundaries. There are practical things within Families as First Teachers to do with nutrition, getting babies to sleep and supporting families in managing children.

A few of us have had teenagers in our lives, such as Minister McCarthy and the Member for Sanderson. We all know how hard that is, but they come out the other end. Mine are in their 20s now, but it is hard work for any family when bringing up teenagers. It is even harder in society now because of technology and other things that make it hard for children to say no and push away peer influences.

My extended family supported me with my teenagers, so it is important we support families to provide boundaries, teach them to say no to teenagers and make sure they are involved in positive things. It is our intention to work with parents and communities to make more Territory children school ready, focusing on the early years. Studies have constantly confirmed the value of supporting families and improving early childhood outcomes as a way to address social disadvantage and associated crime.

As Minister for Education I am focused on driving improvements in educational outcomes for all Territorians, working with families and communities to achieve our goals. When you are well educated you have greater choices in your future and are better equipped to positively engage in the community.

We are supporting children and families to give NT children the best possible start in life and break the cycle of disadvantage.

I believe the bill currently before the House that allows police to fit and monitor electron bracelets for offenders on police bail will be a valuable tool in our ongoing work to support the victims of crime and break the cycle of crime affecting our community.

Debate suspended.

The Assembly suspended.

MINISTERIAL ARRANGEMENTS **Question Time**

Ms FYLES (Leader of Government Business): Madam Speaker, I advise that the Minister for Housing and Community Development, as advised this morning, will be absent this afternoon. Questions on Public Employment and Essential Services will be taken by the Deputy Chief Minister, and questions relating to the Housing portfolio will be taken by the Chief Minister.

PETITION

Petition No 8 – The Galiwin'ku Women's Space Committee to Take Action to Prevent Domestic and Family Violence

Ms WAKEFIELD (Braitling)(by leave): Madam Speaker, I present a petition from 387 petitioners, not conforming to standing orders, relating to the Galiwinku Women's Space committee to take action to prevent domestic violence.

Madam Speaker, I move that the petition be read.

Motion agreed to; petition read:

As a member of the Galiwin'ku community, I support the Galiwin'ku Women's Space committee to take action to:

- *Prevent domestic and family violence through education and mediation*
- *Support the victims of domestic and family violence*
- *Support the building of a domestic violence shelter in Galiwin'ku.*

BAIL AMENDMENT BILL **(Serial 18)**

Continued from earlier this day.

Mr McCONNELL (Stuart): Madam Speaker, I support this bill, but my support is not without some reservations.

I remember clearly that when I was a park ranger in the 1990s GIS, or geographic information systems, were becoming more widely available and moving out of hard research environments into the office and business environments. GIS was a relatively new way of undertaking land management and was thought of as a magical tool.

Some people truly believe that GIS would completely change biodiversity conservation and remote monitoring and would replace hard field work on the ground. They were fundamentally wrong. In the same way, while I agree that electronic monitoring of people on bail may be an effective deterrent of further criminal behaviour, it may not prevent some people from committing further offences while awaiting a court appearance.

It should always be remembered that electronic monitoring is only one tool and it is not the magic bullet. The hard work of reducing and preventing criminal behaviour will remain challenging in the environment that our young people grow up in, and it will give people the basis to make better decisions. We are all one good or bad decision away from having a completely different outcome in our life. In the Territory there are a number of people from similar backgrounds making similar poor choices. I am referring to Indigenous people, and I am concerned about the representation of Indigenous people in the law and justice system.

The only way things will change in the long term is by providing them with access to the tools of rehabilitation, education, housing, counselling, community networks and, very importantly, employment. All of these are truly interconnected.

Changing the way people look at the world and getting them to think positively and be on a hopeful track in life is hard work on the ground. This government is doing that hard work and providing some excellent leadership in that area. Without doing this hard work we will maintain the cycle of crime. The cyclical and repetitive nature of crime in the Northern Territory frustrates the rest of the community, and we have heard that several times today.

Why is this happening yet again? It is because we have not sufficiently dealt with the causes of criminal behaviour. I believe that electronic monitoring can be an effective crime prevention tool for some people. I believe that as a last resort we sometimes have to lock people up in facilities like Don Dale, but we need to remember that this is only managing the symptoms, and a full suite of rehabilitation and prevention tools will still be required to deal with the disease, so to speak.

If the CLP was bringing this bill before the House, I would, rightfully, have a few trust issues. However, under the Labor government, while I have some reservations, I feel more comfortable with these changes. I sincerely believe that there is a suite of services being delivered and developed that will support people to make better decisions in life.

I remain concerned about how electronic monitoring impacts on those it is used on, especially young people who are on bail, waiting for their court date. While it is better to be waiting on bail than in remand, what are the negative long-term impacts? I have not seen the research on that yet.

Are we likely to end up with electronic monitoring used mainly on Aboriginal people? How will they perceive this tool? I have heard that modern ankle bracelets are being compared to leg irons of old. The perceived racial targeting will also potentially lead to resistance, undermining the effectiveness of this tool.

I have consulted on this in my electorate, talked about the idea of this being a measure of restraint and asked how the community will react to it. Deep concerns are being felt within the communities in the electorate of Stuart. I am talking about people who have English as a third language. They all speak at least two of their native tongues. We need to be very careful. When I have consulted my constituents I have been convinced that people know it is the government's intention to keep people out of detention for as long as possible. My constituents know that offenders cannot get away scot-free, and there is a repercussion for damaging other people's property or person.

I received resounding support and feedback from my electorate with, 'We support the government in making these hard decisions. We are watching you. We want to make sure you are representing our interests in the best way, but we are willing to trial these new ideas. We know the outcomes for young people who get involved in the youth justice system are not what we would like them to be.' People are pretty cool with that, but we need to ensure we keep up the communication.

It is a sad and unacceptable reality that the statistics identify Aboriginal people as the majority of Territorians who are interfacing with the criminal justice and corrections systems. It is simply a true statement. I encourage all my colleagues, especially those in Cabinet, to make sure that in the consultation on the development of these further policies, consulting with Indigenous people is front and centre. I am sure that will be the case.

There are parents and elders in the Aboriginal community who are very concerned about their children coming into contact with the criminal justice system. Often they feel a bit helpless to prevent it. They may come to see electronic monitoring as a reasonable tool for crime prevention, and ankle bracelets being better able to rehabilitate these offenders. I am talking mainly about youth offenders, but I understand this legislation also affects adult offenders.

Beyond juvenile offending and property crime, domestic violence is a scourge across the Territory. This kind of violence has, unfortunately, become normalised and it will take an enormous amount of work to shift the thinking and behaviour of our community.

I hope electronic monitoring is another tool that will assist in the reduction of reoffending in the area of domestic violence. It will achieve nothing in isolation. The presence of an ankle bracelet will not prevent reoffending in every case; however, I am operating under the assumption that discretion will be used in applying electronic monitoring devices and evidence-based decisions will be made—I will correct that. I am not operating under that assumption; I know these decisions will be made under an evidence base.

I understand the government's interest in responding quickly and effectively to the spikes in crime and the community's call for further help. I understand why this bill is being brought forward on urgency; however, I believe electronic monitoring is not the be-all and end-all, and we must keep working on the causes of crime in our communities. A lot of that has to do with gaps in opportunity and hope.

I also want to see that electronic monitoring is properly evaluated at regular intervals and that this data is available to the public and used to inform future decision-making.

Overall I support this bill and the use of electronic monitoring as a tool to reduce crime. I understand it is not a long-term fix for the high rates of Aboriginal incarceration in the Northern Territory. I look forward to this government continuing to work with the Aboriginal community, parents and families towards solutions to this entrenched problem.

I truly believe that we have to work together as a community. We need to understand that we have shared values. If we understand those values it is easier to celebrate our differences rather than fear them. We live in a brilliant place. Alice Springs is a community that is close to my heart, where I spent a lot of time living in or around. We see Alice Springs' reputation being besmirched recently. These things are happening because there is the view that there is a problem in the Northern Territory.

The Gunner Labor government is working very hard on fixing those issues. This is one of the most important issues we need to work on. As has been said by many of my colleagues, everyone has the right to feel safe in their home and community. This is an important part of that.

I commend this bill to the House.

Ms MOSS (Environment and Natural Resources): Madam Speaker, I, too, support the Bail Amendment Bill that has been brought forward on urgency. I thank the Attorney-General for all her work on this bill.

As has been said by many of my colleagues in the Chamber, all members of the community have the right to feel safe. Our businesses have the right to safety and security in their premises. This is something we all agree on.

Youth crime is a complex problem requiring a range of short-term, medium-term and long-term solutions. I want to turn to comments made by the opposition and make it clear, as I did earlier in the week, that education is an integral part of the solution when it comes to youth crime. It is integral to our ability to achieve long-term change and keep young people out of the justice system.

Making sure our kids are engaged in school will go a long way towards keeping them out of trouble, building their confidence and opening up positive opportunities in the future.

This week I heard the Opposition Leader state that the opposition has been pushing for these amendments since crime started becoming an issue, but youth crime is hardly a new problem. Successive governments have grappled with this issue. It seems the Opposition Leader was oblivious to it over the past four years, especially when he was a member of Cabinet. The opposition members forget that they have been and will continue to be judged not on what they grandstand about now, but on what they did, or in some cases did not do, when they had the platform of government.

Better education, better housing, employment opportunities and stronger communities are needed to create the change we all want to see. With this issue at the front of Territorians' minds, and all of us here in the Chamber as representatives for our communities, I urge caution in the way we talk about these issues—against the push for knee-jerk solutions over well thought-out action. This government is committed to long-term change that makes a difference now and into the future.

We have and will continue to listen to what Territorians tell us about this issue, and we are taking action. We are investing a record \$18.2m per year to overhaul our youth justice system and employ 52 youth diversion workers across the Northern Territory, all of whom will become operational over the next couple of months.

This week the Minister for Territory Families spoke about 25 new youth justice officers who will commence their specialist training and take roles at Don Dale and Alice Springs Youth Detention Centres. I wish them all the best with that training this week. Funding for NGOs working in this space has more than doubled, opening up more diversion options, such as wilderness camps. The non-government sector has been very vocal on this issue, collectively creating the Making Justice Work campaign.

Our non-government organisations are on the front line for supporting youth from disadvantaged and troubled backgrounds. They know better than anyone that these children and young people need the same as other young Territory people; they need adults who support them, who they can trust and rely on, and who can guide them towards positive and respectful behaviour rather than down a destructive path.

The evidence shows that locking up kids without the right therapeutic support does not work if we want to put these kids on a better path and give them a real chance in life. We just need a government that is gutsy enough to heed that evidence. We are that government.

Under this government, victim-offender conferencing will be expanded. This is particularly important. Over the course of my term in this House I have spoken about restorative justice principles. In my previous role, working as a resources officer and then coordinator of an early intervention program focused on young people and binge drinking, I found the training so good that I did it twice. Restorative justice works.

Many young offenders have not thought about the impacts of their behaviour. Victim-offender conferencing provides a meaningful opportunity for victims to be heard and to express the harms caused by the offence, and for the offender to truly comprehend and take responsibility for their actions. Restorative practice principles underpin our youth diversion programs, and I wholeheartedly support them and believe they work.

The message was clearly delivered by police at a youth issues forum I attended in Katherine in April 2015. It is not a new issue; it just needs the right backing to work. That is what this government is doing. I mention this because victim-offender conferencing does not necessarily fit the narrative that some politicians and political parties like to espouse, that these kids should simply be locked up. That is akin to giving up on them and setting them on a lifelong path of antisocial behaviour.

By making youth understand they are part of our community, and are therefore expected to abide by the moral standards of our community, we are more likely to set them on a positive path. Ultimately we must all get behind the initiatives that work if we want to achieve real, sustained change in our community, and, once and for all, put a stop to the circular, unproductive debate that has been going on for years regarding youth crime.

In January the Chief Minister, also responsible for Police, Fire and Emergency Services, announced 18 frontline police officers, who would be specifically allocated to tackle youth crime, in addition to those working with Task Force Sonoma, which is Territory-wide, and Strike Force Winx in Alice Springs. The Chief Minister spoke this week about the roll-out of body-worn cameras.

The Banned Drinker Register will be reinstated later this year, a measure the former government scrapped in the interests of politics over community outcomes. This is a measure that many members of our community support because they know it makes a difference when it comes to antisocial behaviour in our community. We are listening and acting when it comes to revitalising our city and town centres, and will continue to do so to further advance this incredible place we all call home. That is really important in this debate regarding youth and community crime.

The amendments before the House will provide an additional tool to police in monitoring those on police bail. I wholeheartedly support the work the Attorney-General has undertaken to bring this forward as quickly as possible to ensure it is done in the right way.

The community has spoken loudly and clearly on this issue and the government is listening and acting. That is our track record over the last seven months and we intend to keep going.

These amendments will assist in minimising disruption for other members of the household where someone may be on police bail. It is important to provide an environment that is better for family members engaged in work, school and other things in life, especially for children. It is more congruent to achieving compliance with bail.

As the Attorney-General stated when introducing these amendments, police currently have to doorknock and rely on other intelligence to enforce police bail conditions, such as a curfew, and this is less than ideal. These amendments will give police the tools to do their job effectively and efficiently.

Finally, let us not forget that under the CLP we saw youth and community services struggling and, in some cases, forced to shut their doors. I want to give the Member for Araluen some credit, as she remains to this day one of the only members of the former CLP government who took some responsibility for the impacts of this.

I refer to a newsletter from April 2015 in which the Member for Araluen said:

Since the CLP has been in Government, we have reduced funding to night time youth services, leaving the town exposed again to serious social unrest. With the closure of the Tangentyere Night Time Youth Program, Congress Night Time Youth Service, the Youth Hub and YSOS (Youth Street Outreach Service), there are scant youth services left on the ground. Savings had to be made, but we have now cut over \$2.5m worth of annual funding to Alice Springs youth services.

I have been heavily connected to the youth sector for a long time. I was there when this was happening; it felt like the guts were being ripped out of the youth and community sector. Is it any wonder that we are where we are? These things have an impact.

The CLP opposition does not like us talking about the past, but if we cannot look at the things that have led us to where we are we will almost certainly make the same mistakes. We do not want to do that. The community is paying the price for this short-sighted decision-making, which has led to less support and diversionary activity for troubled young people.

Let us not forget the CLP government was forced to re-establish youth night services in Alice Springs after defunding the same services, or similar, earlier in its term. The previous government talked tough, but ultimately did nothing and made matters worse.

This government has listened and is acting to ensure Territorians are safer and young people are getting the support and treatment they need.

I commend the bill to the House.

Ms WAKEFIELD (Braitling): Madam Speaker, I support the amendment to the *Bail Act* to include the use of electronic monitoring devices. I thank the Attorney-General for bringing this amendment to the House because it is an important one. As my colleagues have stated, every Territorian has the right to feel safe at home, at work, on the streets and at play. They have the right to expect their homes, businesses and properties to be secure.

I wish to speak about the importance of electronic monitoring devices as part of a suite of bail enforcement measures this government has brought forward for young offenders and as a tool to keep women safe in cases of domestic and family violence.

Since I was elected I have attended a number of meetings in Alice Springs and Palmerston where community members have raised concerns regarding young people and repeat offenders committing crimes while on bail. I have heard concerns about the number of break-ins, vandalism and car thefts in their streets and homes. Our government has been quick in responding to these concerns. We have introduced a number of measures to prevent youth crime, support victims and make the community feel safer.

Last month I was proud to stand next to the Chief Minister for our government's announcement of \$18.2m for youth justice. This is an historic investment. The breadth of the investment across such a wide range of services is also historic in the Northern Territory. It represents this government's commitment to a strong and prosperous future for the Northern Territory. We need to get this right if we are to have a strong future in the Territory.

This money means that, for the first time in the Territory, young offenders on bail will be case managed to provide enforcement, accountability and support to stop them reoffending. This is about making sure our bail system works. The package doubles the resources available each year. We will be looking for non-government organisations to deliver youth diversion programs and some bail accommodation services.

The bail accountability program will ensure that young people are complying with their bail conditions and not out on the streets reoffending whilst on bail. The bail accountability includes funding for 24-hour supervised accommodation in each of the major regional centres. It will employ case workers and youth workers to supervise young people whilst on bail and ensure they are meeting their bail obligations, staying on track with a good plan, going to school, attending police and court appointments, and making sure there is a package of support around them and their family.

This is a first for the Territory. When I became minister I found it astounding that every other jurisdiction in Australia had this type of support, yet the Territory has lagged behind in providing this type of program where kids are assisted to be accountable for their behaviour whilst on bail.

Our government has been quick to fill that gap. We have to make sure bail succeeds and that we keep the community safe at the same time. This is about balancing the need of the community to be safe and making sure we are doing the evidence basing that will get these kids back on track.

The amendment to the *Bail Act* to allow the use of electronic bracelets will provide another bail accountability tool. I appreciated what the Chief Minister said this morning about needing to see this as one part of the whole package we have put together. Our youth justice package provides a framework in which this tool sits. It sits as part of our domestic violence framework as well. It gives another tool to police—to give these electronic bracelets as a condition of bail.

I know that police will welcome this amendment; they have asked us to do this. Local police in Alice Springs have talked about their frustration with some of these issues—they are seeing kids reoffend—and the lack of other services supporting police, who are doing a very difficult job. I thank them for their work, especially over summer.

The research tells us that this is an effective tool. The commissioner has looked at the research from England on stopping children's behaviour escalating by using this tool. Once kids are on a pathway it can be very easy for them to escalate their behaviour. This is meant to be a circuit breaker. Police will be able to use this device to monitor the young person and see if they are breaking the conditions of their bail—things like monitoring curfews and geographic locations.

It is also a physical reminder to kids that they are being monitored and people will know exactly what they are doing. They will not be able to get away with it. It is a constant physical reminder that they need to be accountable for their behaviour.

If they do make the decision to reoffend there is evidence that can then be used in court to make sure we get a better outcome for those kids and that intervention is occurring at the right time. We have been listening, and the Members for Brennan and Drysdale and I have heard the concerns from Palmerston. I believe the Member for Namatjira has heard from people in Alice Springs about how concerned they are, which is why we are implementing this into Alice Springs and Palmerston first. It is also part of the broader package which will be implemented into those centres first with our youth diversion workforce.

With that suite of services we have a number of other measures. One of the things we are very passionate about is making sure we fund our NGOs to do the work on the ground and increase the universal youth services which prevent getting kids into trouble in the first place. We need to have the vision to invest in those kids and the services that are trusted by kids. They have a relationship with families on the ground. NGOs are also much more nimble in responding to issues on the ground. If there is a change in behaviour which they need to respond to, or a new issue emerging in smaller communities, NGOs are much better placed to do this work.

Programs such as wilderness camps, boot camps and employment—we are looking at some driver offender programs, behaviour management issues, substance abuse and suite of mental health services. This is where the NGO sector can really support our kids and families and intervene early.

I have spoken in the House about the expansion of our victim and youth conferencing, and I was pleased to hear the Member for Casuarina talk about her experience in the training. It is brilliant training and important work. People at the meetings in Palmerston raised their concerns regarding reoffending. The evidence

base of the kids who are reoffending—there is some really good evidence that victim and youth conferencing is the best way forward in relation to kids who are reoffending.

During the last sittings the Member for Spillett questioned the evidence base for that decision. I was happy to send her a literature review in the gap between sittings because there is significant evidence that this type of program works, because it provides opportunities for all stakeholders to develop solutions for paying amends to the harm they have caused. This is about making very direct and personal amends for the impacts of the crime on the person that crime has been committed against. There is a plan around that which addresses individual offending behaviour. One of the risks is that, under pressure, our courts have become like a factory, churning people through. That is no reflection on the professionalism of the people within our court system; it is more to do with the work demands that have been placed on them.

This is a way of making sure we tailor responses to individual children, their families and, most importantly, individual victims so their voice is heard and they feel empowered and can have a say in what happens to a person who has committed a crime against them.

We had such a pressing need in Palmerston that we employed Jesuit Social Services to do a very important pilot youth conference. We have had youth conferencing in the Territory before, and I acknowledge Relationships Australia and the YWCA, which have done this work in the Northern Territory for a long time. They were very under-resourced by the previous government, but they have continued to do that work.

We have trialled a new model which is much more focused on the repeat offender end of the service delivery. I met with Jesuit Social Services last week to get an update on how it is going. They have a heap of referrals already, which is fantastic. They have completed two processes with young people. One of them is worth talking about in regard to victim impact. A young person had committed a crime; the victim then went through the conferencing process and, at the end of it, said to this young person, 'If you follow through on this I am more than happy to offer you an apprenticeship'. That is how the process works. It makes people feel personally involved and engaged. That is a great story.

I also acknowledge the Witness Assistance Service, which has been supporting victims through challenging processes. If you are not used to working in that environment, court can be very intimidating. The Attorney-General values the service's work as well.

We will continue to roll out that and a range of other programs in Darwin, Katherine and Alice Springs. We need to encourage victims to participate. Many people have raised concerns with me about participating, but every time someone participates there is extraordinary feedback. This will support those victims to participate and feel that there is a positive outcome and that they have a voice in the process.

One thing that is importantly linked to the electronic bracelets is the employment of 52 youth diversion officers, who will be located across the NT. There are 25 workers based in Darwin and Palmerston: 16 in Alice Springs; seven in Katherine; two in Tennant Creek; and two in Nhulunbuy. They are currently being recruited. We had a brilliant response to our national advertising campaign. There were 190 applications, which is brilliant. This means people want to be part of this reform and part of the future of the NT. Those workers will be co-located with officers from education and police. We are also working to ensure NGOs will be co-located in these hubs. They will be working with young people.

This is where the electronic bracelets will be very important—the Member for Spillett raised some concerns about triggers. The Police Commissioner and I discussed looking at the decision-making flow chart that one creates when drafting legislation like this—making sure Territory Families is involved in the decision-making process as early as possible, making sure our diversion workforce is making decisions regarding bail, and working closely and sharing information. That should not be in the legislation; those are operational matters.

I can assure the Member for Spillett that once a bracelet is put on a child's leg, it is a trigger for a wraparound response from Territory Families, police, education and all the services involved in that co-located system. People will automatically be assigned a worker to ensure all the things they need to do to make this tool work—and this is just a tool—will not work without those wraparound services.

Everyone has talked a lot about youth, but I want to expand on the use of this as a tool in domestic and family violence, as well as preventing further assaults and increasing the safety of women and children in the Northern Territory.

I am excited that the Police Commissioner has also decided to look at how this tool, as part of the resources given by this government to police, can work in Alice Springs and the cross-border region with South Australia to make sure we keep men, or anyone using violence against their partner, accountable for that violence and the conditions of their DVO and bail. It is an exciting use of technology to keep women safe.

This week we also talked about the implications of body-worn camera and video evidence bill. Putting these two together as a clever use of technology is an important way forward. This week, the Attorney-General gave her response to the coroner's report into Ms Murphy and Ms McCormack. The coroner commented on the nature of the violence against both of these women, the fairly relentless that was occurring over a long period of time before their death. I believe that this electronic bracelet monitoring can assist with those perpetrators of violence who continue to assault their partners despite repeated DVOs, charges and periods in gaol.

A number of women I have worked with over the years come to mind. I did a quick audit of who this bill might benefit, and within five minutes I could think of a long list of women whose safety would be improved by this. There has been quite a lot of research into domestic violence, the type of behaviour that is mainly perpetrated by men against women, and the risk factors. One of the strong risk factors for a potential homicide is that someone repeatedly breaches their domestic violence order. They have no respect for it as a legal document and do not see the police as having a role in stopping their behaviour. They do not see it as a sanction. That is a significant area for us.

Central Australia has a very high rate of recidivist offenders perpetrating domestic violence. I commend the commissioner for thinking of using this technology in this way. It is an important step forward. I have been trying to think of practical solutions to how this will apply to women who were scared and came to the women's shelter because they heard that man was coming to town. The bush telegraph is an amazing thing; it works quickly and people know when other people are on the move. You would have women turn up at the gate with their kids, saying, 'We have heard he is in a car coming from ...'—whatever remote community—'... into town and we need to come to the shelter now.

I had a vision; what if we knew it was true or not. As wonderful as relying on the bush telegraph is, it would be good for those women to have confidence that if their partner was not where he was meant to be—if he was bailed to Alice Springs and was not allowed to go near her house—that information of his whereabouts would make her feel comfortable. She would not have to uproot the kids and come to the shelter just in case.

These are important things to helping women feel confident that their lives will not be interrupted at any moment. That is the type of fear many women and children live with on a day-to-day basis. The use of this technology to give them much more certainty and confidence that they will know where their partner is—and as technology advances we will see even further advances in this. It is great that we have a police force that is so prepared to be innovative in this space, and we look forward to working with the South Australian Government because it could have great implications.

We have already been leaders in the national field in regard to policing across borders in the matters of domestic and family violence, and this is further evidence. I am very proud, as the minister responsible for domestic violence policy, that the Attorney-General has introduced three pieces of legislative reform already, in around six months of government—three pieces of vital legislation focusing on women and children's safety, addressing the significant issues of domestic violence in our community, taking it seriously, and giving police and the courts the tools to do their job. She should be commended for this work.

In conclusion, being a new minister, as the Member for Araluen keeps reminding me, I am very proud to be part of a team that has been on the front foot in our first six months of government, tackling long-term issues from my previous life working in the non-government sector. Governments have not always been very strong on providing a well thought-through suite of responses.

It is very easy—we saw this repeatedly in the last term of government and it was one of the things which drove me to put my hand up to run. When you start coming up with panicked thought-bubble policy you end up spending a lot of money on the wrong things. Being part of a team that is thoughtful, bringing forward three pieces of legislation in six months, all focused on women's safety—committing ongoing money for a suite of services to address youth crime and using technology, such as electronic bracelets, in innovative ways.

The previous government introduced electronic bracelets, but the next step was missing—innovation and ability to work with and listen to people on the ground to make sure we see the full impacts of that technology and how to use it. I am really pleased we are introducing this legislation so we can use this tool amongst a range of early intervention to get long-term, medium-term and short-term responses to some of our most challenging issues which have not only happened over the last summer. These are long-term issues facing the Northern Territory.

If the solutions were easy we would have solved these issues a long time ago. I am very proud to be part of a government that is able to take a calm, sensible, evidence-based approach to these problems. We will come up with great outcomes for Northern Territorians.

Ms AH KIT (Karama): Madam Speaker, it is a pleasure to speak in support of the Bail Amendment Bill, which will expand the use of electronic monitoring to bail granted by police. Territorians are tired of the amount of crime being committed, as is the government, which is why we outlined our commitment to support Territorians to break the cycle of crime. We can hold up our end, but we cannot make people do something they do not want to do. As a born and bred Territorian I have heard many stories and witnessed the impacts of criminal behaviour on households, extended families, communities, schools and beyond.

When I was growing up I spent a lot of time telling my friends and family exactly what I thought they should be doing. I am not sure why. Perhaps it was because I thought I knew everything and what was best for everyone. Apparently that is a trait I still carry with me. It was not until I changed my mindset and approach that I had more success in helping my friends, family and community. Instead of telling people what to do I chose to listen to their predicaments, help them obtain information on the pros and cons of the decisions they needed to make, and let them make their informed decision without pressure or judgement.

This approach yielded far better results than I could have anticipated. I watched people seek help to work through their problems, gather information to enable them to make an informed decision and consider the repercussions of their decision before they made it. I carried this approach into my community work when I helped to organise public events and when I provided personal support to vulnerable people.

I am sharing this today to highlight the importance of supporting people to make informed decisions, and, more importantly, to attest that I have witnessed many amazing outcomes as a result of somebody feeling empowered to help themselves.

Electronic monitoring is already in use by Community Corrections and courts in the Northern Territory. It is an important measure that allows them to monitor and encourage compliance with relevant orders. The expanded use of electronic monitoring will enable police to monitor the movement of an individual wearing the bracelet. NT Police work extremely hard to serve and protect all Territorians, and we must continue to find ways to support them in their work.

Electronic monitoring has proven to be a helpful tool for the courts and Community Corrections. This helpful tool should be provided to police to add value to the service they provide to us all.

Expanded use of electronic monitoring will not serve as a quick fix for offenders, including youth offenders. It will be used in conjunction with the number of other measures we have announced as part of our \$18.2m overhaul of the Territory youth justice system. Our government values proactive measures. This is evident in our investment in 52 youth diversion works, our \$6m investment for non-government organisations to deliver evidence-based diversion programs, and the employment of youth justice offices in the Don Dale and Alice Springs Youth Detention Centres.

I thank the Minister for Territory Families for delivering this suite of measures and look forward to my community reaping the benefits in the future.

Most, if not all, of our electorates have been impacted by crime in recent crimes. We all want to do more to tackle this serious issue. I support the Bail Act Amendment Bill and thank the Attorney-General and Minister for Justice for her commitment to addressing crime in the Northern Territory and for bringing this important bill before the House.

Mr COLLINS (Fong Lim): Madam Speaker, I support the government's Bail Act Amendment Bill. I support the government's intention in introducing the proposed amendments. I also commend the Commissioner for Police for his and his officers' efforts in working with the government on these issues to reduce the effect of crime on the residents of the Northern Territory.

As Chair of the Select Committee on Opening Parliament to the People, I appreciate the need for a review and for giving due consideration to bills passing through this Chamber. Our committee has considered the need for bills to be passed on urgency and this will be a recommendation of the committee when its White Paper is tabled. I note the concerns the Member for Nelson regarding the need for this bill to pass on urgency, or if it would be better to provide a period of review. While I have sympathy for the member's position, the real politic of the Territory at present is such that there is no alternative.

Both the opposition and local media appear to do everything in their power to create a climate of fear and loathing in community when it comes to crime. There are constant references to the 'crime crisis,' and constant hyperbole in reporting and commentary. These things do nothing to assist the problem. This over-the-top characterisation builds unnecessary additional anxiety in the community, and it only serves to make the process of finding a solution much more difficult. This government is not responsible for the current criminal behaviour, just as the previous government was not responsible for the criminal behaviour during its term.

No government wants to see crime in the community or the hurt that behaviour brings to individuals, families and the general community; however, the stark reality is that there will always be some crime. I have no doubt that all governments do what they can to reduce crime and criminal activity. There is no monopoly on political intentions in this area. Priorities are regularly different and financial considerations are always a factor.

Unfortunately over-the-top reporting and commentary has a two-fold effect. In the first instance it undermines the community's confidence in the government. It also creates the ever-increasing expectations of reactionary responses. Sometimes governments do not deserve the confidence of the community, but most times they do. Sometimes governments need to react quickly, but problems like dealing effectively with crime and criminal behaviour in the community are complex and require longer-term, more considered responses.

In recent times we have seen the rise of a populist president in the United States. It has been a measure of Donald Trump's candidacy and presidency that he makes simple statements without providing evidence or detail. Unfortunately it seems to be of no consequence to his followers that this alleged leader of the free world not only struggles with the English language, but also the truth. This populist approach builds resentment in his supporters without providing any solutions. We are not immune from this type of reaction.

As indicated by the Member for Spillett yesterday, there are groups around Darwin publicly talking about undertaking vigilante actions. There are community Facebook pages that have changed their nature and have begun receiving postings about crime in the area and the actions that can be undertaken. This is not a good result. We cannot have a situation in which the community takes matters into its own hands.

When a community's fears are stoked for political or other purposes, unreasonable expectations are created with regard to what needs to be done. Knee-jerk reactions are often the response, and this how we end up with mandatory sentencing laws and ever-increasing custodial sentences. Mandatory or longer custodial sentences are counterproductive. Being tough on crime by increasing sentences can only have one ultimate end point, which is a life sentence for every offender.

History provides some guidance on the effectiveness of such a response. For those who are not aware, in 18th century England there was some 200 crimes which carried the ultimate sentence, the death sentence. It was not just the serious crimes you would expect like murder and treason, but the death sentence was also imposed for offences that any reasonable person would consider minor, such as pickpocketing or stealing food or handkerchiefs. Many of those convicted ultimately had their sentences commuted to transportation for the term of their natural lives to the lovely shores of New South Wales. While now that might not be such a bad thing, it was not the case in the world of the late 18th and early 19th centuries.

These were the kinds of crimes likely to be committed by those most in need and at a time when their family generally lived in poverty. The lessons here are clear: the prospect of the ultimate penalty, the loss of one's life, was apparently no deterrent for individuals committing petty poverty crimes. Dealing with the underlying problem of endemic poverty was required in those centuries to deal with these types of crimes.

This is the lesson we need to consider in the Northern Territory. We need to look seriously at restorative justice and rehabilitation. Unfortunately law and order is the perennial weed of state and Territory politics. Far too often, crime and crime statistics are used as a populist tool for political point-scoring without any real attempt to find an effective long-term solution.

Yesterday I listened to the Opposition Leader talk about his offer to work in a bipartisan manner. The issues we are talking about today could be assisted by some bipartisanship. A positive start would be a concerted effort to communicate with the community and let them know we, as a parliament, not just a government, are working together towards effective outcomes to reduce the impacts on the community. We need to work together to try to find the best possible way forward.

We in government understand that Territorians have a right to feel safe at home and at work. Our government shares the frustration and anger that many people in the Territory are experiencing. In my electorate of Fong Lim, more often than not it is businesses feeling the brunt of the recent spate of property offences. I feel particularly sorry for the hard-working small business owners, who are doing their best to build their businesses as well as a life, but are too often met with \$1000 worth of damage to their business premises.

We heard earlier about insurance claims—it was pleasing to hear the question from the Member for Nelson and the Chief Minister's answer, saying we are looking into this issue. These people are faced with significant bills to fix their properties, and we need to find a way to assist them so they can get back on their feet and get their businesses operating again.

Coming to government we knew it would be our job to make tough reforms. We recognised it would be a long-term job and we have started the process with our historic youth justice reform package. As a government we also have a responsibility to deal with the situation we face today, that is, the issue of property crime. Expanding electronic monitoring to police bail means the bail conditions will be more effectively monitored. More electronic monitoring give police the tools to encourage positive behaviour.

We had a briefing from the Police Commissioner earlier in the week, which was highly instructive. Police data shows that this will help prevent the escalation of offenders into repeat offenders—a way forward that reduces the effect of crime on the community.

I note the concerns some of my colleagues have expressed, such as the Members for Katherine and Stuart, but I believe, properly used, this reform has the potential to save children from the path of no good. If I were not an atheist I might use the quote, 'There but for the grace of God go I'. I suppose that says it all.

I look forward to the use of this technology for the protection of partners in domestic violence situations. We have lost far too many women as a result of this, and we continue to.

I commend this bill to the House.

Mr PAECH (Namatjira): Madam Speaker, I offer a big thank you to my colleague, the Member for Brainting and Minister for Territory Families. I was very happy to hear her speech regarding the commitment to youth services, and funding and resourcing them adequately.

We have heard about the video conferencing for Jesuits and other service providers. That is another level of commitment and dedication.

As a Labor member, I do not have one problem with this legislation being put before the House on urgency tonight. We have an outstanding member as our Attorney-General, a born and bred Territorian who has been with me numerous times to the regions and remote locations of the Northern Territory, and understands the challenges and complexities of those areas. Look at her across the Chamber; that is the face of an Attorney-General who is committed to delivering much-needed reform in this space.

Territorians across this great jurisdiction have the right to feel safe at home and at work. The government shares the frustration of many Territorians and the anger they feel regarding youth issues. That is why a Territory Labor government is delivering a reform that the CLP turned its back on.

Coming to government we knew we would have to make some decisions on tough reform, and that was a key commitment of the Territory Labor government. We started with the long-term job of reforming the historic youth justice reform package. As a government, we took responsibility to act urgently on these reforms and deliver them. The Attorney-General and the Minister for Territory Families have started that process now. I am very thankful for that.

Expanding electronic monitoring to police bail means that bail conditions will be more effectively monitored and policed. This provides police the extra tools they need; these tools will allow Northern Territory Police to be able to continue to deliver their job, rather than knocking on the doors of households at 3 am to check

whether those people are there when they should be. Sometimes they may accidentally cause a bit of noise when they are knocking on the door, and they might wake up young kids who are trying to get a good night's sleep so they can participate in the great education reform that Minister Lawler is rolling out.

I am mindful of all these things, and I am very proud that we have announced an overhaul of the youth justice system that will see more of an emphasis placed on victims. That is what Minister Wakefield was speaking about with her reference to the Jesuit Social Services and the victim conferencing.

This legislation will allow people to be notified if a breach has been reported and will allow families and communities to prepare. That is one of the most vital things this legislation will enable.

The great electorate of Namatjira is home to many outstations, communities and homelands. Under this legislation those outstations, communities and homelands will be far safer, because this legislation enables people to prepare when offenders have breached bail. This also enables remote police to prepare for when an offender with an electronic monitoring device has breached their bail conditions and notifications have been sent to police. We are able to trace them down. They may be on their way to a homeland or an outstation where there is a domestic violence order or another order in place that potentially puts risk or threat to women, children and the vulnerable.

I make no apologies about supporting legislation that introduces mechanisms which will provide safety to women, children and vulnerable people throughout the electorate of Namatjira and the Northern Territory. I also want to take this opportunity to put on the record that this does not dehumanise justice at all, as some members have indicated today. I make no apologies for those who will be inconvenienced by this legislation, because I want to make sure that women, children and vulnerable people across the Northern Territory are safe, and that is just what this legislation does. This legislation allows police to put extra resources on the ground to tackle crime rather than having to knock on doors. I emphasise that this legislation is for all Territorians.

I am the proud member for the electorate of Namatjira. I smile every time I mention my role as the Member for Namatjira. I will fight for everyone in my electorate, regardless of their sexual orientation, race or spiritual obligations or commitments. As their local member I will fight for them in this Chamber to the bitter end to ensure that they are well represented, because this Chamber delivers laws and reforms for everyone.

My rationale behind supporting this great legislation relates to monitoring to ensure that individuals remain in the places they have to be, for example home detention schemes or curfews—so we know when they have to be home and we make sure they do not breach it or cause harm to other members in our community. This allows for restrictions. We are able to make sure people do not go into areas that are prescribed areas. We are able to provide certainty to the victims so they can be safe in the community. There is also surveillance. This electronic monitoring legislation enables authorities to continually track someone to make sure we reduce the risk of harm to others.

This is great legislation put forward by a committed Territory Labor Attorney-General. In the electorate of Namatjira there are communities seven or eight hours away where people live in fear when they hear on the bush telegraph that a person has absconded or breached their bail conditions. The fear in someone's eyes when they worry if the knock on their door will be from someone who is not warranted to be there—who will cause harm to my people. That is why I am 100% behind this legislation.

Whether you are an Aboriginal woman living in Docker River or a non-Aboriginal person living in the rural area of Alice Springs, this legislation is for every person in the Northern Territory. It sets out to ensure that we continue to govern for all Territorians fairly and equally, and provide the duty of care that governments are responsible for.

I thank all elected members in this Chamber for their valuable input. Whether or not I share the same view, it is important to make sure that everyone has an opportunity to talk in this Chamber about whether they support something or not. I am very pleased to support this legislation and very much look forward to getting back out to the electorate of Namatjira with my colleagues, the Members for Stuart and Brainting and the Attorney-General, and talking to people about the benefits this legislation brings so they continue to live a happy and prosperous life, and not live in fear of someone rocking up when we do not know where they are.

Mr SIEVERS (Brennan): Madam Speaker, I also support the *Bail Act* amendments, electronic monitoring and this government's strong response to combat crime issues.

It is clear to all Territorians that we have had a gutful of the youth crime that occurred over the past few months and the previous two years. These issues are compounded by the fact the CLP made drastic cuts to our youth services, police and education funding. The Labor government is quickly turning around to ensure we have the services and resources back in place to prevent, intervene and address the crime issues in short and long term.

Territorians have the right to feel safe at their home and workplace. This government shares the same frustration. Territory people have expressed their views. This government is committed to addressing these issues.

I attended the two community meetings on crime with Ministers Wakefield and Lawler in Palmerston. We listened to the community's issues, took on board their concerns and consulted with our services and police on all the issues raised. From this work we have a strong, collaborate plan. This government has committed one of the biggest investments to address youth crime—an investment of \$18m to deal with these issues and make our community safe again.

I support our Palmerston community; I support those affected by crime; and I support police. I support the youth wraparound services that will combat crime in the Northern Territory.

Many of my friends are police and from frontline services. My background is police, justice and health services. I have lived their life. I have been part of their stories. I know firsthand our NT police, emergency and justice services so an amazing job, 24/7. They work hard to ensure our community is safe, and they get to incidents as soon as possible. This government recognises and values these people and services. It is one of the toughest jobs you can do, and that is why this government is backing our frontline services, community safety and youth services to support our kids to get back on the right track.

The CLP policy was to lock up kids and forget about them. We are now seeing the fruits of this policy—we and our community do not like it. The CLP forgot the fundamental truth of incarceration: everybody gets out. What product have we released into our society? We know the very sad result of poor policy by the CLP.

The government is introducing smart and collaborative policy that gives many options rather than ignoring systematic problems that have led to more crime—a product we are seeing from a poor policy over four long, regretful years.

Our government's amendments to the *Bail Act* will give police a lot more tools to monitor and address potential crime before it occurs, and respond effectively and efficiently when an incident or breach occurs.

I support the message of NT Police Commander Brent Warren, who said:

We've used the evidence from those electronic bracelets to support prosecutions before and they're a powerful tool for police.

These bracelets are monitored 24/7. They are a tool that police requested; however, police are not alone in the work that needs to be done. I am very pleased to hear that youth services and resources will be working together with police and frontline services to address the issues before they lead to crime.

I have also heard in this House today that some members think our government has been too slow, and some think we are going to fast; however, the people in Palmerston have made it very clear that they want the response as soon as possible. For that reason I support the bail amendments at my constituents' request.

There is one thing we must acknowledge and not forget in this House: there are many very good youths who are doing the right thing by society. We need these positive stories to be heard. We need to share the positives, and we need everyone in this House to talk about the positives. We also need our media to talk about the youth who contribute so much. They are the true leaders in the youth world.

We are all responsible for making sure our youth, who contribute so much, have their role model stories heard and have a voice.

I commend the Attorney-General, the Chief Minister and staff across government agencies who have worked very hard over the past few weeks to amend the *Bail Act* and give more tools and resources to our police and frontline services, which are at the forefront of addressing these issues.

Mrs LAMBLEY (Araluen): Mr Deputy Speaker, it is a privilege to talk about the amendments to the *Bail Act*, brought to parliament by the Attorney-General.

I have been enthralled by the debate by government members. It is great to see you all so excited by and enamoured of this piece of legislation. I can only think of when a bigger piece of legislation is debated—something that will really change the world—how excited you will be. It is great to see. There is great teamwork; you are all getting behind your team, backing each other and singing from the same song sheet, which is quite refreshing.

I support this amendment to the *Bail Act*. I do not have any problem with it at all. It has evolved from, as people have said, the CLP bringing electronic monitoring bracelets into use in the Northern Territory a few years ago. It is evolving now into a broader, perhaps better, and certainly more efficient use of these mechanisms that will help to address crime throughout the Northern Territory.

The effectiveness of this tool is being a little overstated in regard to the magnitude of the problem. It will play an important role, but there are so many other strategies that need to be considered and implemented by this government in order to really get on top of crime. This will help; I do not want to diminish that, but by the same token I do not want to overstate the effectiveness of this mechanism. Hopefully it will be a part of a broad range of strategies and mechanisms that this government will roll out before next summer.

I want to mention the contributions made by the Members for Stuart and Nhulunbuy. Because this legislation was brought on urgently, I do not think there has been enough time to properly consult with remote communities. That is the message I heard from the Member for Nhulunbuy. That is a shame. What he said was really interesting. We have talked about his concerns outside of the Chamber; he elaborated on what he said in parliament. This mechanism will raise issues for Aboriginal people living in remote communities regarding privacy, respect, integrity and how it will all be implemented and perceived within those communities.

His contribution was fascinating. We always have to remind ourselves that our society is not homogenous. Not all of us are urban dwelling people. We have a very rich cultural society. Although this will be embraced by all our urban dwellers, who are well represented in this Chamber, we do need to make sure we listen to the special needs of remote communities that have different concerns and ways of perceiving these types of modern technology.

It is good that this government has taken a reasonably tough approach on crime with this mechanism. The Member for Stuart commented on how if it was implemented by the CLP government he would not feel comfortable with it, but because it is an ALP government he feels okay with it. A lot of people through the Territory would probably agree with him, including me. The former government, which I was part of for a period, was tough on crime, but sometimes too tough. The compassion and sensitivities regarding the implementation of these types of mechanisms would not have been there.

That is the past. I will not hammer away at what the former government did or did not do. This is a time for a fresh approach. It is good to see the ALP has found its legs. It is starting to move and implement some strategies. I am not convinced the pace has been as fast as the Member for Brennan thinks it has. I am not impressed by the pace at which the government is moving, but I am reminded that it is a new government, which has learned lessons from the past and decided to take things in its own pace and style. I have to be optimistic and positive about that.

I commend the Attorney-General on this legislation. I look forward to seeing how it rolls out throughout the Northern Territory and what difference it makes to crime in the Northern Territory.

Mrs WORDEN (Sanderson): Mr Deputy Speaker, this is important legislation because this initiative is possible now. When this government is focused on making much-needed generational change—it is great to be doing something now.

Our constituents want to see us being agile and responding to issues as they arise. This is a good example of us doing just that.

I congratulate the Attorney-General on bringing this legislation forward on urgency, because that is the responsible thing for us to do.

The electorate of Sanderson is not immune to crime. I have heard from some of my constituents about the effect and impact crime is having on their everyday life. Some of that crime is being undertaken by repeat

offenders, often young people on bail. We know that because police have told us that. It is not like those conversations are not being had.

I acknowledge the hard work of our police officers. They often work in some challenging conditions, and the community at large agrees that they are working hard to catch and take offenders off the street. There is no doubt that once they have done their job they want to ensure the community continues to be safe and that offenders do not reoffend, either before or after being found guilty.

This legislation is so important. Enabling police to issue electronic monitoring orders makes sense and they are in full support of this move; we have heard that from them directly.

Another aspect of this legislation is that it acts as a strong deterrent to criminals. They will know up front that when they are caught, which they will be, they may well be ordered to wear an electronic monitoring bracelet while awaiting a bail hearing. The fact this may happen even in the event of a first offence is also important.

I am not sure if anyone here has seen these bracelets, but they are not much of a fashion accessory. If you choose to head out in public it is obvious to people around you that you have potentially been involved in a criminal act. It is a disincentive to people considering acting illegally, but also one that encourages positive behavioural change and prevents the escalation of offenders into repeat offenders.

One of my constituents has been fitted with a bracelet while on bail. I had a valuable opportunity to chat with that person last year. I learnt that it is being used as a tool to reconnect with their family, but also one to ensure they were tracked as part of their bail conditions. It is working really well. They were very frank with me about it and it was an enlightening conversation that went for well over an hour. I learnt so much and am very appreciative. I have spoken extensively with them about the impact of having one of those devices on them, and they agreed that it made them think hard about where they go and who they catch up with. They often stayed at home to ensure they were successful on bail. It is a real incentive to stay on the right side of the law.

It is important that these devices have the ability to ensure that offenders on bail stay within defined areas. Young people like to congregate in groups. It is often where they get their bravado, so excluding them from areas and defining boundaries on where they can and cannot go allows police to bring together intelligence when tracking offenders if they breach those boundaries. That is especially important in cases of domestic violence, which we have heard enough about. We are being told that domestic violence offenders can be tracked in real time and be seen to venture to places they are not supposed to, and this can stop a further crime occurring. In the unfortunate event that they do breach, that information is able to be used. That is important in court proceedings.

It is a shame that we have to discuss electronic monitoring for offenders on bail, but it is a modern day reality for police, not only here but across the globe. We must not forget that this is a small part of a bigger agenda for our government, and that gives me great confidence that we are not just working at the pointy end of law and order.

I am looking forward to seeing the fruits of our overhaul of the youth justice system, especially the important work of our Minister for Territory Families in bringing offenders face to face with their victims through victim conferencing. Showing offenders the stark reality of the impacts their crimes are having on Territorians, and giving them a reality check—making them consider how they would feel if it were their family members being affected—is such a powerful tool and a powerful approach, which I look forward to seeing come into play as a complementary part of our overall approach to these issues in our community.

Not one person in this House wants to see young people, or any other person, go down the path of a life of criminal behaviour. We know it will not go away completely; we would be foolish to think it was. But we need to put in place some serious disincentives so that when a person considers the options before them—those who are ahead on their life path—they realise there will be significant consequence for the wrong path.

Territorians have the right to feel safe at work and at home. We are human beings. This government shares this frustration and anger of many. Our constituents are expressing, personally and publically, their experiences with property crime. My constituents are no different to others. They require support; we have heard their views and we are acting. We are making tough calls and reforms such as this one. We cannot take our eye off the long-term and medium-term responses but have to make short-term, immediate impact decisions.

As with all legislation this government is introducing, there has been a lot of work to ensure the new powers for police or any other body or group are highly regulated, supported by operational policy that guides decisions in relation to using the monitors, and must meet strict criteria. They cannot use them on a whim.

We need to support police to do their job to the best of their ability and back up their hard work in catching offenders. They need to have the best, most contemporary tools to do their job to keep us safe. That is why I support this legislation. It will help to keep our community safe and reduce reoffending while on bail.

I commend the bill to the House.

Mr VOWLES (Primary Industry and Resources): Mr Deputy Speaker, I support this bill 100%. I will not speak too long because a lot of discussion has happened today. We need to get down to putting this through and getting it done.

Jingili was one of the suburbs featured in the segment on commercial TV the other night about issues in the area. We are working in my office to address any issues we can in regard to support. I had a meeting with police this week regarding hotspots around our community. This is not a new issue; it has just gained a lot of focus. I take offence at the opposition saying the crime spree has only happened over the last six months. That is outrageous. We saw the figures going up 20% or so over the last couple of years.

We are in government now. It is not about the blame game. We have to try to fix this and find solutions. A brave and bold move was the Chief Minister's announcement last month of an \$18.2m reform package, 52 youth diversion workers and additional \$6m for NGOs to deliver evidence-based diversion programs. That is the way to go. You do not have to be a rocket scientist—which I certainly am not—to say that you should not cut funding to youth services, which is what happened a couple years ago. We are dealing with an issue that is a priority. We have a plan we are working towards. Please bear with us; it is another step in monitoring. This service also goes to adults to address the situation of rising crime.

We have all been affected, but we cannot blame the opposition anymore. We have a plan. We want to focus on lowering the crime rate and addressing the issues that force people to commit crimes. We all know—as does the Minister for Territory Families—the issues we are dealing with, such as, when a youth plays up, runs amok and does something naughty, when they go home it is not the safest place to be. That is a sad reality.

I am proud—and I have said before that it is brave—that we are introducing a ground-breaking reform package. Instead of just talking about it we have put a significant amount of money towards it. We truly believe, after listening to the experts, that these wraparound services can make a difference. I have said that many times in this Chamber when speaking about crime and alcohol.

If a child comes from a dysfunctional family that is dealing with alcohol issues or living in a place where it is not safe for them to be, we need to make sure we are not just bailing them out and that they are going back to that premises; we are working with those families on their children's future by dealing with the family and their accommodation arrangements—put in place by the family or the government to look after that child. It is our duty of care to make sure we continue to work on reform packages, such as our youth diversion package. We are working towards something we think will make a change.

I totally get the Member for Nhulunbuy, and I respect the traditional law. While I respect the fact he does not support this amendment, in this House you are not representing your people who voted for you in your electorate—we all have issues we need to deal with and one of them is youth crime and the future of these youth. We need to deal with that.

The Attorney-General and Minister for Justice and her staff in her department have put in an enormous amount of work. It does not just pop up in the paper. Having a crack at us about taking too long to act and that this bill is rushed—in the last parliament the opposition had a crack at us that we did not bring it in then, but now we are bringing it in. They also had a crack yesterday when we brought the urgency motion on but did not do it straight away. We had a plan to bring it in today. There is another plan of this government.

I once again say thank you to the Attorney-General and Minister for Justice on her work. I thank all her staff in the department because it is an enormous amount of work. I truly believe this will make a difference.

Ms FYLES (Attorney-General and Justice): Mr Deputy Speaker, I thank all the members who have contributed to this debate and those who have indicated their support.

The purpose of the Bail Amendment Bill 2017 is to amend the *Bail Act* to allow electronic monitoring to form part of a conduct agreement for accused persons on police bail. Our government has taken this step because extending the use of electronic monitoring to police bail will provide an additional tool for police to improve compliance and restrictive movements with bail requirements.

This morning we heard from the Deputy Leader of the Opposition, who, although supporting the bill, levelled various inaccurate and frankly extraordinary criticisms at the government. I will therefore take this opportunity to ensure the Assembly is correctly informed of our government's policy and how this bill supports our hard-working police on the front line and the work they do every day in the community to keep it safe.

I was quite astonished when the Deputy Opposition Leader criticised the government and its approach to putting this bill together and at one stage suggested that the work for this legislation 'should have begun last September'. What an awfully convenient date to pick. According to the Deputy Leader of the Opposition, they are entitled to go missing for four years—chaos and dysfunction—and then blame us. They were focused on fighting each other instead of fighting crime. Then they blame us when we develop strong law and order policies and bring good legislation to this Assembly.

Let us be clear, we are cleaning up the CLP's mess. The rise in property crime started early in 2016 and was left unchecked by the chaotic CLP administration. I refer to the Police Commissioner, who has already spoken publicly about the almost 20% rise in breach of bail offences for youth over the last two years.

We are cleaning up the CLP's mess. It is very convenient for the Deputy Leader of Opposition to pick a date in September—conveniently, about a week after the election—and accuse us of not doing the work then. What were they doing for four years? We have already talked about the cuts in education and youth services. We also have statistics which show there was a steady increase in crime.

This government is committed to change. We are not only committed to giving police the resources they need, additional police on the frontline, and passing legislation such as this, but also ensuring we invest in our young people and education. We heard the education statement this week and I look forward to that debate continuing. We heard from the Minister for Territory Families—and we have heard strong announcements from the government in that area.

I will now go to some specific issues raised by the opposition. The Deputy Opposition Leader was unaware of the prohibition on tampering with electronic monitoring bracelets. This bill states in new section 27A(1)(iaa) that police will require the accused person:

- (1) *to wear or have attached, and to not tamper with, destroy or otherwise interfere with, an approved police monitoring device ...*

If the person tampers with the device, that is a breach of bail. A breach of bail is already an offence under section 37B of the *Bail Act*. Tampering with a device on a court ordered bail is similarly an offence of bail.

Further, this bill ensures that police bail monitoring devices are included in section 38A of the *Bail Act*, which provides that if an accused person destroys or damages an approved monitoring device, the accused may be required to pay the price of fixing or replacing the device. To make it clear under the regime this bill creates, when tampering occurs the monitoring company will notify police directly, who can then investigate and act accordingly.

The Deputy Opposition Leader made some confusing comments this morning about geofencing. If the Deputy Opposition Leader was stating that there would be no automatic triggers—let me be clear that this is not correct. The Chief Minister has already made some comments on this point. The bracelet will be programmed by the contractor in accordance with the instructions given by the NT Police. Alerts will be sent if the accused person is not home at the start of the curfew, leaves during curfew or enters an exclusion zone.

An alert is also sent if the bracelet or strap is tampered with. These alerts can be programmed onto a device that uses GPS. As I mentioned in my second reading speech, the use of electronic monitoring on police bail means that police will not have to doorknock to see if someone is home when they should be. Not only will this free up our vital police resources so they can do more work on the front line, it will also be less disruptive to the household of the accused, particularly children.

There were also some questions on why the bill is not descriptive regarding who gets electronic monitoring on police bail. This is a strange suggestion. This bill replicates the power to have electronic monitoring for police bail, as we currently have for court bail. The relevant factor is whether the accused person is suitable for electronic monitoring. Police will be guided by the types of matters that Corrections already question when they make assessments for the courts.

Mrs Finocchiaro interjecting.

Ms FYLES: As the Chief Minister said, our government is comfortable with the operational decisions made by the experts on the beat, not by politicians. That seems to not be accepted by those opposite, with their continued interjections.

My final response in relation to the comments made by the Deputy Opposition Leader relates to the suggestion that Corrections should be involved in doing a report early in the piece. Police bail is always an interim, lasting only until an accused person's first court appearance.

This bill then allows a court to continue with the electronic monitoring requirement from a police bail conduct agreement through the period that the court is awaiting and considering a full assessment by Corrections. That ensures that there is no gap between electronic monitoring by police and by the courts, assuming the courts find the person suitable. This is a new tool for police. Our government is ensuring a person can be electronic monitored prior to and during the preparation of the report for court.

I will now turn to some of the other comments made in the Assembly today. A number of members spoke about the concerning rates of Indigenous incarceration, including the Members for Stuart and Katherine and the Independent Member for Nhulunbuy. To those members and others, and to the broader community, I acknowledge your commitment and note that the government, and I as the Attorney-General, also share your concerns.

This bill is designed to create an additional tool to stop reoffending and is focused on stopping crime before it occurs by monitoring and enforcing bail conditions. Doing those things helps to stop offending, which in turn stops the incarceration that often follows.

I will take a moment to acknowledge and thank our Chief Minister, who has been driving our government's agenda of putting victims first, for his work on this bill as the Police minister. The Chief Minister made some very positive comments on how our government is looking at long-term, broad solutions. The Chief Minister has noted how this bill will help police prevent reoffending by at-risk people, and how it will give police a new tool to combat domestic violence in particular. This is because real-time knowledge of bail breaches can help police protect vulnerable women and other victims.

I also acknowledge the Member for Brennan and Minister Lawler for their work in the community of Palmerston, attending meetings. Long-term change to the education plan by Minister Lawler—making sure our most vulnerable children have the right support to keep them at school. We know our disengaged children are far more likely to be absent from school. If we can keep them at school and engaged in education there is less opportunity for them to offend.

We are proud to work with Minister Wakefield to make sure we keep the victims of domestic violence safe. As she noted, this is the third legislation our government has delivered that will help tackle the issue of unacceptably high rates of domestic violence in the Northern Territory/

I also acknowledge the Member for Araluen for saying this will help. I thank her for contributing to debate. It is important that we provide our frontline service workers with every tool to do their jobs. There is not only one thing that will fix everything; every bit helps.

I will now recap that this bill amends the *Bail Act* to:

- insert a new section 27A(1)(iaa) of the *Bail Act* which also empowers police to include electronic monitoring as a bail requirement, requiring an accused person to wear or have attached an approved electronic monitoring device
- insert new section 27A(1)(iab) of the *Bail Act* which, read with new section 28(3A)(a), gives additional powers to courts to enlarge the police electronic monitoring requirement when an accused person first appears in court

- amend section 27B of the *Bail Act* to empower police to put on and remove an electronic bracelet from an accused person who has entered into a conduct agreement, which includes a police electronic monitoring requirement
- amend section 28 of the *Bail Act* to prescribe parameters to the exercise of the new police power to impose an electronic monitoring requirement on police bail
- further amend section 28 to provide that a court may only enlarge police bail pursuant to new section 27A(1)(iab) where the accused person was subject to electronic monitoring on police bail up to the time of their appearance in court and the court orders a full assessment report from the Commissioner of Correctional Services
- insert new definitions in section 3 of the *Bail Act* and new section 52B of the *Bail Act* of an 'approved police monitoring device' and 'police monitoring device'.

The bill also makes minor consequential amendments to section 5(2)(k) of the *Sentencing Act*. Section 5(2) of the *Sentencing Act* sets out the matters that a court must have regard to in sentencing. Section 5(2)(k) provides that a court must have regard to time spent in custody or on an electronic monitoring requirement when on bail. The current reference is to section 27A(1)(iaa). Reference to new section 27A(1)(iaa) and (iab) is added.

Regulation 3 of the Surveillance Devices Regulations adds electronic monitoring on police bail to the list of permitted tracking devices under section 13(2)(d) of the *Surveillance Devices Act*.

Our government is responding swiftly to the concerns of the community by implementing these amendments as quickly as possible. These amendments are supported by a comprehensive overhaul of the youth justice system, announced by the Chief Minister in February this year.

We are working as efficiently as possible. We have had some very unrealistic accusations levelled at us during this debate. Why did we not pass this in February? Because we have been preparing the legislation, following process and making sure we do things correctly, but as efficiently as possible.

As part of the reform package, young people on bail will be provided with individual support and a comprehensive range of programs to stop them reoffending and help them meet their bail requirements.

Offending on bail is a significant concern to the government and our community. The public is asking the government to act urgently, and, through this bill, we are. In that respect, I thank our hard-working government agencies, officials and departments in relation to this legislation. I am impressed, as a minister, by the interagency cooperation, particularly between the departments of the Attorney-General and Justice, Correctional Services and Police on this issue. It is worth acknowledging that in the House today.

We are able to debate this and represent our community's views, but we are also supported by a very hard-working public service and police force. They have made briefings available to every member of this House, and some members have had numerous briefings. It is important that we acknowledge their hard work.

Our government is improving the monitoring of compliance with restrictive bail requirements through this electronic monitoring amendment. Our government is giving police the powers and resources they need to combat crime in our communities. Our government is listening to the community and acting.

I commend this bill to the Assembly.

Motion agreed to; bill read a second time.

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

Motion agreed to; bill read a third time.

MOTION
Note Statement – The Year Ahead

Continued from 16 February 2017.

Ms FYLES (Attorney-General and Justice): Mr Deputy Speaker, I wish to speak in support of the Chief Minister's statement on the year ahead. The Chief Minister delivered this statement in the first parliamentary sittings a few weeks ago. I note that my colleagues and I will conclude our comments today. I assume the debate will also conclude.

I will take this opportunity to outline the government's strong plans in the areas of health and justice, portfolios I have responsibility for.

Territorians deserve a government that puts them first, listens and consults before taking decisive action. That is why, as members of the government, we are working to restore trust in government, creating jobs, investing in our children and building safer, fairer, stronger and healthier communities across the Northern Territory.

We are not working for one particular area; we embrace the whole of the Northern Territory, and I think vast diversity of the NT is represented by my colleagues in the Chamber today.

Firstly, I will focus on health. We have a comprehensive plan for health for 2017, a plan that will improve the health and wellbeing of Territorians right across the Northern Territory. We need to improve health rates and have better outcomes for Territorians.

One issue that plagued the Territory, particularly in the Top End, right through the last term of government was the CLP government's failure to plan and none more so than the infrastructure of our hospital. The Royal Darwin Hospital car park has received media attention, and one could say it was a debacle over the last few years.

I am very pleased to inform the House that we are delivering on our commitment of a multistorey car park at Royal Darwin Hospital. This is a long-anticipated project, and one which the CLP half-heartedly talked about and failed to deliver. This project will not only create jobs in its construction phase but will benefit those working at Royal Darwin Hospital and those who visit family and friends. We know this has been an issue for a long time, and I acknowledge the Member for Casuarina and her personal commitment to it.

The CLP introduced a parking management system in February 2014, with fees and fines that did little to help improve things but frustrated and confused patients, visitors and staff. It was an unsatisfactory and unfair system from the start. It added to the stress of people who were already in a stressful time.

I am pleased to inform the House that the Labor government has decided to take strong and decisive action immediately. We are bringing forward the funding by three years, from 2019–20 to the next budget, so we can deliver a \$12m multistorey car park. This will bring relief to patients, people visiting patients and our very hard-working health professionals, the doctors and nurses at the hospital.

The Department of Infrastructure, Planning and Logistics is preparing the tender process so we can award a design and construct tender for the car park in just a few months' time.

The car park will be located within easy walking distance of the main tower. While the construction is in progress there will be temporary parking arrangements put in place. The car park will have a significantly increased capacity. It will build on approximately 350 car parks, which will see an overall increase of 270 spaces. We anticipate that construction will be completed by late 2018.

I will take a moment to reflect on the space at Royal Darwin Hospital. Not only have we seen the hospital services grow over the last three or four decades since it was officially opened in the early 1980s, but we have also seen infill. What was once car parking now hosts additional health services. There has been a combination of those issues. I very much look forward to the project being delivered.

I will talk about another major commitment which has been discussed for a long time in the Northern Territory, the PET scanner. Every Territorian has the right to access essential cancer treatment. Early diagnosis and treatment are vital to ensure more Territorians survive cancer. That is why this Labor government is committed to delivering a PET scanner service for Territorians.

We acknowledge that we have seen great growth in cancer services. Only a decade ago Territorians had to travel interstate, which put a burden on their families. The Northern Territory is the only jurisdiction without this significant piece of medical technology. It is not only commonly used to identify and assess the presence and progress of cancers, but it has the ability to monitor bodies functioning with certain neurological diseases, such as epilepsy, Alzheimer's and Parkinson's, as well as cardiac diseases.

Currently our patients need to travel interstate, but we are committed to this project. I have worked closely with the federal Minister for Regional Development on this project. I look forward to delivering it for Territorians.

The CLP failed miserably in progressing the Palmerston hospital. Holes were dug and filled in, and media conferences were called. It was a debacle. The CLP consistently let down the people of the Palmerston and rural area when it came to health services.

All Territorians are entitled to have access to health services. That is why this government is committing to delivering the first new public hospital to be built in the Northern Territory in 40 years. The \$170m capital funded hospital is jointly funded by the Northern Territory and Commonwealth governments. The Palmerston Regional Hospital will provide low-acuity services as an adjunct to the Royal Darwin Hospital, as well as providing Top End health services for rehabilitation.

While Royal Darwin Hospital will remain the Top End's primary tertiary hospital, the extra inpatient capacity will help reduce bed block at Royal Darwin Hospital. The project has progressed well since we came to government. It was a debacle that we were left to clean up. I acknowledge the Minister for Infrastructure, Planning and Logistics for her passion in delivering this project. I also note the Members for Brennan and Drysdale, who have joined in making sure this project gets back on track and will be delivered for the residents of their communities.

I look forward to sharing more with the community over the year. Since we took the project on board when we came to government, since my first site visit, the project is progressing well. Detailed clinical planning continues with staff ...

Mrs Finocchiaro: There were four stories on it before you came to government.

Ms FYLES: Oh, you want to interject, do you? I am happy to talk about the CLP's achievements with the Palmerston Regional Hospital. Shall we talk about special concrete and stairwells?

Mrs Finocchiaro: There were four stories on that building before you even came to government. You are astonishing.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order!

Ms FYLES: In regard to what I am doing with my responsibilities, detailed clinical planning continues with staff, including lead medical, nursing and allied health clinicians. We are working through the detail of service delivery at the hospital. The practical completion date is scheduled for early 2018. We look forward to a phased approach when delivering health services from mid-2018.

I will continue to update the House on this project. It will be driven by me, the minister for Infrastructure and the great local members in Palmerston, Brennan and Drysdale.

I now turn to the significant health infrastructure spend this Labor government has committed to. It will deliver better health services to Territorians and have the added benefit of providing jobs in the construction phase. There is work to do on the paediatric wards at Royal Darwin Hospital, and we acknowledge the federal government for its joint contribution. I look forward to the second stage of the paediatric ward opening soon.

Royal Darwin Hospital has had a \$6.23m project upgrade for isolation and negative pressure rooms for patients with infectious airborne diseases. Works have been completed in the emergency department and are progressing well on the wards. There has been significant work done from the \$3m spent on the outside of Royal Darwin Hospital. Visitors have noticed major works undertaken to the public areas, such as the front entrance. This work has been undertaken by local companies and is due for completion shortly.

The front foyer outpatients and pre-admission clinic is also being upgraded. The construction tender and works have been completed by Halikos. I was pleased to tour the outpatients clinic recently; it is a vast improvement on those outdated services.

It is not only in Royal Darwin Hospital and Palmerston Regional Hospital that we are delivering health services to Territorians. In Katherine work has commenced on the \$7.6m ambulance centre to relocate the station outside a flood zone. The construction of a new purpose-built facility will enable local emergency services to respond during all-weather conditions. In Nhulunbuy the Gove District Hospital's new emergency department is proceeding well. The nearly \$13m is a joint initiative by the Australian and Northern Territory governments.

Territory company Zone A architects undertook the design work and the construction tender has been awarded. The project is due for completion in the middle of this year, providing a much-needed improvement to the delivery of health services for the people of the north east Arnhem region. Fire safety upgrades of around \$3.5m have taken place at the Gove hospital. This work will commence after the emergency department is completed to minimise disruption on hospital operations.

I was pleased to open the new ICU department in Central Australia. The Alice Springs Hospital has had extensive programs of upgrades and expansions. Some \$38m worth of health services were delivered in Central Australia. These works include fire protection, air conditioning, remediation programs to corridors and lift wells, and the new high dependency unit, the ICU. Work is being undertaken on general fire rectification and upgrades to emergency power.

I was pleased to open the \$5m multidisciplinary teaching and training facility at the Alice Springs campus. It was fabulous to be able to open that facility with you, Mr Deputy Speaker. Part of keeping people in the Territory is about providing opportunities for them. If we let people leave the Territory, they find reasons not to come back. We need to keep people here and provide those services. I am sure you, Mr Deputy Speaker, will join with me in saying how fabulous those training facilities are to allow our health professionals and hard-working frontline staff to undergo training there.

I acknowledge the Member for Araluen, along with my colleagues from Central Australia, in regard to the new facility on the Alice Springs Hospital campus—the palliative care unit. I met with the Alice Springs representatives of Palliative Care NT and understand their desire to see a dedicated hospice developed for their community. I was very pleased that it was one of the first projects for me to announce as Health minister, working with my Central Australian colleagues, the Members for Stuart, Namatjira and Braitling, on what was best for Alice Springs residents. That is an example of listening to the community and delivering for Central Australia.

The project will be jointly funded by the Australian Government with \$5.3m, and \$1m from the Northern Territory Government will provide 10 beds. Design has been completed. Development planning permits have been awarded and just this month the tender for construction was awarded to Scope Building NT, a local business. Construction is due to commence in August this year.

As well as focusing on our centres, we have been delivering for our remote health centres. A new health centre has been constructed at Robinson River, Galiwinku, Numbulwar and Umbakumba. We are also making sure renal facilities in Central Australia are receiving significant upgrades.

We have very passionate members representing remote areas of the Territory, and we want to make sure those residents are involved in the decision-making for their healthcare—local decision-making by local residents. This is one of the commitments we are delivering—transitioning four of our clinics to be locally controlled in our term of government.

We have some strong remote communities and regions, and that is why we are determined to restore local decision-making in communities. We are working to give communities more say over their lives by letting them make decisions around housing, education and health. To that end, we have committed to four clinics. My colleague, the Assistant Minister for Remote Health Delivery, is working hard with the department, identifying communities to transition to community control.

If we want long-term generational change, we need to start when children are tiny. We need to start with pregnant women, working with them to deliver healthy babies. If we can lift the birth rate we can tackle disease and health outcomes. If our young children have strong starts in life, we are giving them the best start. That is why this government is committed to the Nurse-Family Partnerships, which pair expecting mothers with professionals to offer help and advice through the first years of parenthood. Nurses form

relationships with families through home visits and identify and help to intervene in potential or real family and health hazards. These partnerships work.

The Australian Government has contributed funds to help services expand in Wadeye, Maningrida, Gunbalanya, Darwin and Palmerston. We are in the process of selecting sites to deliver these services in another five localities over the next year.

We will invest an extra \$8m to tackle challenging behaviours and support children with disabilities through education.

Sometimes it is not easy being a parent—I can say that from personal experience—but we need to take the time to support our families and communities to raise strong children.

The National Disability Insurance Scheme is rolling out across the Northern Territory. The roll-out continues from the Barkly region and, from 1 January, commenced in the East Arnhem region and the Darwin urban supported accommodation. This is a huge challenge; I was speaking with my state and territory colleagues about it only a couple of weeks ago. We are committed to this scheme and providing for Territorians with a disability, making sure they have a pathway forward.

From 1 July this year Top End remote and supported accommodation in Katherine and Alice Springs will roll out, with the remainder of the Darwin region and Central Australia commencing in July 2018. Our government is continuing to work with the Commonwealth Government to ensure a smooth transition to the NDIS.

In the 2016–17 Budget \$85m was allocated to NDIS. At the time of the full NDIS roll-out approximately \$204m will be available to Territorians with a disability—a combination of Territory and federal funding.

When the scheme is fully implemented there will be 6500 people with a disability accessing services through the NDIS. The Commonwealth and Territory funding that has been injected into the NDIS is expected to create over 1000 jobs.

There is also expected to be additional funding directed towards community development based plans that will ensure the unique characteristics of the Northern Territory, particularly remote areas, are catered for and local communities are empowered to make decisions about the NDIS rollout.

Our government recognises that suicide is a devastating issue impacting on our community, and we are committed to developing a revised suicide prevention strategy. I acknowledge my hard-working colleague, the Assistant Minister for Suicide Prevention, the Member for Karama, who is working with the Department of Health to ensure we have a strategy to help halve our suicide rates over a 10-year period. In conjunction with the Northern Territory and Australian Government departments, I am pleased to say that a draft plan is expected to be ready shortly and community consultation will follow. The assistant minister is making sure we are consulting with the community.

We are also making sure we are delivering on our key commitment of an early childhood development plan. That is being led by the Minister for Children with my support, as the Minister for Health, along with the support of my colleagues the ministers for Education, Housing and Territory Families.

We have commenced development of a child and adolescent health plan. A project planning group has recently met to start the planning and engagement process with external stakeholders. We are also updating the Healthy Under 5 Kids screening program for implementation across urban and remote areas to make sure we have consistency for all Territory kids.

The government is updating the yellow book for parents to be able to monitor their child's development and behaviour through the regular Healthy Under 5 Kids screening. That is an important initiative. I only have two children but can still manage to lose track, so I look forward to that booklet and the ability to help parents to ensure they are looking after their children and planning for their healthcare.

We have spoken a great deal recently about alcohol policy. Sadly, the Northern Territory has the highest alcohol consumption rate in Australia. Drinking to these levels affects everyone in our community. We recognise that alcohol-related harm continues to be the biggest social challenge in the Northern Territory.

Alcohol-related harm costs Territory taxpayers \$642m a year; that is \$4200 for every adult Territorian and four times the national average. Alcohol is a factor in much of the Territory's crime and antisocial behaviour.

I am proud to be working to deliver a comprehensive, evidence-based health approach to stop the destructive path alcohol creates across communities.

Ms UIBO: A point of order, Mr Deputy Speaker! I seek an extension of time for the member to complete her remarks.

Motion agreed to.

Ms FYLES: When last in government we implemented the Banned Drinker Register, described by police as the best tool they had to fight violent crime. The CLP came to government and scrapped the Banned Drinker Register. They would not listen to the community, police or anyone. It was a political move, a silly move, but we are working hard to re-implement that.

In opposition, we were clear that we would reinstate the Banned Drinker Register and impose a moratorium on takeaway licences, and we have delivered. We are working efficiently to deliver the Banned Drinker Register. We imposed a moratorium on new takeaway liquor licences, except in exceptional circumstances such as greenfield sites. With 530 liquor licences across the Northern Territory—one liquor licence for every 353 adult Territorians—enough is enough.

We strengthened legislation to ensure Sunday trading remains limited. We limited the floor space for takeaway alcohol stores, and we introduced new guidelines for liquor licencing to allow public hearings, which the CLP took away from the community—their voice in the licencing process.

I have spoken about our alcohol policy review and I look forward to updating the House as that develops. I encourage people to be a part of those draft terms of reference—make sure this review, this unique opportunity, encompasses what we want it to achieve.

Public consultation will be undertaken as part of the review, with multiple avenues for those interested—people, groups, non-government organisations and communities—to have their view heard. We look forward to hearing not only from the loudest and most powerful voices in our community, but also the many women, children, families and communities that bear the burden of the cost of alcohol harm in the Northern Territory.

This review will start next month and a report will be delivered to government in September this year. The government will then develop a response to the recommendations for the development of an alcohol harm reduction strategy. We will publicly release the report along with the expert advisory panel's recommendations.

Alcohol is a huge issue. As well as reintroducing the Banned Drinker Register—a scheme that cut 2500 problems drinkers from alcohol when it was last in place—we are also focusing on making sure we have a treatment model that works.

We will also promote community education for no alcohol in pregnancy in order to prevent FASD, and a whole-of-government strategy regarding FASD prevention, diagnosis and treatment is under development.

Our robust alcohol policy will ensure that the supply of alcohol is restricted to those who harm themselves and others, whilst delivering an evidence-based health approach to stop the destruction caused by alcohol abuse in our communities.

Turning to the Attorney-General and Justice portfolio—it is a privilege to be the Attorney-General for the Northern Territory. Territorians deserve a government that always puts them first and listens and consults. That is why we are restoring trust in government. We understand that trust in government is the foundation to tackling the issues.

Work is progressing well on the independent commission against corruption. I outlined to the House late last year that the government has supported, in principle, 50 of the 52 recommendations of the Martin report.

We have reforms out for consultation about whistle-blower protection and I look forward to reporting back to the House. We need to make sure we have protections in place so that we have an open and transparent system.

We have spoken today in the House—I note the comments by the Member for Stuart—about the high rates of Indigenous incarceration and the work that has been done on Making Justice Work. I announced our development of an Aboriginal justice agreement which will be led by a new Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander justice unit within my department, the first of its kind.

The year ahead for corrections will consist of much-needed stability and the beginning of program evaluation. This will allow the government to ensure that programs, interventions, training and employment opportunities are good practice and suitable for the Northern Territory.

We are making sure we work with Menzies on program evaluation frameworks so we understand the benefits of programs and direct them appropriately.

Existing initiatives such as the community support work program, which provides vital assistance for some of our most vulnerable individuals, whilst preparing prisoners for transition, have had their funding restored after significant cuts by the CLP government. This will allow the program to work at capacity without impacting on other training programs. That is an important scheme, particularly for the urban members in the Top End, which benefits our community. People like the opportunity for inmates to get out and play a part in our community and repay the community in some sense. It also gives them pride in themselves.

There is so much I could say, but in the interests of time I will conclude. I restate that Territorians deserve a government that puts them first, and listens and consults before taking decisive action. The chaos and dysfunction over the last four years did not help the Northern Territory. There were 18 Cabinet reshuffles. This far into the CLP's term our first Chief Minister was rolled whilst he was on a trade delegation to Japan.

We are implementing a range of reforms to restore trust and accountability to government. This Territory Labor government will continue to listen and implement our election commitments throughout 2017 and beyond.

Mr KIRBY (Port Darwin): Mr Deputy Speaker, I also respond to the exciting statement on the year ahead, delivered by the Chief Minister recently in this House. Before we start to look too far forward, I will take a moment to reflect on what a remarkable year it was for me and the Territory in general.

Amongst moving a couple of times, and into the sunny seat of Port Darwin, getting engaged to my gorgeous fiancée and now looking forward to being a father, it was a pretty amazing year. Finding ourselves in this beautiful Chamber has made 2016 a year I will never forget.

I have also been amazed by the response from people right across the electorate and the Territory. There was an audible sigh of relief the day caretaker mode kicked in. That was reflected in the election result which followed a few weeks later.

I am astonished at the flood of people coming through the Port Darwin electorate office doors. I assume most electorate offices have been exactly the same—from people who are at their wit's end with basic community matters they cannot get any assistance with, to Top End business people who are pleading to be included in consultation regarding the future of businesses around Darwin. It is astonishing how many people have been in.

We are under no illusion about the tough job we have ahead of us. We are not isolated from the community or the issues, as was queried by the other side of the House yesterday. Each of my colleagues gets out and about in the community every day. We hear the pain people are going through and we know there are no easy answers, but we also know that the big ticket items and the long-term plans, which we have in Cabinet, are pointing us in the right direction.

We are not shying away from that tough job. We have welcomed the community's feedback, both good and bad and have been able to adjust our track forward in these few short months. There is a mountain of issues which we are addressing at the moment. The pace at which we are addressing them causes some concern, but I can guarantee, we are tracking through that mountain as quickly as we possibly can.

If we can get back to having a strong, proud and united community, that will be a recipe for a successful community. We will be supported by good government policy and decision-making, being prepared to make the tough calls when we need to, which will support growth in jobs and employment across the Territory.

A strong economy and employment sector is essential for any community to be successful. It is important for all families to have job security, residential security and food on the table. Our jobs agenda is grounded in sensible and community-engaged short-, medium- and long-term strategies.

More Territory families now own their first home because we introduced the stamp duty relief. We heard an update on that in Question Time today. More money has been spent on tradies because of our renovation vouchers. The construction industry will get more work because we fast-tracked infrastructure programs. We brought back the Home Improvement Scheme bigger and better.

We have fast-tracked portions of what will be a record investment in remote housing. We have heard updates on that over the last few weeks.

We are investing millions of dollars in steel works, public housing upgrades and community organisation grants for repairs and infrastructure, which is helping more tradies, contractors and steel manufacturers. We met with the steel manufacturers in mid-2016, before the election, and it was devastating to see the state their industry is in. I can very happily say that some of the people who would potentially have not made it through Christmas have been able to access some of the funds, gained work and get back on their feet.

This government has beefed up its buy local principles so that a 30% local content weighting applies across all government procurement stages. As assistant minister for the Buy Local scheme this is an area of interest to me and of vital importance for the Territory. For far too long we have seen Territory businesses finding it cheaper and easier to outsource contract work. A massive amount of work has leaked out of the Territory. The steel manufacturers were clear with us and said that they do not need a handout; they just need some of the work that is being scheduled over the next few years in the Northern Territory to be directed to Territory companies. Changing the Buy Local scheme will be a big help in that.

Last year, hearing that the manufacturers were as concerned as they were—more businesses may close their doors—to this year, receiving calls saying they are pumping out projects, is obviously a welcome position to be in. By no means does it underestimate the amount of work we have ahead of us. By replacing the ‘value for money’ definition in the government procurement guidelines with the ‘value for Territory’ wording, we can support local businesses across the Northern Territory, which will in turn support employment growth and will support as many people as possible to stay in the Territory.

We have consulted widely with businesses, which told us the Home Improvement Scheme worked. Under the improved program we are rolling out, Territorians who have received the voucher can access it again. Territorians who have not previously accessed the \$2000 voucher can now access the one-off \$4000 voucher.

We have listened and heard loud and clear that it is not the time to take the foot off the pedal. The economic summits process will guide the long-term infrastructure plan.

I am proud to be assistant minister for a vibrant CBD. This is about creating practical, safe, welcoming, vibrant and well-serviced places to live, work and play around the Darwin CBD.

As has been mentioned by our government, Darwin needs to be the capital of northern Australia for us to benefit from the work that is currently happening. That includes upgrading and building new infrastructure, as well as having a vision for the future, revamping State Square and opening up links to China and Asia. In Darwin we will embark on plans to bring the CBD to life, but we must transform our retail and living spaces as well. The Government Architect, Lawrence Nield, is extremely passionate and is putting together an advisory team of locals and professionals to help design a city we will all be proud of into the future.

The Chief Minister and Lord Mayor have restarted the Capital City Committee to show their investment into making sure the CBD becomes more vibrant as soon as it possibly can, with enormous goodwill on each side to get it done.

I am proud to be heavily involved in the CBD working groups to make sure the legwork that needs to be done under these overarching committees is given the focus it needs to make things progress in a reasonable time frame. The Chief Minister has already discussed cooling the CBD to make sure we have

more greenspace and vegetation canopies—looking at the types of pavements we use and water features to make sure people understand that this is a tropical city we can live in and walk around as we want to.

The State Square development to have a capital centre is something we can be very proud of. We are also discussing a new museum in State Square, not like the half-baked Chan Building idea that was presented by the previous government. There will be detailed public discussion papers as to the liveability, heat tests and proposals around the CBD and State Square progress, as well as the museum master plan. The plan is that later this year we will have an agreed vision right across this great CBD.

These measures are not only Darwin based. It is great to hear some of the announcements up and down the track. The Alice Springs iconic Indigenous art gallery will bring jobs and tourism to the southern region and, rightfully, sit the centre of Australia at the pinnacle of these areas.

This year our government will invest millions in upgrading our sport facilities and in early learning education facilities. Government will invest in Katherine by upgrading art galleries as part of the arts trail, as well as working on opportunities for Katherine Gorge and tourism there.

Palmerston will soon have its own hospital. I do not know if there is any truth to the rumours about the airport, but, no doubt, the Member for Brennan will continue to push. Beginning this year with a fast-tracked \$15m we will build a police station for suburbs. We will re-engage with kids, investing heavily in child support services, as we have heard about in this Chamber.

Community safety is at the forefront of this government's decisions since coming into power. There are experts working on early childhood planning, bringing in the non-government sector and involving the community. The evidence is overwhelming that the early days of a child's life are critical in shaping their future. This is where we will be making the starkest of investments.

We will be working with communities to identify what support services are crucial for a healthy start to life. Starting this year, millions of dollars each year will go where it is needed most within schools to tackle challenging behaviours and support children with disabilities. Strong families, strong support, strong communities and jobs all go hand in hand when creating a safe and vibrant community.

I hear time and time again in my electorate about antisocial behaviour, homelessness and the crime associated with that environment. Having extra police on the frontline and building the new police station in Palmerston will be a massive benefit.

Alcohol-related harm costs Territory taxpayers hundreds of millions of dollars each year. That is almost four times the national average. Bringing back the Banned Drinker Register cannot happen quickly enough, according to most Territorians. We are tackling these alcohol issues head on and making the tough decisions that responsible Territorians expect us to make.

I was heartened some weeks ago to hear that the Leader of the Opposition is such a big fan of the Darwin Festival and to hear him speak highly of that fantastic event. I was also heartened to hear the announcement by the Minister for Tourism and Culture that Ian Kew, Avril Vaughan and others have been added to the board to make sure they are focused on the festival remaining an iconic event in the Top End. That festival, in the stunning Port Darwin electorate, is one of my favourite events, as it is for thousands of Territorians. It is a fantastic way to wave goodbye to the Dry Season and welcome the build-up in the Top End.

Some measures are making a difference very quickly in the community, while others will take a longer period of time. We will need assurance from NGOs and community leaders that the investments, both monetary and human resources, are making the impacts they need to make.

Government alone cannot solve the complex economic or social issues we face across the community, but as a community we stand a much better chance. There are people in the community, and even some in this House, who prefer to parrot that things are not happening quickly enough. The fact is we are moving at as fast a pace as we can from the situation we found ourselves in seven months ago.

If you take over coaching a team that has been tracking well over the last few seasons then there is just some fine tuning needed to take them to the top of the ladder; however, if you take over a side that has not kicked a goal for the last four years you have a significantly larger challenge on your table. Make no mistake; it may, at times, feel like we are turning the Titanic around with plastic paddles, but we are turning the ship. We are righting the wrongs and making the Territory, once again, a top team.

I applaud this government for its unified approach of dealing with a raft of massive issues that face Territorians in the coming years. I commend the Chief Minister for his vision and inclusion in governing for all Territorians. I thank him for bringing this statement to the House.

Ms UIBO (Arnhem): Mr Deputy Speaker, last night in my adjournment I mentioned that in February I was privileged to be granted leave of absence from the parliamentary sittings to attend the international leadership program in the USA for three weeks.

I want to provide a response to the Chief Minister's statement outlining the year ahead for the Territory. I will speak on some of the key points the Chief Minister delivered in his speech last month and what it means for the Northern Territory and my electorate of Arnhem.

The Territory is a unique place which all of us here call home. Some people were born here, some intentionally moved here from interstate and overseas, and some, so I have heard, came to the Territory for a short time and never left. Regardless of how we got here, many people now call the beautiful Northern Territory home.

The Northern Territory is so diverse in its environment, residents, visitors and cuisines, and sometimes we even have our own Territory way of doing things.

The Chief Minister stated in his speech in February that the Territory's natural environment supports our great lifestyle and drives our tourism industry. This is true, and many people who live here are fiercely proud of the NT and what it has to offer in terms of opportunities for family, work, study and lifestyle.

Our natural Territory landscapes need to be protected by clear, robust and transparent laws. Our Labor government has reinstated the community-based water advisory committees, which are much-needed boards, in order to consider and consult about water usage and licencing. Under the previous CLP government, this was an area where the tap was turned on and allowed to flow freely and unchecked. Many Territorians were outspoken with their concerns about unfair allocations of water licencing for the CLP mates.

The Chief Minister also made reference to the consultation and implementation of strategic Indigenous water reserves. This is vital in many parts of the Territory, particularly for traditional owners to have a voice in how water is considered in their own context.

For the first time, all major water users will be required to apply for a water licence, including the large mining and petroleum operations, which are currently exempt. This is important, as we have some areas in the Territory where water is abundant and other areas where water is scarce. As a responsible government we need to be accountable to the public and the communities we represent by ensuring we are answerable to the water usage in the Territory at a commercial level.

I spoke yesterday, in response to the statement by the Minister for Education, about the significance and much-needed investment in our Territory kids. The strong future of the Northern Territory relies on the investment in Territory education.

I agree wholeheartedly with the Education minister and Chief Minister that to reduce the burden on our society in areas such as health, justice and welfare, we must invest in our kids today. Our Labor government is putting our money and resources into treating the symptom and the cause. As we all know, prevention is better than cure.

As representatives of the diverse communities across the Territory, we must be part of the solution and listen to local ideas and problem solving to gain relevant, targeted and beneficial outcomes across our diverse Territory communities.

As mentioned in the Chief Minister's statement in February, and again by the Education minister's statement on education on Tuesday, the Labor government has established a Cabinet subcommittee on children to ensure our government's decision-making processes consider the effects on children and family welfare. We are appointing experts from the Territory and across Australia to work on an early childhood plan to ensure children are at the heart of what we do. We want to keep children happy, safe, healthy and strong because, after all, children are our future.

The Labor government is serious about reform and alcohol policy. Our Territory families, communities and businesses do not want alcohol in the hands of people who attack and abuse their own families, strangers,

the hard-working emergency workers, and the shop fronts of businesses and our infrastructure services. Our approach to alcohol will be tough but fair, as stated by our Chief Minister.

Alcohol-related harm costs Territory taxpayers almost four times the national average per adult. This is unacceptable. We know alcohol is a major factor in Territory crime and antisocial behaviour. We also know it causes domestic violence. Young people grow up seeing this and they live with the trauma. One measure our government is committed to in order to curb alcohol-related violence and crime is to bring back the Banned Drinker Register.

I am proud to be part of this Labor government, which values the needs of Territorians in the bush and has pledged to listen to and support the voices of those in the most disadvantaged parts of the Territory, our fellow Territorians living and working in regional and remote areas.

Our Indigenous rangers will get more powers and will be adequately funded to buy vehicles, boats and equipment to better do their most important job of looking after country.

Our government will work to find the best processes, practices and models to give local decision-making power back to Aboriginal people in the Territory in the areas of local government, education, health services, looking after children, law and justice and housing.

Further to the Chief Minister's statement in February is the establishment of the Aboriginal affairs subcommittee of Cabinet. We have three focus areas: treaty; land and sea; and local decision-making. These three areas are chaired by three members of our Labor team: the Chief Minister; the Member for Namatjira; and me, the Member for Arnhem. Our Caucus team is made up of the Indigenous Labor Caucus members and the Labor bush members. It will be a strong team and I look forward to working on that committee.

I am most excited about Labor's commitment to \$1.1bn over the next two years to address remote housing. This commitment will have an enormous impact on the lives of remote Territorians. It will finally begin to address the social and economic disadvantage faced every day by our Indigenous Territorians and provide much-needed relief for remote housing disadvantage. This issue is close to my heart, as many people in the Arnhem electorate are not only my constituents but also my family members.

The impacts of adequate and better housing in remote NT will have positive effects in the fields of education, health, employment and economic development in communities. I am proud to be a part of this Labor government, which is committed to delivering better outcomes in remote housing not only during the four-year term, but into the future over the next 10 years, showing Territorians that the many issues surrounding remote housing are not a political move. It is a social and moral responsibility that our Labor government is not afraid to step up and address in order to close the gap of Indigenous disadvantage in the Territory.

Trust is hard to gain and easy to lose. The previous CLP government showed a complete disregard and lack of respect towards Territorians. Our Labor government is already working hard to rebuild the trust of the public and the community in the processes of the decision-makers in parliament. Of the many steps we are taking as a Labor team to restore trust, I will mention two:

1. We are publishing our travel costs by providing clear and transparent documentation on costing so the public know exactly how taxpayer dollars are spent.
2. We established a long-overdue inquiry into political donations, going back 10 years. We will begin work on legislation to establish an anti-corruption commission so it is ready by next year.

Mr Deputy Speaker, I commend the Chief Minister for outlining the vision and action this Labor government has for the year ahead, and beyond, so Territorians can hear and see the strong and dedicated commitment from the Chief Minister, the Cabinet ministers and the Labor Caucus team in delivering for the Northern Territory. After all, we live here because we love it.

Mr GUNNER (Chief Minister): Mr Deputy Speaker, I thank everyone who has contributed so valuably to the statement on the year ahead. It was watched very closely, inside and outside of this place, because the Territory needs a plan.

We ran very strongly at the last election, saying we would have a plan. A very strong lesson from the last four-year term of the last government was that the Territory needs certainty, and smart, community-

engaged long-term and short-term strategies. It needs a vision. Our vision is about creating jobs. It is about nurturing children as the inheritors and drivers of the Territory's immense future. It is about creating safe and vibrant communities. It is about empowering the bush and restoring faith in government, which was brutally swept aside in four unedifying years of a chaotic CLP government.

I thank all the members of my team for their contributions on what our government is doing to create and sustain jobs. The previous government, caught in the perpetual throes of self-preservation, failed to set out a plan beyond the so-called Ichthys construction cliff. It used up the rampant economic growth of the construction phase, sold our assets and left the Territory in a grim fiscal predicament. We knew that at the Territory election.

The Pre-Election Fiscal Outlook painted a very clear picture of the lack of planning by the CLP for these critical years. The economic headwinds are now strong, and it falls on this government, with community buy-in and expertise, to navigate sensibly, yet boldly. The economic summits process will culminate this month in a blueprint for the Northern Territory beyond this term and beyond the members in this place. We need to provide confidence and certainty about the direction of the Northern Territory and the direction of government that goes beyond electoral cycles. We must also act decisively to keep money flowing to small businesses and industry.

I thank the members for their contributions on this. They hear time and again in their electorates that 2016 was as bad as it gets and we must do better in 2017. I am sure for many of our members who represent remote areas it was not just 2016 that was bad; we need to do more for the economic opportunities of our remote Territorians—full stop.

The Member for Sanderson told us that during her doorknocking last year in just one street she came across three families on the cusp of leaving, all having been laid off their jobs. We must act decisively to create and support jobs and keep Territorians here. That is what we are doing.

Government has brought forward \$120m worth of infrastructure projects. We have offered the \$24 000 stamp duty relief for first home buyers, and \$10 000 of renovation grants to pump into the coffers of our hard-working tradies. We want to keep Territorians here and stimulate the economy at the same time.

I am happy to report that since I delivered this statement, and since we came into government, 325 first home buyers have taken advantage of our stamp duty relief and committed themselves to the Territory. That is a fantastic result. Alice Springs has embraced this scheme. Those residents were hurt by the decision to cut the stamp duty relief. I was pleased to see there has been one purchase on the Tiwi Islands using this scheme.

It is so important to keep Territorians here and help people buy their own piece of the Territory. That is why we understand that connection Aboriginal people have to country. It is something I feel from only four generations here. Think about what thousands of generations would mean to the special connection you have to the country you live on. If you give someone that opportunity you can understand how special it is.

We have brought back the Home Improvement Scheme and made it bigger and better. We are strengthening buy local principles to get more of government's annual \$3bn spend on goods and services into the hands of businesses that will use it to drive jobs and the economy. We are spending \$22m as part of our immediate works stimulus to steel manufacture projects, public housing upgrades, and repairs and maintenance with community organisation grants to get money flowing on things that need to be done so there is a return to the Territory taxpayer.

We will continue to listen to small businesses—and it was pleasing to hear the Member for Fong Lim, who is chair of the government's small business round table, talk about businesses' desires to work collaboratively with government. The member also spoke passionately about our government's vision to overhaul the Darwin CBD. The assistant minister also spoke about that.

This is very much about grasping our place as the great economic and cultural capital of the north. This is our opportunity; it is there for us to take. We have to establish ourselves as the capital of northern Australia. We want Western Australia and Queensland, the northern bits, to look to us. We recognise Brisbane and Perth are a long way away. Darwin is the natural capital of the north.

I thank the Leader of the Opposition for his contribution. He said my statement failed to mention what we were doing about crime and antisocial behaviour. Likewise the Deputy Leader of the Opposition said that nothing was said about keeping Territorians safe and reducing crime. I think the opposition members may

have been dozing off. Granted, it was a very long speech because we had so much to tell. For their benefit, I will explain again.

We will honour the broken election promise of the previous government on an extra 120 police for the frontline and, importantly, we will do it by providing certainty to the police about their recruitment schedules so they know exactly how many police and when. We are giving them confidence and certainty because that is what they need. The commitment has already given police the confidence to assign 18 experienced officers to focus on youth crime right now and how we can prevent youth crime and help families and kids at risk before they go off the rails, before they commit crime. They will work with our 52 youth justice officers.

We will also be building a new police station in Palmerston to provide facilities for up to 200 police for the next 30 years, recognising the commitment that Palmerston needs for police. That is an important promise. The Members for Brennan and Drysdale have spoken about that.

The youth justice system is broken, and 2017 is about us taking the first big steps to fix it. We have fast-tracked the money to rebuild Don Dale and facilities at Alice Springs. We have announced the most comprehensive overhaul of the youth justice system in the Northern Territory as part of an \$18m package. We are funding youth diversion workers in Darwin, Palmerston, Katherine, Alice Springs and Tennant Creek to case manage young people. As part of this package we are expanding victim conferencing so young offenders can see and feel the impacts of their crimes, and victims will have a greater voice. We must make sure victims are put first when we consider these issues.

We will also expand diversion programs, including wilderness camps and boot camps, and focus on drug and alcohol rehabilitation and road safety programs.

We have acted decisively and we have not stopped. Just this week we have debated legislation in this House about body-worn video, including for us as evidence-in-chief, and expanding electronic monitoring for offenders out on bail, because we act in response to Territorians' concerns.

The Opposition Leader said we needed short- and long-term strategies to address crime, and that is exactly what our government is putting in place. We are about breaking the cycle of crime, stopping crime before it happens instead of waiting to clean up the mess.

The Member for Karama is right. She told the House that we must get the balance right between being reactive, intervening and being proactive. I thank the member for her contribution.

I also thank the Minister for Territory Families and the Minister for Education for their contributions about how we are investing in our kids now to get the Territory ready for tomorrow. We are putting \$114m back into school budgets; \$20m has already gone to schools to be spent where it is needed most—extra teachers, classes, programs and support. I appreciate the Minister for Education's input regarding how we are working with key stakeholders like the Northern Territory Principals' Association, the Australian Education Union of the Northern Territory and the Council of Government School Organisations. They are collaborative approaches to getting better outcomes for kids.

We are also investing \$300 000 into every Territory school for refurbishments and upgrades. We are expanding early childhood programs with runs on the board like playgroups, Nurse-Family Partnerships and Families as First Teachers. Last week the Education minister announced an extra 10 Families as First Teachers sites across the Territory.

Education is so important that we gave it extra attention this week with a statement about education. We believe this has to be a front-and-centre conversation. It is important to always have it at the front of our mind, to talk about education, what we are doing, how we can do it better and making sure Territorians know what we are doing in this space. You will hear us talk a lot about kids, education and what we can do better when it comes to our kids.

I also welcome the Territory Families minister's explanation about what we are doing about out-of-home care services. The minister recently signed a statement of commitment with Family Matters, a national coalition of 150 Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal organisations and academics, to eliminate the overrepresentation of Indigenous kids in out-of-home care.

The minister, Labor's first Alice Springs-based member, is also excited about what is happening in the Centre. I was very pleased last week to sign a project facilitation agreement with metals company TNG

Limited for the development of the Mount Peake vanadium, titanium and iron mine, 280 kilometres north of Alice Springs. The project will include a refinery in Darwin and could create more than 1700 construction jobs and 600 ongoing jobs throughout the Territory.

This is a good announcement for the Centre and for the Top End. It is a great announcement for Ti Tree, Alice Springs and Tennant Creek, and for the mine. The operators are talking about a locally-based model, and it is good for ongoing operational jobs in Darwin at the refinery. They have a few checks and balances to get through. We are not taking any shortcuts. We will protect the environment and the development consent processes all the way through this, but it is a sign of confidence in the future of the Northern Territory.

With the establishment of a refinery in Darwin, the deep port, the highway, the railway—we have advantages in the Territory that appeal to companies and we have to keep working to make sure we are delivering on the potential of the Territory.

Since I delivered this statement I have travelled to Alice Springs to outline our government's vision for this very special part of Australia. Our government sees Alice Springs as the inland capital of Australia; the beating heart of the outback and Indigenous Australia; the gateway to Uluru and the MacDonnell Ranges.

There is a romance to the Red Centre, which is why so many people visit and why sometimes it gets more attention on the national and international stage. But we should never lose sight of the fact it is a beautiful, brilliant place to visit. It is a true bucket-list destination, and people from around Australia and the world should visit Alice Springs, the Red Centre, the ranges and Uluru. You will never regret it. It is a beautiful place to visit.

The iconic town of Alice Springs is wanting for jobs and rejuvenation, and as a government we will do that. We are working on that right now. I thank the Members for Araluen, Braitling, Namatjira, Stuart and Barkly for the contributions they have made toward rejuvenating our Red Centre to maintain its place as a must-do location.

We have already had discussions, led by the Government Architect, on things we can do in and around the city centre—exciting concepts—and in the second half of 2017 we will have practical and achievable ideas to take to the people.

I welcome the art and culture minister's contribution to what will be the centrepiece of this rejuvenation: the iconic national Indigenous art gallery. We believe this must be the most visual representation of what Alice Springs is all about, a strong signal of the cultural value of Alice Springs and its place on the national stage, where we can elevate the things we are so proud of and that we do so well—things that are true and genuine to the people of the Red Centre.

That can all be embraced in this national Indigenous art gallery and we have committed \$50m for the gallery. We have pledged a further \$20m for the cultural centre, which is another wonderful idea to advance the cultural value of Alice Springs and the Red Centre, led by local Aboriginal organisations.

The minister recently announced well-renowned authorities on Aboriginal art and culture writer and curator, Hetti Perkins, and Desert Chief Executive, Philip Watkins, will lead a steering committee of experts to begin early scoping work on the gallery.

I thank you, Mr Deputy Speaker, as the assistant minister, for your involvement in this project as well, supporting the minister and providing a strong voice from Alice Springs and the Red Centre. We look forward to hearing the progress reports during the year on this exciting project.

Work will start in the upcoming financial year on the \$6m Alice Springs Women's Shelter, and \$7m will go to the Alice Springs youth justice facilities and programs. I was pleased to stand with the Minister for Territory Families as well as Charlie King, the commissioner, Rirratjingu and others to announce the first of its kind, police-led, community-supported conference in Alice Springs during 2017. The conference will look at what we can do better, the good and the bad of how we tackle and handle family violence. It is an important conversation to have, and Alice Springs is showing how it leads what can be a difficult debate by hosting that conference.

In partnership, the federal government will also build a \$6.1m 10-bed palliative care unit in Alice Springs so end of life is comfortable, peaceful and dignified. That was in response to listening to locals about the health services they want in Alice Springs and the Red Centre.

The Deputy Opposition Leader asked about our roadmap for renewables, and I am happy to elaborate. Our 50% renewable energy target by 2030 is about more than doing the right thing by the planet. It is about energy security, particularly for the bush, where blackouts are part of the daily or weekly routine. With 300 sunny days a year, Alice Springs is a natural solar power hub. Government has already established an expert panel to advise on a roadmap for renewables. By June a report will be available for public comment, scrutiny and refinement.

Desert Knowledge Australia has produced a discussion paper setting out a proposal to build a centre of excellence for isolated power systems in Alice Springs. Desert Knowledge is now in the process of producing a business plan for commercial investment, which should be ready early in the new financial year. I have only very recently, last week, spent time in Alice Springs at Desert Knowledge, talking with them, walking through the site again and looking at the solar investment there.

The Members for Katherine and Barkly are very excited about the \$30m we will invest in the arts trail, stretching from the iconic gallery in Alice Springs all the way to Darwin, through Tennant Creek, Katherine and East Arnhem Land. The Member for Barkly and the Minister for Primary Industry and Resources spoke passionately about our plans for Tennant Creek and the region. Mining and cattle is Tennant Creek's heritage and we believe it is the heart of this exciting future. We heard the minister speak at length about everything happening in this space and I thank him for his contribution.

We must invest now in making Tennant Creek more liveable to attract and retain the professionals and their families who will be drawn by the Barkly's mining and cattle prospects. That is why our government will invest \$5m in upgrading Tennant Creek's sports facilities and a further \$6m in early childhood education facilities.

The minister, the Member for Barkly, and the assistant minister for Primary Industry and Resources, the Member for Fong Lim, make a potent team to drive change in the Barkly. I look forward to working with them and the communities through 2017 and beyond.

The Member for Katherine is a passionate local member and is excited about that town's role in future Territory prosperity. The optimism in that town now is palpable. We will put our money where our mouth is and invest in Katherine to help it realise its potential as an inland port and agribusiness centre of national importance. We will build a logistic parks and business park, and work is under way to identify the most appropriate site and investment partner. There is huge potential in that region; it is right on the railway and the road. It is a fantastic place to be. The positivity there at the moment is incredible.

I thank the Member for Brennan for his contribution about our vision for Palmerston as a family-focused centre of living. We believe it must have its own suite of services and sense of purpose and identity, and must no longer be seen as a mini-Darwin.

Palmerston will soon have its own hospital. Beginning this year we have fast-tracked \$15m to begin building a police station for its suburbs. We will establish a re-engagement centre for kids who struggle with the traditional education system, as part of an overall \$8m for children support services. For the Member for Brennan this means not only jobs for his constituents, but a better community.

Local members do not get more passionate than the Member for Stuart, and I thank him for his contribution about lifting the bush into the economic mainstream. He is right; the government in the Northern Territory needs a better relationship with the bush. He is right in saying that what happens in the bush affects the Territory as a whole. We know the best decisions are made locally, not in Canberra or Darwin. That is why we are handing local decision-making for communities to Aboriginal people in the areas of education, looking after our kids, justice, health, local government and housing.

Ms UIBO: A point of order, Mr Deputy Speaker! Pursuant to Standing Order 43, I move that the Member for Fannie Bay be granted an extension of time.

Motion agreed to.

Mr GUNNER: This is smart and decent, and it will be the most significant reform in Northern Territory Aboriginal affairs in years, with a trust relationship between government and locals, and decisions made by locals about education, looking after our kids, justice, health, local government and housing. We have to do better, have better trust and make sure we do not have that reaction—when someone makes a mistake, drawing back decision-making power to Canberra or Darwin. We have to try to trust locals.

The minister for Housing has carriage of one of the most powerful elements of this reform and I thank him for elaborating on our record \$1.1bn commitment over 10 years for remote housing.

At the beginning of the month I travelled to Milikapiti with the minister and the Member for Arafura to launch Room to Breathe. That program is a component of our \$1.1bn to add extra living space onto existing homes in the bush. We saw some fantastic, practical examples in Milikapiti of how you can make a meaningful difference to someone's life with the application of a little money, a lot of thought, listening, trusting locals and giving them a say.

We will see tremendous outcomes through that program. It will improve lives while we deal with the difficult issues that can emerge sometimes around land tenure or the civils. We can make a transformation to where people live now.

The Member for Arafura is an excellent voice for his people. As the assistant minister for homelands he will be delivering for all remote Territorians. I thank him for his hard work and support.

I thank the Member for Arnhem for her contribution. She undervalued her contribution a bit—in her role as co-chair of the subcommittee we are looking at treaty, land and sea, and local decision-making. This is very much about how we move decisions to the centre of government, having a clear direction and process for the public service to work through, and how we will work with Territorians to make sure we are delivering important things for the future of the Northern Territory. If we get it right we will put the Territory onto solid foundations for decades to come.

It is not just about trusting locals, but removing decisions from the electoral cycle. If a local has that choice there will be less pressure on the electoral and political cycles when faced with sudden transformations. Remote Territorians suffer the most during political cycles, upheavals and decisions made in Darwin and Canberra. One of the best insulations for them is local decision-making.

Land and sea—it is about making sure we are working with traditional owners so they can achieve the best opportunities in ownership of their land. Treaty goes to the heart of a positive, long-term reconciliation and relationship with the traditional owners of the Northern Territory.

If we get this right, these are important foundational things for where the Territory is going for decades to come. Not too much pressure there, Mr Deputy Speaker and Member for Arnhem, about what we have to do in that space. We will build on the successes and learn from the missteps of previous CLP and Labor governments. We will do better in 2017. The only way you can move forward is by acknowledging both the mistakes and successes of Labor and CLP past. That is what we will do.

We will be a government that listens and acts. We will provide certainty for Territorians. That is why we have a plan. We are happy to share the plan we are working on to give Territorians confidence about the direction of the Territory. That is something they need in what will be a tough 2017 after a terrible 2016.

I thank all the members for their contributions in this House. I invite all members, including the members opposite, to work with us through 2017 and beyond to face our challenges and embrace our glorious future. I am confident about the future of the Northern Territory. There is hope, but 2016 was tough and we are here for you in 2017. We are producing long-term plans over our economic summit process. It will only work if there is genuine bipartisanship on accepting that almost all our major projects benefit all Territorians and should be shared projects.

I commend the statement to the House.

Motion agreed to; statement noted.

PAPER TABLED

Auditor-General for the Northern Territory's March 2017 Report to the Legislative Assembly

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable Members, I table the Auditor-General for the Northern Territory's March 2017 Report to the Legislative Assembly for consideration.

MOTION

Note Paper – Auditor-General for the Northern Territory's March 2017 Report to the Legislative Assembly

Mr GUNNER (Chief Minister): Mr Deputy Speaker, I move that the Assembly take note of the Auditor-General for the Northern Territory's March 2017 Report to the Legislative Assembly and I seek leave to continue my remarks at a later date.

Leave granted.

PAPER TABLED

Minister's Response to Northern Territory Environment Protection Authority Assessment Report 79

Ms MOSS (Environment and Natural Resources): Mr Deputy Speaker, I table my comments on the Northern Territory Environment Protection Authority Assessment Report 79.

I wish to make a short statement on the tabling of my comments on the Jemena pipeline project. All members would be aware of the Northern Gas Pipeline and its economic significance to the Northern Territory, and this government's strong platform of environmental assessment reform and transparency.

The pipeline proponent, Jemena, was awarded the contract for its construction in 2015, and the project is for the construction and operation of a high-pressure underground gas pipeline between the Amadeus Gas Pipeline—commencing at Warrego, approximately 45 kilometres northwest of Tennant Creek—and the Carpentaria Gas Pipeline, near Mount Isa in Queensland.

This is a significant project for the Northern Territory and Tennant Creek, whose businesses and the community stand to benefit from the jobs relating to the construction of the project and from services and industries that flow from it. It has generated some robust commentary, and concerns have been raised by some stakeholders through the public environmental impact statement about the potential for environmental and biodiversity impacts of the pipeline's construction over large areas of pristine land east and southeast of Tennant Creek.

I want to make sure it is clear that this is based on an agreement to transport gas from existing access conventional gas sources, as the Minister for Primary Industry and Resources has said. The assessment of the pipeline relates only to the construction of an underground pipeline and whether or not the construction poses environmental risks and, if so, what mitigations and management are required.

In October 2015 the Northern Territory Environment Protection Authority determined that the project would require an environmental impact assessment under the *Environmental Assessment Act*. Key matters for consideration included land access and land clearing, effects on watercourses and crossings, and the potential impact on biodiversity values across large areas of largely underdeveloped land.

On 17 January 2017 the Environment Protection Authority submitted its Assessment Report 79 to me, as the Minister for Environment and Natural Resources. Under the legislative process, having received the report from the EPA, I have the opportunity to make comment when I provide the EPA's assessment report to the responsible minister.

As the pipeline also requires approvals under the *Energy Pipelines Act*, the responsible minister is my colleague, the Minister for Primary Industry and Resources. The purposes of our environmental impact assessment legislation is to ensure, to the greatest extent practicable, that matters with the potential to have a significant impact on the environment are fully considered.

The EPA's assessment report highlights that the Jemena project can proceed subject to conditions that will ensure the recommendations made by the EPA, as well as the commitments made by the proponent during the assessment process, are implemented.

I fully support the recommendations made in the EPA's assessment report. I have, however, taken the opportunity to provide additional comment, and I note that I am the first minister to do so since this provision was introduced in 2013. My comments are, in part, contrary to the EPA's assessment and, as such, I am obligated, in the interests of transparency, to table those comments. I am of the view that they add to the assessment with the goal to improve environmental outcomes, increase confidence in the project and reduce uncertainty in the granting of approvals.

Consistent with the requirement that my comments are tabled and in keeping with full transparency on this matter, I advise members of the following comments provided to my colleague, the Minister for Primary Industry and Resources: it is my strong recommendation that all of the EPA's recommendations be implemented in granting any licence to construct or operate under the *Energy Pipelines Act*. I have also highlighted my strong support for the recommendation that the weed management plan, traffic impact assessment and traffic management plan be completed prior to the commencement of any works if approved, and be incorporated into the pipeline management plan.

In my comments I also drew attention to a critical recommendation of the EPA that aims to avoid any impact of the pipeline on watercourses of high environmental value.

Our government has a clear commitment to environmental regulatory reform, transparency and accountability in environment management. This is why, in addition to the eight recommendations made by the NTEPA, I have also recommended that all environmental management components of the pipeline management plan for construction and operation of the pipeline be made publicly available as a condition of approval and that updates on compliance with and enforcement of environmental management conditions be provided to my department.

This government will continue to focus on strengthening our environmental assessment process and look at projects through this lens. Our new system will support responsible development, delivering jobs and economic growth to Territorians, while at the same time protecting and preserving the environment for current and future generations.

This is in line with the expectations of the community. While we progress our environmental reform I will continue to carefully consider all recommendations made by the EPA in their assessment reports.

As I have done in relation to Assessment Report 79, I will work to ensure that key issues are raised with responsible ministers as appropriate to achieve the best possible outcomes for the Territory.

CONSIDERATION OF COMMITTEE REPORTS, AUDITOR-GENERAL'S REPORTS AND GOVERNMENT RESPONSES

Auditor-General for the Northern Territory's Report to the Legislative Assembly November 2016—consideration deferred.

ADJOURNMENT

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

Ms LAWLER (Drysdale): Mr Deputy Speaker, I wish to talk about the early childhood educators' industrial action that happened on Wednesday 8 March.

On Wednesday 8 March early childhood educators across Australia staged industrial action in support of better wages and walked off the job at 3.20 pm. In Darwin approximately 50 educators and supporters met at Casuarina Childcare Centre to participate in the action and to call for equal pay for early childhood educators.

Alice Branco, Director of Casuarina Childcare Centre, has been a long-term advocate for the rights of educators, and I thank her for her passion and commitment in supporting early childhood educators. Not only was this walk-off organised in a way that minimised disruption to families, these passionate educators braved heavy rain to promote their cause. Parents were asked to support the action by picking up their children by 3.20 pm. Such is the professionalism and dedication of the educators, they ensured that no service was disrupted and any children who were not able to be collected were still cared for. The walk-off was part of an on-going national campaign.

Currently educators earn about \$20 an hour. They are among some of the lowest-paid professionals in Australia, yet they look after and educate our children. Educators and other low-paid workers find it difficult to own their own homes and provide for their families. Early childhood educators earn one-third less than other professionals educating and teaching our children.

Early childhood educators have many roles and responsibilities in their daily work that bring both challenges and rewards. Over the course of a day, educators guide and support children's learning and

development by planning for individual children, setting up activities and supporting children's participation in them, observing children and evaluating programs to ensure children's development and learning needs are met.

Educators provide a nurturing environment that flexibly meets children's needs for play, rest, stimulation, group time and meals, which often involves regularly moving furniture and equipment. They provide for the physical and emotional care of children, feeding, changing nappies, putting babies to sleep, picking up and carrying young children. It is physically, emotionally and intellectually challenging work. They also support families to stay connected with their children through updates via electronic platforms, scrap books and photos. This allows families to be included in the important milestones of their children.

Educators need to be able to communicate and work with families to promote a coordinated approach to the care and education of their children, and to work with other professionals when children need extra or specialist support.

Early childhood educators are not only trusted to care for our most precious little people in society, they support our economic growth by enabling parents to participate in work or study. The low wages of early childhood educators help subsidise the wages of higher-paid professionals, and the Commonwealth should ensure our most important workers are rewarded for the work they do without increasing the cost of care for working families.

The Territory is one of a few jurisdictions that provide a subsidy to long daycare and family daycare services to help families with the cost of childcare. This Labor government supports early childhood education and care workers and the important work they do.

Poor wages and conditions impact on the recruitment and retention of quality staff, and the delivery of high-quality, sustainable services. To address this we will work with the sector and the Australian Government to improve educators' salaries and conditions to reflect their skills and qualifications and the importance of the work they do.

Early childhood education and care services are central to supporting children and families and improving young children's outcomes, and these educators deserve better. I thank everyone who participated in the walk-off and those who provided their support for this important campaign.

Early childhood education and care workers deserve our support, as well as pay and conditions that recognise the important role they play in our community. Thank you.

Ms MOSS (Casuarina): Madam Acting Deputy Speaker, I echo the words of the Minister for Education. I am also a supporter of the Big Steps campaign. I note that part of the minister's adjournment speech was about Casuarina Childcare Centre. They are brilliant and I support their campaign for professional wages. Thank you for highlighting that tonight.

I wish to speak about this week's coverage of tourism in Alice Springs. I stand shoulder to shoulder with our Centralian members; the Members for Braitling, Namatjira, Stuart and Araluen, who I am sure are eager to be part of promoting Alice Springs in its best possible light—and Tourism Central Australia CEO, Stephen Schwer, and the Chair of Tourism Central Australia, Dale McIver. I stand shoulder to shoulder with all of them in encouraging people to experience the magic of Alice Springs and Central Australia.

I want to comment on the coverage we have seen over the last two days. Each year over 700 000 people visit Central Australia. Many come to experience the incredible landscapes that change throughout the year, from the red earth and the expanses of wildflowers to the rock formations that make this place unlike any other in the world. I have seen some photos from the Member for Braitling and I know that to be true. You can go at any time of year and see something completely different in Alice Springs and Central Australia. There are places there that make you contemplate your significance, permanency and, importantly, our history and our stories.

People come for the Red CentreNATS and the Finke Desert Race, or stop before heading off for a unique experience at the Field of Light. They come to experience Australia's beating heart of the world's oldest culture. This is where we will invest \$50m in showcasing the movements that have been defined in Indigenous art and, more broadly, through the national Indigenous art gallery, and a further \$20m in a cultural centre.

This is where, like song lines across this great land, we will start art trails to continue to share our stories with all who are ready for this wonderful experience. And there are so many people who want to experience Alice Springs and Central Australia. They come for award-winning experiences run by dedicated tourism operators. This year most of the winners of the national gold, silver and bronze tourism awards were from the Centre.

Some of the travel advisory information that has been referred to over the last couple of days is outdated. Although we would tell all visitors, as you would anywhere, to be mindful of personal safety and take care on our roads, we still strongly encourage people to have this once-in-a-lifetime experience.

The biggest travel advice I would give is not to miss out on magical Central Australia. That is why I have joined with Lord Mayor, Damien Ryan, to invite Karl Stefanovic from the *Today* show to do as they suggested, that is, a show in Alice Springs to experience what is on offer and promote it to the rest of this beautiful country. Being able to share the beauty of this place is why I continue to work with proud Central Australian local members. I hope that others in the Chamber will come on board.

While we do not have a rose-coloured view of the world, as the Member for Braitling so eloquently said in her Facebook post about Alice Springs, we love the Centre and we want it to be treated fairly. We want to share it with the world.

I encourage people to please experience Alice Springs and Central Australia, and do the Red Centre.

Mr PAECH (Namatjira): Madam Acting Deputy Speaker, I want to talk tonight about a recent trip I undertook to the Northern Territory's most remote community in the electorate of Namatjira, and probably the furthest from the capital of Darwin. It is a community about 670 kilometres southwest of Alice Springs, so it is always a bit of an adventure for me when I visit my constituents there.

I was fortunate enough to get back to Alice Springs on Monday after having a good time marching for equality with Senator Malarndirri McCarthy at the Sydney Gay and Lesbian Mardi Gras to make sure we stood tall and proud for Territorians. I landed and jumped in the car to head out into the electorate, where I was fortunate enough to spend a lot of time with my constituents and sit around a camp fire cooking a kangaroo. I see myself as a very versatile person.

Enough about me. As I said, Docker River is about 670 kilometres southwest of Alice Springs and is situated in the wonderful Petermann Ranges of the Northern Territory. It is about seven kilometres from the Western Australian border. While out there, I was fortunate to attend two events. The MacDonnell Regional Council held a local authority meeting in Docker River, which I was fortunate to attend, where I saw a number of people participating and making sure the local voice is a very strong one. I acknowledge the outstanding work of the local authority members there: Ruby James; Barnaby Kunia; Marlene Abbott; Robert Tilmouth; and Winsome Newberry. They are just some of the outstanding local authority members.

It was so refreshing to be in the electorate at Docker River, sitting and listening to these people's outstanding contributions to shape the future of their community. We discussed a range of things—town planning for the community of Docker River, upcoming sporting events, youth programs and a range of exciting things for the people of Docker River. That local authority has an outstanding bunch of local community people poised to take real leadership and direction for their communities.

While I was there I also was fortunate to see members from the NPY Women's Council, which runs a fantastic youth program in Docker River. Being quite remote, it often does not get the services that other communities throughout the Northern Territory get. The NPY Women's Council runs a series of things, such as a rec hall program in the rec shed after school and during school holidays, which is aimed at working with young kids. It is heaps of fun and there are many activities for engaging young people.

The NPY Women's Council does an outstanding job engaging with the young kids in that community. They also run a range of fantastic programs there. The NPY Women's Council can be noted for having an outstanding track record in that region in case work, support, recreation and diversion programs, as well as advocacy and collaboration. They also run a fantastic program called the Ninja Circus. Unfortunately I am not as quick-moving as some of the others, but I was fortunate to see them and they showed me a few moves.

The NPY Women's Council is a fantastic organisation when it comes to leadership development for tomorrow's leaders. I stand in this Chamber with my colleague, the Member for Braitling, who will be able to share her experiences with and support of the wonderful work of the NPY Women's Council. I look forward

to continuing to grow my knowledge and understanding of the NPY Women's Council and supporting them over the coming months to make sure we look after the people in that tristate region.

Being as remote as the community of Docker River is, it sometimes does not get the services that others get. I am very pleased to have organisations like the NPY Women's Council in my electorate. They do outstanding work with the young kids and have some great women's leadership programs. The Member for Brailling has been heavily involved with the NPY Women's Council over a number of years and is a keen advocate, so I share her passion in that.

I am happy to report that work is being undertaken on the Docker River road. We have committed to that. I am happy the Treasurer is supportive of that road, which is part of the Outback Way, making sure we are delivering services.

As I have said previously, the MacDonnell Regional Council also does an outstanding job in the community. I want to acknowledge Mr John Thomas, the area manager for that region. Doing that type of job can be stressful at times and it is very remote, so I want to extend a big thanks to him, as well as all the councillors. Marlene Abbott is the councillor representing that region. She is a very fierce and passionate woman, making sure the voices of the people of Docker River are well represented within the MacDonnell Regional Council.

I also extend my gratitude and support to members of the MacDonnell Regional Council. All councillors there are outstanding. I have very much enjoyed working with them, and I wish them the very best success as we head to local government elections in August. I hope I see many faces return because their contribution to the MacDonnell Regional Council has been outstanding.

I very much enjoyed working with Roxanne Kenny, the President of the MacDonnell Regional Council. She is a fantastic advocate. Members of this Chamber were enlightened by her when we had our regional Caucus in Hermannsburg. It was great to see every member in the electorate of Stuart there for that Caucus in the boundaries of the MacDonnell Regional Council.

Members were very happy. It was a definite sign of commitment by a Territory Labor government to bring members of the team to the local government area of the MacDonnell region just to see the outstanding work of council members and what they bring to the community. I hope I see some of those councillors return to that area, and I will be out on the track, talking to them about their intentions to run again.

Again, I place on the record my support for the NPY Women's Council and their outstanding work in the area of my electorate.

I also extend a big thanks to all community members in Docker River. You have an outstanding community in a pristine part of the Northern Territory. I look forward to continuing to advocate and lobby hard on your behalf to make sure you get the services you need and deserve.

If any member at any time would like to see one of the Territory's most remote Aboriginal communities, you are more than welcome to jump in the car and come for a cruise with me.

Mr SIEVERS (Brennan): Madam Acting Deputy Speaker, I wish to deliver a statement outlining the great achievements of Mathew Stokes, a Territorian and resident of the Brennan electorate, who is currently facilitating the Footy Means Business program. It is a youth development program aimed at providing Indigenous footballers with life skills for both on and off the field.

Mathew's father, Mr John Stokes, is a life member of the Palmerston Magpies Football Club and was obviously a strong influence on his son's football career. Mathew was only 14 years old when he first played senior football for Palmerston Magpies. Like his father, Mathew played in a premiership with the Magpies. There was no doubt in Mathew's skills and abilities as he grew up in Darwin. He was a regular in highlight reels of many different junior sporting programs across town.

When Mathew just missed out on being drafted in 2002 he did not let that stop his ambition. Instead he moved to Adelaide, where he played in the South Australian National Football League for Woodville West Torrens for the next three seasons.

Mathew's persistence and hard work finally paid off. In the 2005 AFL draft he was selected by the Geelong Football Club. Mathew went on to play 200 games of AFL football. He played in two premierships with Geelong, in 2007 and 2011. He won a preseason premiership in 2009.

Mathew's career provided him with many high points. It also allowed him to grow into a mature and measured footballer. The Geelong Football Club environment that Mathew evolved in taught him to be disciplined, united and honest. It was built on a philosophy of being humble but ruthless, and to respect the game he played.

I am pleased Mathew has returned to the Territory and is currently mentoring the group in the Army aligned program being run at Robertson Barracks, sponsored by Rio Tinto. To me, Mathew is the ideal mentor for this type of program. He knows firsthand how to overcome adversity, as his long and successful AFL career identifies.

There is no better time than now to see mentors such as Mathew Stokes work in conjunction with other stakeholders who share the strong values and understanding of what it means to work side by side with your mates. It is a great trait which I am sure his father instilled in him.

There is no better time to see opportunity provided to the youth of our future. It shows them there are a great many pathways when it comes to achieving their goals. There is no better time to challenge our future leaders and promote their importance and promote concepts that have a strong focus on making us better and pushing us towards personal excellence.

I acknowledge the efforts of Mathew Stokes. He is back in the Northern Territory and giving back to our Territory youth. Mathew is an AFL premiership player for Geelong Football Club. He has grown into a good leader of the Territory. I am sure we will hear many more good stories about Mathew's work in the future.

Ms UIBO (Arnhem): Madam Acting Deputy Speaker, I rise to speak about the significance of today, which is National Close the Gap Day. The Oxfam Australia website says that last year, in 2016, more than 150 000 people across Australia took part in more than 1596 separate National Close the Gap Day events.

I am heartened by the growing rate of national participation across Australia in putting this very important issue front and centre on the national stage. After all, if a problem is not discussed, how do people know it exists?

Close the Gap has been highlighted in some very public forums. One very famous example is the NRL round dedicated to supporting the movement and awareness across Australia. When I was teaching I participated in five National Close the Gap Days and coordinated four of these events at my school in Numbulwar.

I worked with my secondary students to spread awareness about the day and have a school event. Each year we held a staff versus seniors basketball match, which drew a wide crowd from the community, as you can imagine. Sometimes the teachers did well and other times we got our butts kicked.

Each year the familiarity with this day grew, and our school event evolved with whole-of-school participation. We had basketball matches across the early childhood and primary students who formed teams in both the moiety groups Mandaridja and Mandayung. This was always very well received across the community and an exciting day which drew together the community at the school.

Oxfam Australia best explains the aim of National Close the Gap Day, which is to bring people together, to share information and, most importantly, take meaningful action in support of achieving Indigenous health equality in 2030.

As we know in the Northern Territory, from our own experiences and observations, equal access to healthcare is an area which desperately needs to be improved here in the lucky country of Australia. As stated by the Oxfam Australia website, the tragic reality of Indigenous health is:

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people can expect to live 10–17 years less than other Australians.

Oxfam Australia is working in partnerships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in creating success with the awareness of the Close the Gap movement. It is one that I fully support.

We see here in the Northern Territory some very dire statistics for Indigenous Territorians in the areas of rheumatic heart fever, which can be linked to the skin disease scabies, which is curable. We also see the links between that and kidney and renal failure, and the long-term care that is required on dialysis. We also

see high rates of diabetes and high blood pressure, as well as a new growing trend of obesity, unfortunately.

We also see curable conditions that lead to long-term problems in regard to hearing problems, eye care and dental care. This is in regard to a lack of access and sometimes, unfortunately, a lack of quality healthcare here in the Northern Territory and in other parts of Australia.

I wish to bring this to the attention of the House. I hope that in future our fellow parliamentarians will look at ways we can spread awareness of National Close the Gap Day, looking at Indigenous healthcare and making sure Territorians and Indigenous people around Australia close the gap in regard to health, ensuring all Australians have access to quality healthcare, no matter where they live—remote, regional or urban.

Mrs WORDEN (Sanderson): Mr Deputy Speaker, I stand this evening to put into *Hansard* the efforts of a wonderful community group that recently took themselves to Melbourne. I have gotten to know them quite well over the last few months.

The Greek Traditional Dancing Group of Darwin is a small local group based in my electorate of Sanderson. I am fortunate that a number of the members of that group are not only my constituents, but they also come under my remit as assistant minister for multicultural affairs, which is a great intersection for me.

As other members would know, Darwin is so far from other major centres. The idea of travelling to another major centre to highlight the expertise and skill of your group can be daunting, particularly if you are in a small group without much financial support.

I know of several local sporting groups that no longer travel to their national championships because it is cost inhibitive and time onerous on families. They get there and find it difficult to get onto the stage. When this small dance group approached me for support—and in our electorate offices we do not have a great deal of capacity—I was more than happy to sit with them and strategise ways to raise the much-needed funds. The group approached this task with amazing gusto and pulled together some good prizes, including some from the Member for Brennan. He kindly donated something to them, as did the Member for Karama, so they began their fundraising in earnest.

I do not think in its history the Northlakes Shopping Centre has seen such an excited or energetic group of raffle ticket sellers in such a sustained way. There was no way you could enter the shopping centre and not know they were there—a little gentle reminder on the way in and another on the way out of what they wanted to do. They were very dedicated to that. I came in one morning and there were all these balloons hanging off my signage. It was a sight to see, and it was exciting. It added a new dimension to a somewhat square shopping centre.

The group spent the following Friday, Saturday and Sunday leveraging more than \$1000 out of the community around them, not just the money we gave them, to represent the Greek Traditional Dancing Group of Darwin. They were really determined to do it. They headed off to the Melbourne Greek Glenti festival, which is a celebration of Greek culture that we see here on the esplanade.

I thought they were going to some massive national Greek dancing competition, but they just wanted to showcase the Territory at Melbourne's Glenti.

They are a not-for-profit group. Their expenses included 30 new traditional costumes, flights, hotels, transport, tours and food for 35 people. It is quite a big group. It was their first trip to Melbourne; in fact, it was their first trip anywhere in Australia, although I think they have ventured overseas before.

The parents and students, along with their main organiser, Anastasia Mastrandreas, met all their expenses themselves from their fundraising. It was a relief to have that offset from what could have been a difficult task. From all accounts the group were well received—I cannot imagine they were not—and they danced their hearts out, representing the Territory the only way a Greek traditional dancing group could do.

After speaking to some of the dancers since they have returned, I have heard that they enjoyed their trip and learned a lot, which they brought back to their group. I look forward to seeing them and all they have learned at the Greek Glenti this year.

I want to place on the record the names of the dancers who travelled: Andreas Mastrandreas; Simeon Skoufetzis; George Platsis; Nikolas Karanikolas; Theofilis Sisois; Harry Magoulis; Nikitas Magoulis; Eleni

Kypreos; Anna Mastrandreas; Yvon Mailis; Evdokia Kortesis; Katerina Kavouklis; Vaggelitsa Lelekis; Katerina Lelekis; and Kalliopi Skoyfetsis.

There are another 12 members of that group who were unable to travel at the time, so I say this to them: next time; just keep dancing.

I look forward to assisting the group further with a sausage sizzle in the coming months, and to support their efforts over the full time of my term in office to ensure they are able to continue the good work they do, particularly with our young people.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Member for Sanderson, just to confirm, were you seeking leave to table your notes?

Mrs WORDEN: Yes, I seek leave to table my notes.

Leave granted.

Ms NELSON (Katherine): Mr Deputy Speaker, I rise to speak of two very special people in my life, and I appreciate the opportunity to put their names on the public record.

On March 17 1999 I gave birth to my first son. He was born with multiple health issues, some of which were detected while I was still pregnant. His name was John-Michael and he died 28 September 1999. Had he lived, we would be celebrating his 18th birthday tomorrow.

On 17 October last year, late in the afternoon after a really busy day, I took a few minutes to appreciate the gorgeous sunset over Darwin Harbour. I also took time to reflect on where I was, where I have been and where I have come from, and, I admit, I got emotional that afternoon. I thought back on the events throughout my life that have led me to 18 October, and I thought a lot of my dad.

My dad passed away in 2012 and not a day goes by that I do not think of him. My father was a wonderful man, a man of integrity who was dedicated to his family, friends and country. He was committed to social justice, and empowering the disempowered, ensuring everyone felt equal to each other and had equitable access to the most basic necessities of life.

He was a champion in the fight for an independent Timor, and he died in his country with the knowledge and satisfaction that his efforts and passion helped to shape a free and democratic Timor.

On that night, 17 October, I sat in my hotel room and thought about what I would be doing the next day, delivering my inaugural speech on the first day of the 13th Legislative Assembly of the Northern Territory. Throughout that day my father was at the forefront of my mind. I remembered his advice, as I do every time I am faced with a tough decision: let your conscience be your guide.

It is difficult to speak publicly of my dad, even though he passed away five years ago. Not a day goes by that I do not think of him. In the Portuguese language there is a word that is difficult to translate to English. That word is *saudade*. There is no English equivalent, but that word means yearning, and this is exactly what we feel about dad. He meant everything to us. He was the centre of our family.

My dad was born in the mountains of Timor, which is where he now rests. He had such a love of his countrymen that at every opportunity he would leave Dili, the capital of Timor, often well after midnight. He would get in his four-wheel drive and travel around with a cooler full of fish and some bread, and he would go to the districts just to be amongst the people.

Whether he was visiting or being visited by Timorese elite or political leaders, or if he was meeting with foreign diplomats and heads of state, or sitting with his nephews and nieces, my dad was always the same person. He left us with an important legacy, and that is, love people and be loyal to your family.

The most important thing he demanded of my brother and I was that we be loyal to each other. We protect each other and look after ourselves, each other and our mother. 'But above all else', he said, 'the children are the priority.'

As you can imagine, it is difficult to not get emotional when I speak of my dad and our last few hours together. We spent the day before my father died with him at the family compound in Dili. It was a good day; he was in a great mood, happy to have all four of us together for the first time in many months.

With our own children, my brother and I are raising a new generation in his honour and with his philosophy in life. To honour my dad tonight, my brother and I ask this of all of you: live your life to the limit; enjoy your life; take advantage of it; do what makes you happy; and always remember to share your blessings with those who are less fortunate. We ask you not to forget our dad, and I ask you not to forget my son. His name was John-Michael.

Continue to tell my dad's story so his memory lives on, and continue to tell John-Michael's story, and I will continue to tell John-Michael's story so that his memory lives on also.

My father's name was Joao Viegas Carrascalao and he was from Liquica in Timor.

Ms WAKEFIELD (Braitling): Mr Deputy Speaker, I thank the Member for Katherine for that speech. It is usually me getting emotional in the Chamber. Thank you for reminding us of what we do.

I will very quickly speak about my home town of Alice Springs, which, I feel, has been treated unfairly by the international media this week. There has been some focus on travel warnings for Alice Springs. Those travel warnings are fairly standard across the world. Some of the media coverage has been very distressing. I think Alice Springs is one of the best places in the world. It is a wonderful place for me to raise my son and a fantastic place for people to visit.

My family and friends have come to see me very often since I moved to Alice Springs about 13 years ago. Someone said to me that you will get more visitors than anywhere else if you live in Alice Springs, and that is true. You have a constant stream of visitors. Those of us who live in Alice Springs say it is visitor season as soon as the weather cools. You have a constant run of people through your house, which is fantastic. But it is because people want to visit, as it is an iconic place. Once they know there is a free bedroom they are there. Family and friends' visits are fantastic and, I am sure, keep the economy ticking over.

All my friends who have moved to Alice Springs and ended up settling there are in a similar position. Their families come through every year. It is an important part of tourism. My aunty Julie is coming on Sunday. My parents have just left and now aunty Julie is coming.

I first visited Alice Springs as a single female traveller in the late 1990s. I went by myself. I was advised when I got there to perhaps not walk down the middle of the river in the middle of the night. I took that advice, but that is not something you would do anywhere you go. I had a fantastic time, felt completely safe and did some amazing things. It is significant that five years later I moved to Alice Springs. It was the best decision I ever made.

I love so many things about living in Alice Springs. I love the markets on Sundays. My favourite dumpling stall happens to be right next to the Labor Party stall, which is very convenient. My son has a sausage every weekend. It is the only way we can get him there. He just loves those sausages; they are locally made by a very lovely German man with a fantastic story about how he got to Alice Springs.

I love it when the river flows. If you are lucky you will see the first wash come down and then hear the roar. Everyone is down on the banks. The kids and their dogs are there and everyone is having a chat about the river. It is a wonderful community experience.

One of my son's favourite things to do on the weekend is take the dog for a walk at the claypans, which is beautiful. It is five minutes from our house, but you feel as though you could be in the middle of nowhere. The silence, beauty, space, freedom and bush land my son has to access so easily as a young child is extraordinary.

My colleague, the Member for Casuarina, has outlined many of the events that occur there, so I will not go through those. From motor sports through to the Beanie Festival, which I have said many times is my favourite festival because I crochet—it is the best town. In what town could you go one weekend to a motor sports event and the next weekend crochet with old Aboriginal women? Really, it is the best town ever. We have a town full of bolshie people who are more than prepared to stand and fight for our town.

I do not know if you saw Facebook last night, but everyone was defending Alice Springs. That is because we will not put up with this unfair representation. As I said in my Facebook post, that does not mean we deny that we have a lot to do. We have many struggles and no one can accuse me of not being able to see those problems. I ran frontline crisis services for a long time, but that does not take away from the wonderful things in our town.

One of the best things about our town is the people. I acknowledge Mayor Damien Ryan, because he has been defending our town. He is a born and bred local. He loves the town and commits to being a part of many events. I want to thank him for his work, particularly over the last few days. It has been a slog. We could not ask for a better advocate for our town; he is a passionate Centralian.

I want to thank the work of Tourism Central Australia General Manager, Stephen Schwer, who is on the other end of the Alice Springs spectrum. He moved there and found a home with his young family, doing much work with local tourism providers. We are doing great work; we have been winning awards. There are so many things to do in Alice Springs.

I am proud to be part of a government with a vision for Alice Springs. It is one of the reasons I signed up to be part of the Labor Party. When I first met Michael Gunner he gave me a strong, positive, contemporary and inclusive view of Alice Springs. I am fortunate to have a leader so committed to the town I come from.

In our Cabinet, five out of eight people have lived in Alice Springs and understand that town, as well as several members of the back bench. We are a government that is committed to Alice Springs. We love the town. I am proud of everything we have done, but there is more to do.

I believe that Alice Springs is the capital of Central Australia. It is the heart of our country. It is unique, quirky, vibrant and beautiful. I recommend it to anyone to visit.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: I thank all members for their adjournments tonight. Thank you for a good first week of robust discussion.

Motion agreed to; the Assembly adjourned.