

From: [REDACTED]
To: [LA Committees](#)
Subject: Submission on the Territory Coordinator Bill before the Northern Territory Parliament
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TO: The Legislative Review Committee of the Northern Territory Parliament

Thank you for the invitation and opportunity to provide individual response comments in respect to the Territory Coordinator bill introduced to the Northern Territory to Parliament.

In brief: I stand totally opposed to the evident purpose, aims and objectives of the Bill

It appears glaringly and disturbingly apparent that this Bill represents a threat to the NT's democracy, its already threatened and perilously degraded environment, environment, and the civic rights of its people, containing drastic provisions that would allow the Chief Minister and an unelected bureaucrat to override 32 of the Territory's laws in favour of gas, mining, and agricultural projects.

This appears to me to accelerate and give dominance to a disturbing trend whereby it increasingly appeared in the statements and actions of the previous Territory government, and already even more so under the present Territory government, to give primacy and precedence to such high impact and high risk mining, fossil-fuel exploitation and massively damaging agricultural ventures that will generate revenue, at the expense of the increasingly endangered environment, water, country, community, public well-being and the need to contain the increasingly toxic effects of run-away global heating the intensifying impacts of climate change.

It would also appear to reduce and frustrate the community's access to the available avenues of disagreement, counterargument, opposition, and rights to be respectfully heard.

In short: this legislation is a threat to democratic processes and institutions in the Northern Territory. The powers proposed to vest in the Chief Minister and Territory Controller by this bill represents an enormous overstep, centralising decision-making authority in only a few individuals and circumventing delegated processes.

Not only does the proposal concentrate hands in the power of the Chief Minister as an individual, but also in the hands of an unelected bureaucrat.

This bill thus goes beyond what is proposed in other jurisdictions in Australia such as SA and QLD and represents a unique and dangerous attempt to override deliberative process and to concentrate power far too narrowly.

It is readily apparent that - given the present and long-standing sensitivities in respect of the vulture-like high-pressure arrival of wholly profit-driven international fracking and fossil fuel exploitation entities - the legislation could put at risk the things that Territorians value, the Territory's water and health - together with country, culture and community.

The Territory already faces enormous risks and impacts to environment, from the over-extraction of water to the expansion of the fossil fuel industry and its associated greenhouse gas emissions, as well as to out-of-control clearing of native vegetation - habitat for increasingly pressured and endangered native species - and for expanded water-guzzling farming - including cotton.

The starkly apparent intention and result of this legislation would be to remove the little existing oversight or scrutiny of these projects, potentially removing the right or opportunity for public consultation or environmental assessment processes - which often represent the only chance communities have to engage with or advance vital concerns or expose detrimental consequences of these projects and their potential risks.

The 'primary principle' is ill-defined and represents a threat to Territorians' interests. The elevation of so-called "economic prosperity" above all other considerations, such as public health, safety, culture, and environmental considerations, represents a dangerous provision that could lead to unconscionably worse outcomes for people and the environment – and our common future in time of an existential and worsening climate crisis.

We know that projects like fracking and big agribusiness don't actually lead to better economic outcomes for the vast majority of Territorians – with our inadequate royalty regime meaning Territorians don't see a fair share of revenue from (self-interested, foreign-speculator-purposed) megaprojects, and the structure of these industries, a model predominantly relying on a similarly fenced-off pipeline of FIFO labour to somewhere else's benefit.

In Summary: I oppose the evident purpose, intentions, and outcomes of the present Bill, and most strongly believe that it must be widely opposed both across the Territory and across the nation, for the reasons briefly assembled above.

Thank you again for the opportunity to put my views forward for consideration.

Rupert Macgregor