

LA.Committees@nt.gov.au - Territory Coordinator Bill

Thank you for the opportunity to participate in the Territory Coordinator Bill.

My name is Heidi Jennings, a concerned Territorian who loves and cares about the NT.

The Northern Territory is a unique place with many amazing attractions of nature, animals, bird watching, rivers, waterfalls, billabongs, hunting, fishing and much more for residents and tourists.

I am a Water Defender. Many years ago, I became aware that the water in the Northern Territory is over allocated. The need to protect Water has been ongoing due to the increase of Industries putting pressure on the Aquifers and Water sources. NT residents require fresh clean drinking water security.

The Territory Coordinator Bill poses many questions, and I am concerned it may only make situations worse and cause Legal Implications in the future.

The Bill states that the Territory Coordinator will have a Deputy and staff, to create a new Department.

Is this new position due to other Departments not having enough funding, lack of staff, incompetence or unable to process decisions in a timely manner?

If this is the case, the Departments should be rectified rather than employ 'a new department' to undermine the existing Departments' decisions.

If the Bill remains and Departments are overstepped with their process of decision making, their employment may be terminated due to not fulfilling their job requirements.

The Bill states the Territory Coordinator is to "consult" with a particular Department, but consultation is not the same as acting in accordance with the Departments advice.

The Bill states that 32 Laws can exempt projects from existing Laws and Legislation.

The Territory Coordinator Bill seems an overreach of power for an unelected Bureaucrat if they can exempt existing Laws and Legislation that has been put in place to protect the Environment, Economy and People, to create positive outcomes for projects.

The Bill also states that the Territory Coordinator can go from 'step one to step three then returning to step two at a later date'. example: Land clearing may occur even if the project does not go ahead: loss of Biodiversity.

This will throw out the order of processes and create future problems.

The Territory Coordinators power will also cause overlooking the 135 Pepper Recommendations, which CLP stated they would not, but sadly the Bill proves otherwise.

The Waste Water Disposal Act, Environmental Protection Act, Water Act, Waste Management & Pollution Acts will be overlooked.

Reportable incidents may also be overlooked, while it is still self-regulated by the company and the possibility of contamination of fresh water may occur.

More water allocations and water licenses will put more pressure on N.T.'s already over allocated water sources.

The Bill also states that the Territory Coordinator can enter Private Land without the consent of the owner or occupier, also acquire Land and Water. This seems to be a 'land grab'.

The Interested parties are all Territorians and should be referred to as shareholders.

It is our Territory, and we want it protected as well, even if it does take time.

I am truly concerned that removing Environmental Protection and other Acts will be detrimental to the Northern Territory at the expense of the taxpayer, environment and the Water.

There are many more questionable statements in the Bill that need reviewing and clarifying.

Transparency is required.

Please consider rejecting this Bill, due to the effect it will have on the N.T. in the future.

Heidi Jennings.

*Please make this submission Public.