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### Federal Budget Cuts

#### Mr HIGGINS to CHIEF MINISTER

You have a unique talent for spending Territorians' money without any business case or economic modelling, then you whinge because the federal government will not fund your uncosted and unfunded projects. Chief Minister, why would the federal government trust you to manage federal funds when you clearly cannot handle your own?

#### ANSWER

Madam Speaker, I thank the Leader of the Opposition for the question because it gives me an opportunity to speak about the Australian Government's priorities that it is not funding. We are asking the Australian Government to back its own agenda of closing the gap and developing the north, things the Australian Government has said are important. Let us be clear; closing the gap and developing the north is not just good for the Territory, it is good for all Australians.

The case we have put to the Australian Government is it should put its money against its word; stop talking about it and do it. When it comes to developing the north and closing the gap there is only one government you can trust; that is the government that delivered the budget last week.

I thank the Treasurer for the work she did because she put Territorians first. We have costed remote housing and we have put \$1.1bn towards it over the next 10 years. There is an estimated \$2.2bn shortfall plus some on land tenure, but we have put \$1.1bn in. We stand ready to genuinely partner with the Australian Government against its own agenda. If they are not there we will do it on our own. We will keep putting Territorians first.

We will back Territorians. What we saw from the Australian budget last night was no support for the Territory or recognition of the tough economic times we are in and no recognition of the impact of the GST cuts on the Territory. They did it for WA; we saw the finance minister and the foreign affairs minister win their fight at the Cabinet table and get a GST top up for WA.

But silence from the Leader of the Opposition on that. Why is he not railing against the Australian budget giving extra money for WA? Instead he is in here attacking the Territory, the Territory budget and the government which is actually doing it for Territorians. Our budget is more important than ever after the Australian budget because we are the only ones creating jobs for Territorians and who have a plan for the Territory.

The CLP have a plan to cut jobs in the Territory; they said, 'Slash services, increase revenue and cut job-creating infrastructure'. That is their recipe for the Territory. We reject it utterly. We also reject the Australian budget and its failure to deliver for Territorians—an extraordinary budget that ignored the economic conditions in the Territory and the GST cut. They could do it for WA but not for the Territory.

We were failed at the Cabinet table by the Indigenous Affairs minister. WA had success with its ministers at the Cabinet table, but the Territory was failed, tragically, by our Indigenous Affairs minister. We expect more from the CLP; we cannot do it alone. This is a Territory problem and the CLP was not there for Territorians.

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#### VISITORS Nungalinya College

**Madam SPEAKER:** Honourable members, I advise of the presence in the gallery of the Nungalinya College student group. We have students from Palumpa, Wadeye, Milingimbi, Gapuwiyak and Alice Springs. Welcome to Parliament House.

**Members:** Hear, hear!

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**SUPPLEMENTARY QUESTION**  
**Federal Budget Cuts**

**Mr HIGGINS to CHIEF MINISTER**

True to form, the Chief Minister has again resorted to whingeing, moaning and petty political point scoring in an attempt to blame everyone else for his self-imposed woes. Chief Minister, when will you stop blaming the federal government and put up projects with a business case which the federal government can get behind?

**ANSWER**

This is incredible. We have put up \$1.1bn against a remote housing plan. There is not one cracker from the feds for that 10 years. When the NPARIH money is due to run out, we do not get one cracker. The Leader of the Opposition is supporting the Australian Government's neglect. He is saying there is no case for remote housing in the Northern Territory.

I think that case has been made. That is part of closing the gap. We have \$1.1bn against it, but not a cent extra from the Australian Government in this budget against that \$1.1bn over the 10 years. The NPARIH money is about to run out. There is not one cent in this budget, but the opposition is supporting the Australian Government and saying no case has been made for remote housing in the Territory. That is clearly garbage. That is not true.

**Mr Higgins:** I did not say that.

**Mr GUNNER:** You just said it. You just jumped up and said, 'Put forward a case'. We are putting forward a case for remote housing. That has a very significant case against it and you are now saying in this Chamber that you do not think there is a case for remote housing. Think about what you say and the consequences it has. Maybe this is why the CLP does not support Territorians. Maybe this is why we are not seeing action from the Australian Government. The Leader of the Opposition has been in there and said, 'Don't worry. There is no case for remote housing in the NT.'

**Madam SPEAKER:** Chief Minister, your time has expired.

**GST Funding – Meeting with the Prime Minister**

**Mrs FINOCCHIARO to TREASURER**

Your Chief Minister has not even met with the Prime Minister since your government first heard about the Commonwealth Grants Commission's reduction in the Territory's GST. Why is your government more comfortable throwing rocks from the sidelines than actually meeting with the Prime Minister and putting the Territory's case for additional funding?

**Members** interjecting.

**Madam SPEAKER:** Just before Question Time here I watched Question Time in the Canberra Parliament. They were very well behaved. Could we just have a little bit of order please?

**ANSWER**

Madam Speaker, it would be great to get the Prime Minister to the Northern Territory. It would be great to get the federal Treasurer to the Northern Territory. You will never, never know if you never, never go, ScoMo. Come to the Northern Territory. We want to see you here.

We welcome them to the Northern Territory. Our Chief Minister has had two meetings. We have not been able to make them face-to-face because the Prime Minister has been dealing with a cyclone and has been overseas on trade missions for the country. I think he has been to Papua New Guinea, India and the United States of America. But the Chief Minister has been at the door of the Prime Minister to put our case forward on these \$2bn worth of GST cuts. He has been there to rally the Prime Minister to put on the table the deep impacts the \$2bn GST cut will have on the Northern Territory.

Our engagements with the Commonwealth have not just been about that \$2bn GST cut. They have been about, 'Show us your commitment to the Northern Territory, to your own policy agendas—developing the

north, closing the gap on Indigenous development, investing in Defence with the Defence White Paper'. We want the Commonwealth to show us that commitment to the future of the Northern Territory because we have a huge amount to contribute to this nation. We have huge potential. We have the Cattlemen's Association future leaders in the gallery, a wonderful, important, critical sector in the Northern Territory—the development of our pastoral sector. We need more funding for roads so we can further open opportunities for people across the Territory. It is a clear case.

What did we see in the federal budget last night with regard to the Commonwealth's, the Turnbull government's, commitment to the future of the Northern Territory? We did not see that commitment. They did not match their words with action, and that is devastating. We will continue to pursue them, and we will do everything we can to work with the Commonwealth to get them to recognise the potential of the Northern Territory.

One of the biggest areas of disappointment was the fact we have a Northern Territory Senator at the Cabinet table unable to help deliver for the Northern Territory, particularly in the areas of closing the gap on Indigenous disadvantage and investment in the future of the Northern Territory.

I thank the Deputy Leader of the Opposition for her question. We will continue to do everything we can to get the Territory the recognition and funding it deserves.

### **Federal Budget – Foreign Workers Tax**

#### **Mr HIGGINS to CHIEF MINISTER**

Last night's federal budget saw the introduction of the foreign workers tax to replace former revenue measures in this area. You and I both know Territory businesses cannot afford the fees of between \$1200 and \$1500 per worker per year. Due to Territory businesses' reliance on overseas employees this measure can have a dramatic impact on their viability.

I care about Territorians, so will you join me in calling the federal government to exempt employers of any temporary skill shortage visa workers whose occupation is listed under the Northern Territory Designated Area Migration Agreement, DAMA, from paying the new tax?

#### **ANSWER**

Madam Speaker, that was a very positive contribution from the Leader of the Opposition.

We recognise the pressures Territory businesses can be under, not necessarily from skill shortages but from labour shortages, as they genuinely try to find somebody to do the work. We have had a massive debate with the federal government on this over the backpacker tax.

The Minister for Primary Industry and Resources was strong in this space, as is the current Member for Solomon, Luke Gosling. He did a significant amount of work in this space, as did the federal Member for Lingiari, Warren Snowdon. We were not alone on our side in having that argument. I recognise there are other people in the Territory who also had that argument about labour shortages and the pressure on Territory businesses.

I am more than happy to sit with the Leader of the Opposition, through the Minister for Primary Industry and Resources—I hope you do not mind me nominating you, Kenny; I know you are passionate in this space. I have the department of business too, and we will work together with the Leader of the Opposition making sure Territory businesses and their needs are recognised because they were not in the budget last night. We have that designated area migration zone and work we need to do in this space.

I am happy for the Leader of the Opposition to partner with me, as the minister for business, and the Minister for Primary Industry and Resources to work with you on putting the Territory's case when it comes to looking after businesses in the Northern Territory.

We need the Leader of the Opposition to acknowledge there is a case for remote housing and a case for beef roads. A significant case that was already made by successive governments over many years for investment in the Territory, developing the north and closing the gap. These cases have been made.

I join with our Treasurer in saying the federal Treasurer should spend time in our remote communities to understand the service pressure we are under to make sure they get the same level of services as all

Australians. The federal Treasurer needs to understand the remote circumstances in which our cattle producers and agribusiness sector works to understand the pressure they are under.

It is not as straightforward and simple as it may seem when they look at remote and rural New South Wales or Victoria. The Territory does it tougher. Territorians are tough; they will survive this Australian Government budget. I can say to them they have a government and budget on this side with them in the trenches, recognising the tough times and putting them first to do everything we can to create jobs in the Northern Territory. We recognise the pressures they are under and the services they need.

This is what we have done in our budget. Unfortunately, tragically, the Australian Government was not there for them in that budget last night, but we are.

### **Northern Australian Infrastructure Facility – Projects**

#### **Mrs FINOCCHIARO to TREASURER**

How many projects has the Gunner Labor government put forward to the Northern Australian Infrastructure Facility?

#### **ANSWER**

Madam Speaker, I thank the Deputy Opposition Leader for her question. The NAIF has been a point of much discussion around the nation, as we know. We welcome the NAIF, but it has its board and goes about doing its work.

We have met with those at the NAIF and have had conversations with them. Government continues to have discussions with them, but they are going about their business across the nation. I think all jurisdictions will agree, as I am sure the NAIF board does, they have not secured projects yet. They have not signed any up yet, but in our last meeting with Senator Canavan—there was the Chief Minister, me and the delightful Minister for Primary Industry and Resources—we had a very good discussion about the potential of the NAIF.

The Australia Government has made it very clear to us that it wants to see the NAIF able to secure projects to help secure further development of northern Australia. Unfortunately that has not come to fruition yet. The Commonwealth is looking at that. That is the commitment we received from the senator last time we met with him.

From a government's perspective, we want to see the NAIF moving forward. There is a range of opportunities in the Northern Territory. We keep talking about things like Project Sea Dragon. What an exciting project that could be for the Northern Territory.

**Mrs FINOCCHIARO:** A point of order, Madam Speaker! Standing Order 110: relevance. Whilst I appreciate the background given by the Treasurer on the NAIF, it was a very straightforward question: how many projects has the Gunner Labor government put to the NAIF?

**Madam SPEAKER:** It is not a point of order. The Treasurer has time to answer the question.

**Ms MANISON:** We have had conversations at the government level with regard to the NAIF. We had people from the NAIF here, working with a range of opportunities and having a range of meetings. The issue is that we are yet to see the NAIF get one of these projects off the ground. We are waiting to see that.

We have had several discussions at a range of levels. We want to see the NAIF succeed, but clearly there needs to be a bit of tweaking in regard to what is going on because at the moment it is not delivering the results all three jurisdictions want to see—four, including the Commonwealth.

There is much more work to be done. I am confident we will see some changes, but we want to see the Northern Territory benefit from the NAIF. Unfortunately we are yet to see those projects get off the ground.

## Justice System – Funding

### Mr HIGGINS to CHIEF MINISTER

Territorians are living through the Gunner Labor government's crime crisis; however, last night the federal government set aside \$40m for a safer community fund and \$18m for a school security program. The federal government is stepping up to the plate to protect Territorians.

Without whingeing and whining—enough of your crocodile tears, it is time to get real. When will you start fixing the crime crisis? Other states and territories are already working with the federal government to access these funds. What will you do to secure some of this money?

### ANSWER

Madam Speaker, Territorians have a right to be safe at home and at work, and to simply live their lives in the Territory. That is why we made a promise at the last election to honour the broken promise by the CLP about the 120 extra police.

We have made big steps to fix the broken youth justice system. We are doing significant work in this space to help Territorians with the urgency bill on electronic monitoring at the police bail stage. We have looked at how we can make evidence from body-worn cameras evidence-in-chief. We are doing a significant amount of work to make sure we are helping to look after and protect Territorians.

The Opposition Leader talks up the \$40m and the \$18m from the Australia Government for all Australians. In our budget last week we committed \$5m to help Territory businesses—Territorians, not spread across Australia—provide upgrades to the security of their premises. It is a co-contribution of up to \$10 000, which will start on 1 July. That is what we are doing. There is significantly more for Territorians in the share they will get from the \$40m than the share they will get from the \$18m.

This is work we are doing. We have put money into PROMIS. We are fixing the police database. This work should have started several years ago. The police system has fallen over. The CLP was not there for police when they were saying, 'We are having trouble doing our job. Our IT system is 18 years old.' That is very old for an IT system. It was around before iPads and iPhones. To run a modern police force they need a new system.

They have been trialling Winscribe and SceneDoc on iPads and iPhones, phasing that in to see if they can make it work. That will, with a new database behind it—that is what we are doing to improve police services on the front line. It can save two to five hours a shift and allow police to stay on patrol and not come back to the station. This is a significant investment in our front line.

Palmerston police station—we have fast-tracked that. We are doing it all at once, the front end and the watch houses. We have a community hall there, recognising the needs of Palmerston. Police want to trial a new approach. They are members of the community, and they want to have that involvement.

There is an \$8m investment for a special purpose fire station in Katherine.

We are doing the hard work to make sure Territorians are safe and looked after, and to clean up the mess after four years of chaos under the CLP, the chopping and changing of the Police minister and the trashing of the police reputation by the former Chief Minister without giving them a right of reply, which was outrageous—allegations of a police coup ...

**Madam Speaker:** Chief Minister, your time has expired.

## Dan Murphy's and Alcohol Policy

### Mrs FINOCCHIARO to ATTORNEY-GENERAL and JUSTICE

You do not trust your inquiry into alcohol and have made it clear you are happy with policies that are not evidence-based. You answer criticism of your bad Dan Murphy's policy with alcohol-related harm statistics, so I ask you, how much more antisocial behaviour does your government believe will result from setting up a Dan Murphy's store at the airport?

## ANSWER

Madam Speaker, what an interesting question from the opposition, talking about antisocial behaviour and alcohol-related crime.

The CLP government turned its back on Territorians. You failed to deliver the 120 extra police you promised. You closed the police station in my electorate. You scrapped the Banned Drinker Register overnight, against the expert evidence of our police on the front line and the view of the community, which refers to the BDR as a tool that helps tackle antisocial behaviour.

The matter of Dan Murphy's is before the court, so I need to be careful with comments. But I can say that the Northern Territory has unacceptably high levels of alcohol-related harm, antisocial behaviour and crime. As the Minister for Health I am determined to tackle that. We have put in place an expert panel which will lead a full and thorough review.

We have said, 'Yes, we will tackle this issue'. When it was last costed, it was found that this issue costs our community \$640m per year. That was in 2009. Eight years later, I assume that figure would be significantly higher. That is a huge cost to our community.

We are creating a safer community. Just this morning I introduced the legislation to bring back the Banned Drinker Register. This is a Territory-wide supply measure. It is not the patchwork approach we saw from the former government with one measure in place in some communities, at a huge cost, and police standing outside bottle shops for long periods of time.

We have a Territory-wide approach, a measure that is in place consistently across the Northern Territory and is backed up with clinical support. This morning we talked about the sobering up shelter being co-located at Berrimah, along with clinical assessment beds, providing support to those who have a problem with alcohol—giving them clinical caseworkers who can work with primary health providers to help them turn their lives around.

Dan Murphy's is welcome in the Northern Territory. We have said that from the start. They need to abide by our rules. As a government we are determined to tackle this issue that over the last four years the previous government ignored, an issue that causes so much harm within our community. We are tackling that not only through the expert panel that will provide a guiding document, but with legislation, like what you saw this morning, that will impact on our communities and make them safer.

## Yirra House

### Mr WOOD to MINISTER for TERRITORY FAMILIES

You sent me an email dated 2 May regarding Yirra House at Holtze following from my inquiry about maintenance work being done there over the last couple of months. By the way, thank you for your offer to visit the facility.

I was confused when the *ABC* reported on 14 April:

*The government-run Yirra House has been shut down and "gutted", a Territory Families spokesman said, and the department is considering alternative uses for the site.*

What is the future of Yirra House? If it is no longer being used as a therapeutic care facility what will happen to the people who require that care?

## ANSWER

Thank you very much for that question, it is an important one.

Madam Speaker, we have had to do a fair bit of work on that property because there were issues with mould, I understand, that needed to be rectified. We had been using it as an out-of-home care facility for more high-needs youth. We will continue to use that property, most likely as part of our bail accommodation.

It is a good property. It needs some work because it was built more like a mental health facility and it is not quite the environment we want for the new bail accommodation. It is about making sure we have

therapeutic environments that are home-like and, as much as possible, not institutionalised. What we need for kids who go off-track is wraparound support and the right environment with skilled staff.

We are also working with our NGO partners on how they can also help deliver services in that facility. It will continue to be used. It is in a great location. I went and toured it within the first couple of weeks of being minister. It is a great asset. It was jointly built with the federal government and the Health department. We will be looking at using that as part of our ongoing reform for home-care and bail accommodation, accommodation for some of our most vulnerable youth.

What we know is that our facilities, both Don Dale and Owen Springs, are mainly filled with people who are on remand. We need to stop those first-time offenders from going into the remand system, into detention where they are mixing with hardened criminals. They are there often for only short periods of time whilst another plan is sorted out by the courts.

If we can get them into alternative accommodation where we can make a better plan, wrap around our services—our youth outreach service will be part of that service, as well as our out-of-home care service. It is about having a seamless continuum of service delivery that is focused on the child and focussed on keeping our kids out of detention because we know that is a pathway to ...

**Mr WOOD:** A point of order, Madam Speaker! Thank you, minister. Part of the question was what will happen to those children who will be moving from there. Where will they go?

**Ms WAKEFIELD:** There have been no residents in the facility for quite a period of time because of the mould, so those placements have already been found. There was no-one there, since Territory Families has been there, with significant health issues that would prevent them from being placed in any other type of out-of-home care. It is about making sure we have that facility there. Those kids have already been placed over a long period of time into suitable placements.

### **Budget 2017–18 Versus Federal Budget**

#### **Mrs LAMBLEY to CHIEF MINISTER**

I thought last night's federal budget was very impressive, and I would like to congratulate Scott Morrison and Malcolm Turnbull for putting forward a very commendable budget, a big spend and a big taxing budget. It was responsible and fair. It is what I would describe as a mature budget and a budget for grown-ups, unlike what we saw last week, the kindergarten budget, the Mickey Mouse budget—no heavy lifting whatsoever and a big spend of \$5.5bn of debt.

**Member for Namatjira** interjecting.

**Mrs LAMBLEY:** I just remind Territorians—I cannot hear myself think because the Member for Namatjira is screaming.

**Madam SPEAKER:** I cannot hear the question, so I do not know whether it is in order or not. Please cease interjecting while the question is being asked.

**Mrs LAMBLEY:** Chief Minister, could you remind Territorians how you will bring us out of the \$5.5bn debt with a million dollars in interest repayments per day? How will you bring us back to surplus?

#### **ANSWER**

Madam Speaker, what an extraordinary question. The Member for Araluen has just said that she loves an Australian budget that delivers squat for Alice Springs. She said that is a mature budget. Thank God Alice Springs got nothing; that is the budget she supports. The budget she criticises is the one that spends money on and creates jobs in Alice Springs, the one that invests in a vibrant Alice Springs CBD, tourism and the things that matter to Territorians.

Apparently that is a budget for kids and the budget for adults is the one where Territorians do not get anything. The Australian budget deserves an adult response, but not that one. The Australian budget was terrible for the Territory, and the Member for Araluen just said that is the budget she wants. She supports budgets that stuff over Territorians.

That is an extraordinary and unbelievable thing to say.



Territorians are doing it tough right now and they expect their elected members to stand up for them and say, 'We want jobs; we want investment; we want to see Territorians put first.' The Australian budget put Territorians last and it has been welcomed by the other side. They like last night's budget. Where is the fight from the other side for Territorians? Where is the demand for the Prime Minister and Treasurer to put Territorians first?

Instead it is welcomed. This is awful, appalling news that elected members in this Chamber are saying we will neglect our duties. The member should apologise to the people of Araluen for welcoming a budget that stuffs them over, puts them last and says, 'not one extra cracker for the NT'. WA gets extra; they say, 'That is okay, we don't want the NT to get extra.' They support WA more than they support the NT.

This is appalling and deserves a public apology.

**Mrs LAMBLEY:** A point of order, Madam Speaker! The question is: please explain to Territorians how you will bring us back from a \$5.5bn debt. That is an adult question.

**Mr GUNNER:** She is walking away from all her appalling initial comments, but not far enough. She has not apologised but is trying to back off a bit from the fact she said a budget that fails the people of Araluen is good for them. What seems to have escaped the people on the other side of this Chamber is that Territorians are doing it tough. This is a budget that invests in them and creates jobs ...

**Mrs LAMBLEY:** A point of order, Madam Speaker! Relevance; the Chief Minister is still failing to answer the question. How will you bring us back from this deep debt?

**Madam SPEAKER:** Chief Minister, can you get to the point please.

**Mr GUNNER:** By growing the Northern Territory and investing in jobs you will see a decline in the deficit over the forward years. They do not want to acknowledge that. I do not know where they live; they do not live in the Territory half the time, I think, because they do not know the conditions Territorians face.

**Madam SPEAKER:** Chief Minister, your time has expired.

### Highway Sign Pollution

#### Mr WOOD to MINISTER for INFRASTRUCTURE, PLANNING and LOGISTICS

Some time ago I raised a question about sign pollution along our highways, specifically in Holtze, Coolalinga and Humpty Doo. Since then things have gotten worse, and with the opening of Coolalinga Central there is a fair chance there will be even more signs.

We need to promote business but we also need to make our roads attractive, not only from a local perspective but also because both the Stuart and Arnhem Highways are major tourist routes. You promised something would happen but nothing has. Surely we can find smart ways to advertise businesses without turning our highways into Hicksville. If you do not have a plan, why is your department not enforcing its own signs on roads guidelines?

#### ANSWER

Madam Speaker, I have some work coming up from the department shortly. It has not been as fast as I would have liked; however, we have it coming up, and we will be looking at the issue. We will consult with you and with the Member for Goyder. I went to Coolalinga Central on the weekend for a look at the lovely new shopping centre. It goes beyond the rural area; it is across the entire stretch between Darwin and Palmerston that we have that issue.

The thing that struck me as I was driving there on Sunday was that these businesses have invested dollars in promotion of their business, so it is important that we have the right conversations with them as part of this work.

I am with you; I think we need a greater level of restriction. We need to have that discussion with those businesses. I am sure many businesses will get quite upset if their signage is to be removed, so we need to consult with them. My greatest concern is safety. If it is not applied safely—where some of these signs are erected they are getting in the way of people's view and distracting people on the road. At the same time

we acknowledge that there will be businesses that will be upset with the removal of their signage, so it is important for us to get the consultation right.

The advice I have received is that a briefing is on its way up. Once we get information on how to move forward with consultation we will sit down with you and any other interested members of the parliament to have those discussions. It is not only Darwin that this applies to but the greater Darwin region.

We will have conversations about how we can have safer and more appropriate signage on our roads to ensure we do not compromise safety. We need to make sure businesses understand the rules and what they should and should not be doing. I expect to have a few upset knocks on the door, but we have to deal with this and do it properly.

It is a chance to get it right. It has taken longer than I was hoping, Member for Nelson. You juggle many priorities and I apologise for not getting this to you sooner. But we have not dropped this; we are still working on it and will speak to you about it. The business consultation will be where we will have the greatest level of debate and discussion. Some businesses have invested good money, so I am not sure they will be delighted to have the signage removed, but we need to get this right for the sake of the community and community safety.

### **GST Revenue Figure**

#### **Mrs LAMBLEY to CHIEF MINISTER**

One of the premises of your kindergarten budget last week was the projected \$2bn shortfall in GST revenue. On the radio, as I was driving around at lunch time, I heard the federal Member for Lingiari say that is now down to \$1.7bn, not \$2bn as you projected.

It seems to be reducing; you have it wrong. There was a lot of speculation that you got it wrong. Do you have it wrong? Did you mislead Territorians?

#### **ANSWER**

Absolutely not. It was confirmed in the Australian budget overnight that there is a \$2bn cut over four years. WA got a GST top up, yet the other side is saying, 'WA can get a top up but the NT cannot'. They are supporting WA getting recognition for their GST problems.

It is extraordinary to have people elected to represent Territorians in this Chamber advocating for Western Australia over the Northern Territory. That is incredible. Even if you accepted the Member for Araluen's premise about the cut over the next four years, it ain't good enough. It is not good enough for Territorians, and there was no recognition in the Australia budget of that cut over the four years.

Do you want to know the biggest impact on the bottom line of the Northern Territory? That GST cut. There is no recognition in the Australia budget of the tough economic times the Territory faces or the GST cut. But WA gets a top up and they support that.

**Mrs LAMBLEY:** A point of order, Madam Speaker! Standing Order 110: relevance. Who is wrong, you or the Member for Lingiari? Is it \$1.7bn or \$2bn?

**Mr GUNNER:** It was confirmed in the Australian budget books overnight that it is a \$2bn cut over four years, which has a massive impact on the Territory budget's bottom line and is the biggest problem we face in the Territory when it comes to our budget.

The best way to fix that GST problem, besides having action from the Australian Government, is for us to tackle the problems that underpin it by growing the Territory, investing in population, investing in the services that matter and the things that grow jobs to bring and keep people here.

The CLP's plan is to cut those services and the infrastructure spend on jobs, which would see people leave. What is their prescription? Cut those services—infrastructure and investment in jobs—and see people leave. You go backwards and down a dangerous spiral. We are investing in a service that matters to Territorians, and we are investing in infrastructure projects that will create jobs for Territorians and attract people here. We have a plan for the Northern Territory. They have a plan to cut jobs.

That GST cut has been devastating for the Territory. WA gets a top up but the NT does not. We have people in the Chamber advocating for Western Australia over the Northern Territory. It is a shame and it is appalling behaviour. We need more money in the Territory due to the challenges of service delivery we have. Start advocating for the NT and Territorians and put them first. Recognise the problems our budget faces and the solutions you need to fix it.

We have to invest in the services that matter for Territorians and infrastructure projects that create jobs for Territorians. We have to get on top of our population issues—fix this for Territorians. I will stand up for Territorians even while they stand up for WA.

### **Alcohol-Related Harm**

#### **Mr HIGGINS to ATTORNEY-GENERAL and JUSTICE**

Why are you so distrustful of Territorians, and sceptical of the people you are elected to serve when we are talking about a bottle shop development at the airport? Territorians do not believe you when you try to link alcohol-related harm with Dan Murphy's, and they are right; you have no evidence. You are engaging in a shameful misrepresentation while wasting money on an inquiry you will not listen to. Come clean, be open for business and stop looking after your mates. Explain why we are wasting time and money on an inquiry that you already have a predetermined outcome for.

#### **ANSWER**

Madam Speaker, the same policy the CLP government had going into the election—the Leader of the Opposition was part of that team but we know he backflipped out of that. I do not know how many times we need to keep saying to the opposition—I would think they would understand it having been in government and moved around their community—that the Northern Territory has a huge issue with alcohol-related harm.

I point to a letter that was in the *NT News* on 17 March this year on the harm that alcohol causes our community. This letter was from the Royal Australasian College of Surgeons, just one group that has applauded the government for having a cautious approach to tackling the issues of alcohol.

The Northern Territory has the highest portion of alcohol-related deaths and the highest rate of alcohol-related hospitalisations in the country. As the Minister for Health, I know we need to turn this around. The Minister for Police, Fire and Emergency Services is listening to hard-working police officers on the front line, who deal with these issues. He is listening to the child protection workers, who deal with so much harm that alcohol causes families—the cost within our education system and the issues teachers face every day in the classroom. As you move amongst our community the cost of alcohol-related harm is evident.

The CLP government completely failed Territorians in this space. They scrapped the BDR measure overnight simply because they did not like it and felt it was inconvenient to show identification, and they invested in a hugely expensive alcohol mandatory treatment program, with very little evidence base. When we handed down the report we saw there was very little gain for those few people who were engaged in that program.

As the Minister for Health I am listening to the Royal Australian College of Surgeons and a community that wants us to stop and tackle this issue once and for all. Every Territorian has the right to feel safe in their home and community, and that is why this government is tackling the issue of alcohol-related harm that causes so much crime, antisocial behaviour and social dysfunction.

We speak about the economic cost of \$640m in 2009, but there is a huge social cost, and every member of this Chamber will have a story to tell. We are reviewing legislation and policies surrounding alcohol so we can provide for Territorians who drink responsibly to access alcohol and, at the same time, protect our community.

### **Electronic Monitoring Bracelets**

**Mrs FINOCCHIARO to CHIEF MINISTER**

In March your government rushed through amendments to the Bail Act through the parliament on urgency, premised on the idea that you are taking crime seriously and acting decisively to reduce crime in the short term by granting police the ability to fit those granted bail with electronic monitoring bracelets. It has been two months since those amendments were passed. How many alleged offenders have been fitted with an electronic monitoring bracelet by police as a condition of their bail?

**ANSWER**

Madam Speaker, I appreciate the recognition from the CLP that we did this on urgency and we were responsive to the needs of Territorians. We believe in doing that on this side.

We are responding to the needs of Territorians with 120 extra police and our investment in PROMIS. We are supporting police with the new Palmerston police station, costing \$26m. We are supporting the Police, Fire and Emergency Services with the \$8m fire station in Katherine. We are getting behind police. That is what we are doing.

We are working with police in Alice Springs to phase this in for repeat domestic violence adult offenders. That gets lost in this conversation a lot—repeat domestic violence adult offenders who go across borders. We are recognising they are some of the worst repeat offenders.

They are also being phased in for repeat youth offenders, even alleged first-time offenders, in Alice Springs and Palmerston.

It does matter to this side. We believe in Palmerston. The Member for Brennan and the Member for Drysdale are both very active supporters of the people of Palmerston, advocating to make the people of Palmerston safer. We are working with the police in Palmerston to phase this in for youth offenders. It is important work that police are leading. The police have that discretion at the point of bail.

Police are doing this fantastic work, with Community Corrections and others, to get these rolled out. They are trialling them and phasing them in—they prefer the words ‘phasing them in’—in Alice Springs for adults and youth, and Palmerston youth. Police are doing that work.

I am more than happy to have a briefing arranged for the opposition about the work police are doing in this space. I am more than happy to get an answer for the opposition on the exact number of youth that police are working with in this space. It is important work. We did this on urgency as a parliament to give police the tools they need. The police now have these tools. The powers are in place with police. It is in their hands to have the discretion about how they use this. I do not direct police.

**Mrs FINOCCHIARO:** A point of order, Madam Speaker! Standing Order 110: relevance. It is a very simple question. How many bracelets have been issued as part of your bill passed on urgency?

**Mr GUNNER:** It is a very important bill; sorry, it is now an act; it has been gazetted. The power now exists with police and they have the ability to apply these bracelets. Police are phasing it in in Alice Springs and Palmerston. I am more than happy to arrange a briefing and to come back with an answer about how many youth or adults police have worked with. What we have done, as a government, is give police the power and the resources, and police have the discretion on how to apply this. They are working with adults and youth in Alice and youth in Palmerston.

### **Plastic Bag Pollution**

**Mr WOOD to MINISTER for ENVIRONMENT and NATURAL RESOURCES**

Earlier this year Keep Australia Beautiful NT released a five-year litter review related to the Northern Territory plastic bags ban. KAB said for five consecutive years Territorians have increased the amount of plastic bag pollution, and thicker, heavier, glossy plastic consumer outlay by Territorians is in excess of \$20m to date. We have created more litter, increased the cost of living and provided more profits for stores.

Performance of the plastic bag ban has been totally unacceptable and unsatisfactory, with the number of plastic bags, including lightweight and thick re-useable bags, showing a continuing consecutive increase.

Now litter pollution streams across the Territory. Is it possible, as KAB has asked, for some money to be diverted from retailer revenue and invested in an awareness campaign to encourage people to reuse plastic bags or use other types of reuseable bags?

**ANSWER**

Madam Speaker, the plastic bag ban was an important initiative of the former Labor government, and we should be looking at ways we can do more to encourage people to reuse and recycle. I value the work Keep Australia Beautiful does, and I am aware of its litter surveys and data. We also keep our own data in regard to that plastic bag ban.

Our natural environment is one of our greatest assets. I wholeheartedly believe in making sure we keep it preserved and litter free; that is important. Many members in this Chamber participate in Clean-Up Australia Day across the Territory.

The key aim of that ban was reducing litter across the Territory, resulting in less waste in landfill and people reusing their bags. There was a ministerial review of that ban; it was tabled in parliament in 2014. The review showed the community was supportive of the ban and consumer behaviours had changed. There was a reduction of 10.3 million plastic bags per annum being sold. That is 10.3 million fewer bags in our environment. That is a positive outcome.

There have been changes in community behaviour. We need to look at the different datasets that come out and make sure we are considering all the evidence. We will continue to do that with Keep Australia Beautiful. In the last annual report there had been no complaints received about the plastic bag ban program.

We continue to work with Keep Australia Beautiful; we provide it with funding for a range of initiatives it undertakes in the community, such as the tidy towns program. I am happy to explore with you, Member for Nelson, other ideas and ways to encourage people to reuse bags and use different kinds of bags.

A few of us were at the Nightcliff Seabreeze Festival on the weekend and Parap Primary School was fundraising. They were making their own reusable eco-bags. The material is sewn by parents and they are selling them to the community as a fundraiser for their school. There is a lot more that can be done around community education. I would love to hear your ideas, Member for Nelson.

Queensland is just starting to look at the plastic bag ban. They are looking at jurisdictions that have already done it. We were leading the way in 2011 and we continue to do so. There are jurisdictions that have no ban of this kind in place. I am happy to look at ways we can improve that and make sure we are doing the best we can with resources going into those programs.

**Public Holidays – Christmas and New Year's Eve**

**Mr MILLS to CHIEF MINISTER**

You said a number of times you would grow the Territory, and we wish you well with that. But in December last year you increased the wages of workers over the Christmas and New Year period and very strongly argued, a number of times, that this was a measure to grow the Territory population. As your government prides itself on an evidence-based approach to policy, how many extra people came to the Territory as a result of this unorthodox policy approach?

**ANSWER**

Madam Speaker, there were many reasons why we did this; one was the fact we wanted to remain competitive in this space. Adelaide had gone to part-day public holidays, and we know other jurisdictions were thinking about it. We recognised the importance of investing in the liveability of the Territory. That was just one angle.

I believe, and the other side does not, that Christmas and New Year's Eve are special times. For some reason they do not seem to value these half days. It was from 6 pm to midnight on Christmas Eve and New Year's Eve. Some people have to work those nights; they cannot avoid it—police, nurses, doctors et cetera. I went on patrol with police on both of those nights in recognition that they were giving up their Christmas and New Year's Eve so we could be safe.

I value that. Christmas Eve is completely different to any other ...

**Mr MILLS:** A point of order, Madam Speaker! Relevance: this does not, in any way, address the point of the question—evidence.

**Mr GUNNER:** Madam Speaker, as I have explained there was more than one reason why we did this. We value these half days. The Member for Blain is suggesting that he does not value Christmas Eve, which I find extraordinary for a Christian man. We value Christmas Eve, and if you sacrifice that time away from family and loved ones it should be valued.

The police on patrol that night have no choice; they are doing their work in service to us so we can be safe, yet the other side does not value that. They do not value New Year's Eve either—important time with family and friends being sacrificed by police. I went out with police on patrol that night. I find it disgraceful that the Member for Blain is saying that time is not important, that Christmas Eve is not important. That is a disgrace, a shame and a travesty.

**Mr MILLS:** A point of order, Madam Speaker! I find that deeply offensive; I made no such assertion.

**Mrs FINOCCHIARO:** A point of order, Madam Speaker!

**Madam SPEAKER:** Member for Blain, please be seated. Deputy Opposition Leader, what is your point of order?

**Mrs FINOCCHIARO:** It was Standing Order 31, but the Member for Blain has sought that himself.

**Madam SPEAKER:** Member for Blain, what is your point of order?

**Mr MILLS:** I ask the honourable member to withdraw his comment because in no way am I passing comment over the value of Christmas and New Year—it is the evidence of his policy.

**Madam SPEAKER:** Chief Minister, the Member for Blain finds your comments offensive. Please withdraw.

**Mr GUNNER:** I withdraw.

Christmas Eve is valuable time with family and friends. I was on patrol with police that night; they gave up that night to make sure we were safe. In my opinion this is important recognition of the work done by workers on that night.

I will stand up for those workers who give up their time on Christmas and New Year's Eves, and I reject the suggestion from those on the other side that that time is not valuable. It is clearly valuable and it is a shame that they refuse to recognise it.

We support the workers; we value Christmas Eve and New Year's Eve. I say to those police I went on patrol with, thank you. We value the work you do. The other side does not, and I do not know why. Christmas Eve is important. Explain why Christmas Eve is not important.

**Madam SPEAKER:** Chief Minister, your time has expired.

**Mrs FINOCCHIARO:** A point of order, Madam Speaker! Standing Order 31; the Chief Minister has made several imputations against members on this side. He should withdraw.

**Madam SPEAKER:** It is not a point of order.

### **Budget 2017 – Security System Upgrades**

**Mr HIGGINS to TREASURER**

Your 2017–18 budget allocates \$5m for assistance grants for Territory businesses to install or upgrade security. This is a matched government payment of up to \$10 000 for businesses to protect them against the crime crisis, which was labelled by the Labor Party as a media beat-up, but which saw commercial break-ins rise 100% in Darwin in February, with double digit increases in Palmerston and Alice Springs.

Telling businesses to upgrade their security is tantamount to admitting your Gunner Labor government is helpless to protect them. Why is money being spent to close the gate after the horse has bolted?

**ANSWER**

Madam Speaker, I thank the Opposition Leader for his question. We are helping businesses to make their premises more secure. This will be seen in three different ways. In one case it is a stimulus measure; in another way it is a measure to help them boost their security and business capacity; in another way it is supporting local Territory business.

I had a conversation with a local business owner who expressed their concerns and said they thought it would be a great investment to have a co-contribution into upgrading their security facilities. That is exactly what this does, but it will be informed by good advice. They will have to get a CPTED audit. They will need to go through the premises to get the best advice on how they can best enhance their security system.

To access the grant they will have to make a co-contribution. They will also have to use a local Territory business. It is responding to requests from the business community, which wants some assistance in that regard, but it will also help with insurance costs and so forth.

It is important to provide support where we need to enhance community safety. That is why we are investing in the extra 120 police. Budget 2017 starts delivering on that commitment. That is why we have a \$26m investment into a new Palmerston police station, after listening to the Palmerston community and police and recognising the best investment is doing it in one stage.

The security grants are in response to listening to business, their requests and what they would like to see. We are very much looking forward to seeing the response to that.

This will also support local jobs and businesses, delivering work and enhancing security. We will make sure it is done in a methodical way to get the best bang for buck for the business owner and the Territory community, and give them the support they have requested. We are very happy with that announcement in the budget, which is a \$5m announcement as part of the budget works. We will be looking forward to working with businesses from July and seeing what the uptake across the Northern Territory business community is.

**Ms FYLES (Leader of Government Business):** Madam Speaker, I ask that further questions be placed on the Written Question Paper.