ALL PAIN, NO GAIN

December 5th, 2012

The Opposition Leader’s Mini Budget reply speech spelt out a recipe for more debt and public service job cuts.

Treasurer Robyn Lambley said the speech, the worst Budget in Reply since Self Government, has shown why Labor was incapable of dealing with the serious problems that have throttled the life out of the Northern Territory economy.

“The speech provided no policy initiatives about what Labor would change in Government,” says Treasurer Robyn Lambley.

“The Opposition Leader says her plan to tackle the Territory’s debt is to rely on GST revenue, public service staff caps and ‘increased efficiencies’.

“This would have resulted in ballooning debt and interest payments of $1.1 million a day by 2015-16.

“The suggestion that continuing along the path of relying on GST revenues, which increased by around 8 per cent a year before the Global Financial Crisis but dropped to about 2 per cent post-GFC, is highly irresponsible.

“By contrast, the Opposition Leader’s commitment to a cap on public service numbers is laughable.

“In 2009 Labor introduced a public service freeze – the failure of which was as humiliating as it was comprehensive.

“In the last five years of Labor, the public sector grew by 24 per cent and executive contracts blew out by over 50 per cent.

“Unlike a freeze, a cap on the public service means numbers could actually be reduced.

“This takes on a sinister dimension when considered alongside the Opposition Leader’s commitment to ‘efficiency measures’.

“ ‘Efficiency measures’ is code for job cuts – and Delia Lawrie needs to explain from where those ‘efficiencies’ will be found.

“Based on the Opposition Leader’s statement today, a Labor Government will saddle the Territory with million dollar a day interest payments, job cuts and on-going dependency to the Commonwealth.

“Delia Lawrie has no answers. With Labor, it’s all pain and no gain.”

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