GILES BUDGET FAILS TO DELIVER FOR THE CENTRE

Opposition Leader, and Shadow Minister for Central Australia, Delia Lawrie, said the CLP Government Budget was a missed opportunity to invest in and develop the economic and social future of Central Australia.

Ms Lawrie said Central Australians were looking to the CLP Government for relief from tough economic times and Adam Giles had again failed to deliver.

“All the Territory Budget does is ignore the economic and social realities in Central Australia by failing to invest in projects that will build the region’s economy and give some relief to families suffering under the high cost of living,” Ms Lawrie said.

“The cuts to the first home owners grant, coupled with a lack of land release, will hit the real estate sector and restrict new buyers coming into the market, as well as those looking to sell and upgrade their home.

“Local real estate agents have already said they are disappointed with the first home owners cuts – how will they be feeling today to realise this Government has no real commitment to new land release in Alice Springs?

“The CLP has slipped in a reference to works at Larapinta yet a new Indigenous Land Use Agreement has to be negotiated before any work on new blocks. Where does this leave any commitment to future development at Kilgariff?

“Public housing dwellings are being sold off and stock is not being replaced. The waiting list has now blown out to six years for a three bedroom house.”

Ms Lawrie said this Budget was an opportunity to invest in our road network through strategic development and improvement to key links and economic drivers but repairs and maintenance is down by $19 million across the board.

“Central Australian businesses hoping for a real stimulus to the economy have been left high and dry by the Giles Budget,” Ms Lawrie said.

“There is nothing in the Budget to assist local business to leverage off new developments in oil and gas in the region and nothing to help boost tourism
access to Alice Springs, with operators left high and dry with the forthcoming withdrawal of Tiger air services.

“Spending on Central Australian health services has been cut since the CLP came to power, down by more than six percent since 2012, and there is no new investment in expanding critical health facilities such as regional dialysis in town or out bush.

“This Budget contains no relief for Alice Springs residents suffering from increasing rates of youth-related crime and antisocial behaviour.

“Alice Springs businesses and families have been telling Adam Giles, Matt Conlan, Bess Price and Robyn Lambley they want the Youth Street Outreach Service reinstated and funding directed back to youth support services.

“But this Budget contains nothing to help families and young people.

“This Government keeps telling Central Australians to wait but their patience is running out, businesses are closing down and people are moving out.

“Couple this NT Budget with forecast measures in the Federal Budget’s increase in the fuel excise and doctor co-payments and charges to visit hospital EDs and Central Australia is hit with a double whammy it just can’t afford.”

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