Northern Territory to benefit after agreement reached on China FTA

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The Northern Territory Minister for Asian Engagement and Trade Peter Styles said the Chinese Government would welcome the news the China-Australia Free Trade Agreement has been passed in Australian Parliament today.

Federal Opposition Leader Bill Shorten yesterday announced that following negotiations with the Government his party would support the Bill and ensure ‘speedy passage’ of the legislation.

Mr Styles has returned to the Northern Territory this morning after conducting high-level meetings and attending key trade and investment forums in China over the last 10 days.

“Australia’s position on the agreement had been a hot topic of discussion and one of the most frequently asked questions was; what does the Labor Party have against Chinese people and Chinese investment?,” Mr Styles said.

“I found myself defending Australia’s position on a regular basis and I have gone to great lengths to explain that there were some within the Labor Party that were out of step.

“One of those was Federal Leader Bill Shorten and another was Northern Territory Opposition Leader, Michael Gunner.

“Following my discussions with members of the Chinese Government I am certain they will receive today’s developments with great optimism.

“There is a great deal of excitement in the Asian region surrounding the Northern Territory. The Chinese see Darwin as Australia’s gateway and a future distribution hub for products throughout the country.

“The Northern Territory Government’s lease of the Port of Darwin to the Landbridge Group had already sparked Chinese investors’ interest and now the support of the Australia-China FTA will mean exciting things for the Territory and go a long way to ensuring a prosperous economic future.”

The legislation will go before the Senate and is expected to be in place by the end of the year.

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