Gerry Wood, the Independent Member for Nelson, says he will introduce a motion in Parliament tomorrow asking that the government strengthen the Traffic Act so that hooning on our roads can be targeted more effectively than it is at the moment.

Gerry says in 2004 the Government introduced ‘anti-hooning’ legislation in response to legislation he introduced in 2003. The legislation Gerry introduced included impoundment of a vehicle by the police for 48 hours where an offender was found to be hooning. The NT Government felt that this was a bit harsh and replaced that impoundment with an infringement notice.

Gerry says that it has been shown in other states that an impoundment for a first offence makes a big difference in hooning, with very few people charged with a second offence. For example in Queensland to April 2006, 2648 vehicles were impounded for a first offence, 58 for a second offence and 4 for a third offence. Queensland allows for impoundment of vehicles for a first offence of 48 hours.

Hooning is a real problem on our roads and Gerry does not believe the present legislation has done much to change this. Gerry says that many people in his electorate especially Howard River Park are totally fed up with the hooning in their locality. It is affecting the amenity of the area, safety on the roads and making it harder for people to sell their properties – what would you think if you saw rubber up and down the roads?

Although the police are doing their best Gerry believes the government firstly needs to toughen up its legislation and secondly put money into 24 hour portable surveillance systems to enable the recording of the offence so that offenders can be prosecuted.

Gerry says some residents in Howard River Park would like to take the law into their own hands because they are so frustrated, others would like to help police but know they will be intimidated by offenders.

Gerry says people should not have to think about taking the law into their own hands nor should they have to put up with intimidation.

The government needs to support this motion to show that they are serious about this anti social behaviour.