Jodeen Carney  
Shadow Minister for Justice  
Media Release  

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OPTIONAL PAYMENT OF COURT FINES

Questions to the Justice Minister during the Estimates hearing have exposed that the Henderson Government views the payments of court fines as optional.

Under questioning the Justice Minister admitted that there are $6.4 million in outstanding fines and penalties for the financial year 08/09 alone.

The Minister further revealed that a disgraceful 58% of court fines for the financial year 07/08 remain unpaid.

In total more than $13 million of fines and penalties levied in just the last 3 years remain unpaid.

“The Henderson Government’s slack approach to the payment of court fines and infringement notices is just another manifestation of how Labor is soft on crime,” says Jodeen Carney, Shadow Minister for Justice.

“It’s not just the tens of millions of dollars of revenue that could be used to put more police on the beat to curb the Territory’s very high crime rates.

“It’s the message it sends to offenders that there is no will to enforce penalties handed down by the courts.

“Such a slack approach to the non-payment of fines eats away at respect for the law and makes a mockery of the notion that fines levied are meant to be paid.

“Too many people in the Territory already have little or no fear of the penalties they are likely to face in the justice system.

“It is totally unacceptable that so many individuals brazenly refuse to pay court fines and penalties.

“I remind the Minister the penalty is meant to fit the crime and the fine is meant to be paid.”

Further comment Jodeen Carney: 0407 187 992