POLICY FAILURES MUST BE REVIEWED

The failure of the Labor Government’s child protection policies over the past eight years should have been front and centre in the Board of Inquiry’s terms of reference, says Shadow Minister Jodeen Carney.

In 2004, the then Child Protection Minister, Marion Scrymgour, said in Parliament …

_The easiest thing for me and the Government to do would be to announce another review. I will not. I will not let our comprehensive reform process languish while we wait. I believe that child protection problems that our society currently faces have resulted from Government inaction, not a lack of information._

“This points to the Labor Government’s on-going abject failure in the development of its child protection policies,” Ms Carney said.

“It also re-enforces the Opposition’s call (media release October 28th) for an assessment of the policies that underpin the child protection system in the Northern Territory to be the first item on the agenda on the terms of reference of an inquiry.

“Over 8 years, the Labor Government’s policies have failed miserably. The revelations in Parliament last month and from child protection workers over recent weeks are testament to that.

“This sentiment is supported by Australian Medical Association president, Paul Bauert, who said child protection in the Northern Territory has gone backwards since the Little Children Are Sacred Report.

“Without an assessment of Labor’s child protection policies, how can we know how those policies that underpin the child protection system have failed so miserably and what can be done differently to protect children into the future?

“The Board of Inquiry will be the third investigation into child protection systems in the Territory in two years.

“When it comes to child protection, the failures of the past are every bit as relevant as the changes moving forward.”

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