MEDIA RELEASE

CHANGING THE RECORD ON CORRECTIONS

October 07th, 2011

The announcement by the Henderson Labor Government that their proposed rural prison has blown out to $495million is not only an indication of how badly planned the process of costing the spending commitment has been, but an indication of how slippery this government is with the truth, says Shadow Corrections Minister Willem Westra van Holthe.

“Labor went into the 2008 Territory election with a promise to build a second Darwin prison within three years. Well that window has definitely closed, but the cost continues to blow out” Mr Westra van Holthe said.

“The community is going to be lumbered with a $495million dollar commitment due to Labor mismanagement, but it’s not just the $70m cost blowout on the basic cost that has the Country Liberals concerned, it’s the spin that educational facilities, supported accommodation and a secure care facility will cost $175M extra as well.

“Territory Labor is hiding its budget blowout behind project changes, but it can’t hide far. For example in recent times:

- For $60M it got a primary school and middle school for a thousand students at Rosebery.
- For $14M it will get a 16 bed secure care facility in Alice Springs.
- For $26M it is getting a 50 unit accommodation complex at Darwin Hospital.

“Yet Labor would have us believe facilities significantly less in scope than these have boosted the total cost by an extra $175m, even discounting the fact that some were already planned.

“The Government has so badly botched the planning and design of the prison that the $300m initial cost that was promised to Territorians was so obviously wrong as to be incompetent.

“Each extra dollar that Labor wants to push into a facility, just so it can close down Berrimah to sell the land for development, demonstrates they have no plan except a short term fix for land release, and a long term plan to bury the Territory in debt.

“Labor need to correct the record when it comes to the design and plan for their prison, because the tune they have been singing, doesn’t ring true”.

Further comment: Willem Westra van Holthe 0414 778 430