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PAIN DEEPENS UNDER CLP— DEBT UP AS EDUCATION & HOSPITALS CUT

The CLP’s first budget is missed opportunities and broken election promises, Opposition Leader Delia Lawrie said today.

“The budget deepens the pain the CLP are inflicting on Territorians with further hits to the hip pocket, cuts to crucial services like education and hospitals and the domestic economy predicted to go into reverse under the CLP for their entire term,” Ms Lawrie said.

“The bush has been ignored with cuts to infrastructure and indigenous education slashed.

“The CLP Giles Government is inflicting all this pain on Territorians to achieve a $12m improvement in the coming year fiscal position. It’s appalling incompetence.”

The budget confirms that the CLP have hiked up the cost of living with more pain through further tax and PowerWater price hikes flagged.

“The CLP inherited an inflation rate of 2.1%. The budget confirms they have increased it to 3.9%, well above the national average. Under the CLP, the cost of living in the Territory is rising much faster than the rest of Australia,” Ms Lawrie said.

“The budget confirms Education has been slashed by $17 million and 130 teachers will be cut.

"There is a reduction for hospitals funding, yet the budget papers confirm a health blow out of $40 million in the last six months thanks primarily to increased admissions of drunks.

"The Palmerston Hospital and RDH Children’s Wing are officially scrapped under this budget.

“The CLP were elected promising to do two things - reduce the cost of living and reduce debt. This budget confirms these broken promises – it does the reverse.

“This budget doesn’t cut debt - it increases it by $1.1 billion in the coming year. The budget predicts debt growing to $5.1bn under the CLP. They have lost all credibility on their hysterical excuse for their incompetent government."
Very concerning for business, the budget forecasts a massive decline in the domestic economy next year and for every year under the CLP term.

"The CLP inherited a buoyant domestic economy with State Final Demand at 26% growth – the CLP have admitted under them it will plunge to minus 15% and stay below zero through the next four years.

“The admission that the CLP are creating a two speed economy of the haves and have nots is a disgrace.

"Businesses picking up Icthys contracts are the haves but the sharp decline in public expenditure under the CLP has condemned Territorians to further job losses.

“Nearly $300 million is to be ripped out of the public service further damaging business confidence and our local economy.

“Infrastructure spending has been slashed and continues to be cut going forward with $64 million less than last year and going down.

“Power Water prices are up yet infrastructure investment is down by $20 million," Ms Lawrie said.

Ms Lawrie said that disturbingly our most vulnerable Territorians are harmed with a $9m cut in real terms to the Child protection budget.

The Giles government predicts more children than ever at 6,000 reports won’t even be completed in the coming year.

“Under this Government Territorians will continue to be robbed of the benefits of the strong economy inherited by this government, instead suffering unnecessary pain to cover CLP incompetence and unfunded bush election promises – all for an improvement in the fiscal balance of just $12m," Ms Lawrie said.

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