Media Release

Peter Styles
Deputy Chief Minister of the Northern Territory, Minister for Business

**Opposition Leader a no-show for business**

22 June 2016

Opposition Leader and Shadow Business Minister Michael Gunner owes the local business community an apology for his disrespect by not showing up to Estimates to ask one question on their behalf.

Northern Territory Deputy Chief Minister and Minister for Business Peter Styles is calling on Michael Gunner to explain why he snubbed the business community by not bothering to take part in estimates questions in the Business portfolio he has responsibility for.

“It astounds me that Mr Gunner would show such disregard for Territory businesses that he would not even bother to turn up and ask one question about what government is doing to support them,” Mr Styles said.

“The Business portfolio is critical to the future of the Territory and includes small business support and development, Asian engagement and trade, employment and training, procurement, red tape reduction and many other key concerns for business.

“This is the same Opposition Leader who forgot to include business in his first shadow ministry.

“The same Opposition Leader who is so lacking in understanding of the business community he would rather copy the Country Liberals Government’s plans than attempt to create his own.

“The same Shadow Business Minister who says he will wait until sometime next year to find out what the business community wants if he wins the election.

“He has promised a gem of an idea to restructure the Department of Business to include a unit that already exists ‘Business NT’. The role and achievements of this and other key units were discussed extensively last night, yet he didn’t care enough to show up.

“He has pledged to employ six small business mentors which would effectively see Labor needing to sack 18 of the team of 24 current Business Development Officers working across the Territory.

“Last night’s estimates hearing was the ultimate opportunity for Mr Gunner to ask questions and gain a better understanding of what is happening within his shadow portfolio.”
“Mr Gunner needs to explain why he didn’t take part in the hearing and why he doesn’t see Territory businesses as important enough to turn up.”

The estimates hearing sat from 4pm - 7pm and 7.30pm - 11.30pm last night.

Questions in relation to the Business portfolio continued until after 11pm.

What was more important than the Territory’s business community Michael Gunner?

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