Michael Gunner

From: Michael Gunner
Sent: Tuesday, 17 February 2015 3:28 PM
To: Adam Giles; Chief Minister
Cc: Garyj Barnes; Ron Kelly; Nathan Barrett; Gerry Wood; Lia Finocchiaro
Subject: Port Committee

Dear Chief Minister,

I refer to your recently announced Parliamentary Select Committee into your Government’s proposed privatisation of the Port of Darwin.

I also refer to your recent statement that you will “ensure Territorians are at the forefront of all government decision-making.”

Labor’s position is that to have Territorians at the forefront of decision means the sale of assets owned by Territorians should get the approval of Territorians. That is why Labor believes the Port of Darwin should only be privatised with an election mandate.

To ensure that Territorians are at the forefront of government decision making in relation to the future of the Port the Opposition will participate in the parliamentary inquiry into the privatisation of the Port, and asks for your consideration of the following conditions:

- The time frame of 5 weeks is extended. The privatisation is a complex issue and there is not enough time for important stakeholders to assess the Terms of Reference, put together comprehensive submissions and have the inquiry analyse them and then report back. I note that the Parliamentary Inquiry into the Fuel Price Disclosure bill was launched on October 21 last year and is still having hearings four months later. I also make the point that the Commonwealth Asset Recycling Scheme that has been used to justify the privatisation does not yet exist.
- The Inquiry’s Terms of Reference should include an analysis of Port privatisations in other States. We can look at their models and learn from their successes and mistakes. The inquiry should be resourced to undertake such an analysis and I would be happy to discuss a proposed program with you.
- The Government release all the documentation they have in relation to the potential sale of the Port and make it available to the committee. This includes the Renewal Management Board report which Government has said would assess options for Government owned corporations, including the Port. The Government promised they would release the report but you are yet to do so even though it was completed nearly two years ago. If you are serious about involving Territorians in decision making then you will release this report straight away.

Agreement to the above conditions will indicate that the Government is genuine about involving Territorians in the decisions around the future of the Port. There is community concern that the CLP may have already determined the fate of the Port of Darwin. Accepting these conditions would be a sign of good faith with the community and opposition.

I am more than willing to discuss any aspect of these proposed conditions and all other matters in relation to the inquiry.

Yours sincerely

Michael Gunner