12 July 2007

Calls For Carney To Reject Fed's Takeaway Laws

A commitment by the CLP’s David Tollner to abolish proposed Federal restrictions on purchasing alcohol exposes the flawed thinking behind the policy.

Northern Territory Licensing Minister Dr Chris Burns said Canberra’s plan to impose conditions on the purchase of three or more cartons of beer in Darwin, Palmerston and other major centres is impractical, ineffective and unworkable.

“The Territory Government does not support this proposal,” Dr Burns said.

“Now Mr Tollner says he will ensure the restrictions are scrapped after six months.

“This is clearly policy-making on the run.”

Dr Burns said the NT Government has a targeted strategy focusing on a region-by-region approach to limit the supply, demand and consumption of alcohol.

“The ‘one size fits all’ approach announced by Indigenous Affairs Minister Mal Brough will be ineffective and unworkable, and lead to unintended consequences,” Dr Burns said.

“Both the Chief Minister and I have repeatedly told Mr Brough and the Prime Minister that the implementation of their alcohol agenda would lead to a further movement of people away from remote communities and into towns.

“In their public comments, David Tollner and Opposition Leader Jodeen Carney accept this undesirable outcome.

“I would urge Ms Carney to join the Territory Government in calling on Canberra to abandon its plans to override NT alcohol laws, and to halt the Commonwealth’s restrictions which are impractical and flawed.

“The Territory Government has a long-standing commitment to reducing alcohol-related harm throughout the NT.

“We have taken strong action, but acknowledge there is much more to do. Above all, we seek effective and practical solutions on a region-by-region basis.”

Media contact: James Hook 0401 119 592