STRENGTHENING OUR BUSINESS ENVIRONMENT

Speaking at a pre-election Chamber of Commerce lunch today, Chief Minister Clare Martin said that population growth and a competitive business environment is seeing the Territory keep moving ahead.

“Our initiatives are working and the Territory economy is growing,” she said.

Ms Martin outlined how the Labor Government had delivered on promises to bring in a Jobs Plan, cut business taxes and build our population.

“My Government has delivered a record $1.5 billion infrastructure budget with 95% of infrastructure contracts going to local firms,” she said.

Ms Martin said that as economic managers, her Government was backing Territorians and backing business to grow by ensuring we have the lowest taxes for small business in the country.

“We have delivered our promises and they are working - we are seeing a real strengthening in our economy,” she said.

The strengthening economy was illustrated by Ms Martin as she outlined some of the Labor Government’s achievements:

- Job Advertisements up 31% in last year to highest level ever
- Retail spending increasing at fastest rate in the country
- Building approvals increasing at over 50% in value in the last year
- Tourist Accommodation nights increasing at highest rate in the country
- Unemployment coming down
- Population now over 200,000 and growing at three times the forecast rate.
- Economic growth predicted to grow by 4.6% by Access Economics
- Home Affordability rising and highest in the nation
- A 41% increase in apprenticeships and trainees
- Electricity price freeze means Territorians no longer have the most expensive power

“We are bucking national trends as the plans we have put into place are working to strengthen our economy,” she said.

She said that economic performance was no accident and when her Government took office it inherited an economy that had flat-lined, experiencing 0% growth.
Ms Martin pointed out her Government’s record of converting opportunities into projects with the Wickham Point LNG Plant and Alcan’s Gove developments underway. The Waterfront development is about to start we are expecting the green light for the Trans-Territory pipeline.

Ms Martin responded to issues raised in the recent Chamber of Commerce survey including the skills shortage and itinerancy issues.

Ms Martin said that while the Territory was moving ahead there is more to be done and that her Government will keep backing Territory business to grow.

Contact: Craig Rowston 0401 119 777