4th May 2005

Chief Minister says Appropriation Bill will be passed before Territory Election

The Labor Chief Minister has given a guarantee that the Appropriation Bill and therefore supply, will be passed by Parliament before an election will be called.

In an interview given on Monday, the Labor Chief Minister said that an election will not be called before the Appropriation (the Budget) Bill has gone through the Estimates process and passed by Parliament before the Territory election date will be announced.

The comments, aired on Imparja Television last night, give Territorians a promise that the 2005 Budget will be given the full scrutiny that it deserves given Labor’s inability to deliver on key promises.

Country Liberal Party Leader Denis Burke said, “Thank God the Chief Minister will finally allow full and open scrutiny of the Budget. For a while I believed that Labor were going to break another 2001 election promise.

“With all of the questions that this Budget has raised and the economic future of the Northern Territory at stake, I am pleased to hear this guarantee from the Chief Minister.

“The Chief Minister is obviously responding to Country Liberal Party and community pressure to ensure that Labor does not go to an election without having supply guaranteed – to do otherwise would be playing fast and loose with the future of the Territory.

“Despite this Budget being remarkably insipid, Labor have realised that Territorians will not stand to be hood-winked by this government. Labor made a big deal at the 2001 election of being open, accountable and honest and I sincerely hope they live up to their promises.

“However, there is always a possibility that the Labor government will make Territory history by not securing supply before fronting the Territory community at the imminent election.”