31st March 2005

Burke Challenges Labor to Allow Estimates Scrutiny of Election Budget BEFORE next Territory Election

The Country Liberal Party Leader Denis Burke today challenged the Labor Chief Minister to guarantee that the Country Liberal Party and all Territorians are able to scrutinise this years Budget before the next Territory election.

Mr Burke said that he was willing to respond to the Labor challenge to get the Country Liberal Party’s policies costed by NT Treasury by guaranteeing that this will happen before the next Territory election, due by October this year.

“The Labor government issued me with a challenge in Parliament last week and I am here to guarantee to all Territorians that our policies will be submitted for costing by Treasury before the next election.

“However, if the Labor government are so good at issuing challenges, I want them to respond to my own. I want the Chief Minister to give an iron-clad promise to all Territorians that her election Budget and policies will be subject to scrutiny at the estimates hearings before the next Territory election.

“The comments today by the Chief Minister did not give Territorians any assurances that estimate hearings will be held before the election. The Chief Minister must publicly say clearly and unequivocally that the estimates committee will be able to scrutinise and challenge this years Budget before the next Territory election.

“Failure by the Chief Minister to let her Budget books be examined before the next Territory election is a refusal to be held accountable to the people of the Northern Territory.”

ENDS