17 June 2004
Opposition abandon Censure
Motion to avoid embarrassment

In an embarrassing attempt to politicise the important issue of child protection, the Opposition today abandoned its attempt to censure the Government, Family and Community Services Minister, Marion Scrymgour said.

After a series of child protection questions to the Minister, it became obvious that a censure would only serve to expose the appalling legacy the CLP left Territory children.

“It is blatanty obvious that the Opposition aborted their ill-attempted strategy to fault Labor Government's efforts in addressing child protection issues,” Ms Scrymgour said.

“The fact is that after almost three decades of CLP neglect, this Government is getting on with the job of reforming the child protection system.”

In answering Opposition questions, Ms Scrymgour outlined the NT Government's Reform Agenda, which includes:

- An injection of $53.8 million over the next five years to build a better child protection system; This includes the employment of new child protection staff, an increase in the foster payment rate and strengthening training and development opportunities for staff.
- Reform of the Child Protection System; Directions for Reform over the next five years have been set out in the Government's Framework for Building a Better Child Protection System.
- Establishing a Family and Community Services Advisory Council.

“This Government is pumping $53 million into the child protection system over five years to restructure our system – an unprecedented injection of funds that will enable us to make inroads and address the complexities of the issues faced.

“Already we have seen the employment of 19 new child protection workers across the Territory,” Ms Scrymgour said.

“We will continue to develop a broader range of family support and specialist services for families whose children are at risk of abuse and neglect.”