TREASURER FLIES OUT TO FIGHT FOR TERRITORY’S FAIR SHARE

Treasurer Syd Stirling will fly to Canberra tonight to attend the State and Federal Treasurers’ Conference and ensure the Territory continues to receive its fair share of GST funding.

“The current method of distributing GST money is up for review, with some of the larger states arguing that they deserve a bigger share of GST,” Mr Stirling said.

“I will be fighting strongly for the Territory to ensure that the current system, which takes into account the unique needs and circumstances of smaller jurisdictions, does not change.

“We will also be fighting moves by the Commonwealth Treasurer to tell states and territories how they should be spending GST.

“This is not on. We will not have southern bureaucrats telling us what is best for Territorians.

“The Territory Government is spending money responsibly and in a way that will assist economic growth and build essential services for Territorians.

“We have spent a record $1.3 billion over the last three years on infrastructure, we have increased police spending by $75 million and are putting on 100 extra police, we have provided 100 extra teachers as part of a significant boost to education services; and have employed 100 extra nurses and injected an extra $100 million to the health budget.

“At the same time, we have reduced the Territory’s debt.

“The Commonwealth Treasurer has no right to dictate how we spend our money. We are already spending more on infrastructure, police, teachers and nurses.”

Mr Stirling said he would also go to the Treasurers’ Conference to sign the Territory up to tax reform, but not in a way that would ensure the Territory’s budget was pushed into unsustainable deficit.

“We have an extremely tight Budget and this Government will not spend money recklessly. It will only lead to spiralling Territory debt and no money for new initiatives in areas like health, education and police.

“We support tax reform, but we need to ensure it is done in such a way that the Territory’s economic position is not jeopardised.”

Contact: Mary Fall 0401 119 770