MINISTER MISLEADS ON CROC FEST FUNDING

"Contrary to the Minister for Education's claims in the Estimates Committee hearing, Croc Festival organisers certainly did approach the NT Government for financial support to hold the festival in Alice Springs", says Loraine Braham, Independent Member for Braitling.

"The Minister claimed he never received a request for funding".

"However, the organisers met with the Department's CEO in 2006 but later received a letter in March 2007 declining funding support" (attached).

Mrs Braham said the Minister should have checked his information with departmental staff before making misleading statements.

"The Minister also claimed the organisers had received $600,000 from the Federal Government for an Alice Springs event".

"Wrong again, Minister".

"Croc Festival has a long history of success in the Territory, instilling in youth the benefits of attending school, leading a healthy life, and working towards positive life goals".

"I say to the Minister and members of government, if you have never attended this festival don't judge and bag the organisers. You don't know what you are talking about".

"Given the problems facing youth in Alice Springs, coupled with the current intervention by the Australian Government into Aboriginal communities, it is an indictment on the NT Government that they not only refuse such a positive program, but they cover their inaction with misleading information".

"I urge all schools to lobby their local member to support this festival, and I suggest the Minister come clean and correct the public record to undo the mischief caused by his misinformation".

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