The Northern Territory Government has sought to intervene in a High Court challenge about the constitutional validity of the recent Federal industrial relations laws – the so-called WorkChoice Bill.

“After careful consideration, we have decided to join the NSW, West Australian, South Australian and Queensland governments’ applications concerning the legislation,” Public Employment Minister Dr Chris Burns said.

“I am concerned that Territory laws are going to be overridden by this unfair and ideologically-driven legislation – that goes to the heart of self government,” Dr Burns said.

“Just as with the nuclear dump legislation, the Federal Government is again seeking to remove or alter rights provided by state and territory legislation.

“The Federal Government has become arrogant. Now it has control of the Senate, it believes it can do whatever it pleases.

“Not only will workers in the private sector suffer under the new industrial relations laws, the Federal Government is trying to influence employment conditions for public sector employees.

“The Martin Government was re-elected last June in part because of commitments made to its own employees.

“This is in stark contrast to Federal Government, which never mentioned its industrial relations agenda in the lead up to the 2004 federal election.

“I am again forced to ask what the federal CLP politicians did to try to prevent Territory laws being overridden by a federal government which has no mandate to introduce these radical changes.”

Contact: James Hook 0401 119 592