Today’s announcement of Labor’s second intervention into Indigenous communities squanders a rare opportunity to develop economies outside the major Territory centres.

Shadow Minister for Regional Development, Adam Giles, said the Government should be backing up its increased focus on education in communities by developing real jobs in the bush.

“To date Labor’s intervention has largely failed Territorians in economic terms, falling well short of expectations where businesses and jobs were supposed to be created,” Mr Giles said.

“People want business and jobs in the bush and instead of Labor announcing a new intervention they should have delivered economic solutions that would drive growth in the bush, leaving a legacy for future generations.

“But now many Territorians live in an environment where they are burdened by bureaucratic shires that have stifled community development and disenfranchised Aboriginal Territorians so much, that they are moving into urban areas in droves.

“Of course I welcome moves to focus on education in the bush and welfare quarantining to get kids to school is a tool that Labor hasn’t properly used.

“The Territory’s own budget papers show that only 15% of Indigenous middle school students are satisfactorily attending schools.

“But it was telling that despite the low attendance rates in bush schools, Education Minister Chris Burns today revealed only seven families had so far received infringement notices for not sending their children to school.”

Further comment: Adam Giles 0421 5 88 118