BAIL REFORM

The Opposition has been a strong voice against crime and tackling the crime wave that has hit the rural area, Darwin and Palmerston in recent months. Churches, schools, businesses, homes, community and sporting groups were targeted. Even a children’s playgroup was broken into. Lia and I joined the broader community to call for change – focusing in particular on bail reform.

It is a huge frustration for police and the community that offenders, many of them kids, commit a crime, are arrested by police, charged, bailed and then back out on the streets again.

The revolving door of justice needs to be stilled.

The Opposition called for electronic monitoring of offenders on bail and the Government responded by allowing police to issue ankle bracelets to offenders.

These changes passed during the March Parliamentary Sittings means police are able to track the movements of offenders on bail to determine if there have been breaches or they have committed crimes.

WILDLIFE PARK

A plan has emerged that could see this Government relocate the Northern Territory Wildlife Park from Berry Springs to a site closer to the Darwin CBD.

The Wildlife Park is the lifeblood of Berry Springs and central to present and future growth and development in the rural area. The through-traffic generated by the Wildlife Park sustains businesses that were established to service that market.

Local businesses say there has been no consultation around this plan and operators are horrified by the proposal.

I will campaign strongly to ensure the Wildlife Park remains where it is and this plan, which could do untold damage to the rural area, is scrapped.
While in Wadeye recently, I visited the local footy ground with star St Marys forward Francis Kinthari to inspect the light upgrades.

This has boosted participation in AFL, a spin-off of which has reduced crime in the Town.

Francis, a local Wadeye boy is making his mark in the Northern Territory Football League.

Francis is currently third on the AFLNT’s goal-kicking table, booting 40 goals in just 11 games for the powerful St Mary’s club.

Recruiters from Territory Thunder and Richmond VFL have taken an interest in the gun forward.

We spoke about football’s role in juvenile diversionary programs, the importance of footy in Wadeye and the benefits that have come from the new lights around Wadeye oval.

Football is enormously popular in Wadeye and the growth of the sport has huge benefits for the community.

Police have been using football as a diversionary program for young offenders and its impact on crime has been significant, with falls of around 40 per cent over the past couple of years.

Young men like Francis are role models for the young people of Wadeye and surrounding communities.

The Coomalie Branch of Council of the Aging NT presented an Automated External Defibrillator (AED) unit to Northern Territory Parks and Wildlife for use at Litchfield National Park.

COTA saw a need to have a defibrillator at the Park in case of medical emergency.

The closest alternative is forty minutes away by car at Batchelor Community Health Clinic.

Congratulations to COTA Coomalie for identifying a need and delivering a result that will benefit park visitors and possibly save lives.
Describing Wadeye as a Community is old-fashioned and needs to be updated. Wadeye is a town – the fifth largest in the Territory – and the services delivered there by Government need to reflect that.

During more than four years as Member for Daly and a Government Minister, I worked hard to deliver infrastructure and services to improve conditions for the residents of Wadeye.

Earlier this year I visited Wadeye to inspect some of the projects that began under the Country Liberals Government.

A priority was the new police station, which the Commonwealth helped fund. This opened on 17 November and I was fortunate, along with a number of Traditional Owners, to be able to inspect the new building with Officer-in-Charge Anthony Clarke.

Once the new station opened, the old one was demolished and in its place nine new police houses are being built.

I worked with the local Women’s Centre to relocate two of the old police houses to land purchased from the Thamarrurr Development Corporation. This provided extra accommodation for the Women’s Centre.

Work on the Port Keats Road remains a priority. I am proud to have secured $20 million to seal two parts of the Port Keats Road between Peppimenarti and Palumpa and also delivered essential upgrades to Yellow Creek Crossing.

The Wadeye bus is another initiative which has improved lives and strengthened the community since services began last year. With a population of around 3500, a service like this was long overdue.

Every day driver Keith Mardigan takes hundreds of passengers to and from the Airport, the shops and their homes – and they love it!

It was great to see also that work has begun installing the old footy lights at the local softball diamond, which means the many ladies involved in the sport in Wadeye will now be able to play at night and won’t have to stump up during the heat of the day.

I will continue to fight to ensure Wadeye and other communities within my electorate get the services they deserve.
DUNDEE ROADS UPDATE

Fog Bay Road has caused many delays and frustration for locals and visitors to Dundee, with Rocky Creek crossing in particular causing many vehicles to come to grief this wet season.

My office received a barrage of calls and visits from residents after temporary works appeared to make the crossing even more dangerous and impassable.

The promised upgrade to Rocky Creek is due to be completed prior to the next wet season, which will improve access for residents and visitors to Dundee.

Although the Rocky Creek upgrade should make Fog Bay Road year-round accessible, heavy monsoonal downpours can still cause problems. This was shown recently with the swollen Charlotte River causing significant damage to the road.

Departmental staff have been quick to repair damage to roads in the electorate and I thank Minister Manison and her team.

I recently asked the Minister to consider sealing a number of roads in the electorate, Mermaid Circuit, Barramundi Drive and Javelin Road. Unfortunately at this stage, there are no plans in the immediate future for the sealing of any of these roads. However the Minister has directed her department to consider the re-gravelling of each of these roads.

As your MLA I will continue to lobby for these roads and others in the Dundee area to be included in future budget development.

I must also commend the Dundee community for their true community spirit. It was great to see how many people helped and kept each other informed, through social media on the status of the roads in the area this Wet.

PET SCANNER

During the last Federal election campaign the Federal Coalition Government committed $15 million to deliver a long-overdue PET scanner and cyclotron to Royal Darwin Hospital.

The PET scanner identifies cancer and other diseases. A cyclotron produces isotopes used in PET medical imaging.

This commitment meant hundreds of Territorians will no longer have to fly interstate for cancer diagnosis, so it was almost beyond belief that the Gunner Labor Government announced it was scrapping the cyclotron and would fly isotopes from interstate into the Northern Territory.

Sustained pressure from the Opposition and the community has led the Government to reverse its decision - a great win for Territorians!
Daly Infrastructure Update

- Upgrades to Nauiyu, Peppimentari, Palumpa and Woodycupaldiya Health Centres
- Wadeye Morgue upgrade
- Jungawa Road
- Rocky Creek Bridge, Fogg Bay Road
- Pine Creek Police Station upgrade
- Daly River Police Station upgrade
- Finness River Bridge and Litchfield Park Road
- Palumpa Preschool upgrade

Getting Kids to School

Each year I donate a bike to schools in my electorate to encourage student attendance.

This year I have offered a bike to Berry Springs Primary, Batchelor Area School, Adelaide River School, Wooliana, Belyuen and Palumpa schools.

I was able to present some of the bikes to the schools recently and was delighted with the response from students.

Fire Breaks Reminder

With the dry season nearly upon us it is timely to remind residents to ensure their firebreaks are maintained and Gamba grass is under control.

As a rural landholder, it is your responsibility to establish and maintain a firebreak around your property.

Firebreaks should be a minimum of 4m wide, graded or slashed to a maximum height of 50mm, with all slashed material removed.

Penalties apply for non-compliance.
**Our office is your office**

The Daly Electorate office located at the Berry Springs shopping village is a resource for not-for-profit organisations.

We can assist you with photocopying and other administrative tasks and can assist with letters of support for any grant applications for your organisation.

We are always keen to hear what your organisation is up to and are happy to assist where we can in navigating government processes.

And a reminder the office has a Community Room available for use by not-for-profit organisations within the electorate.

Office hours and after hours availability.

Call 8999 6432, email electorate.daly@nt.gov.au or drop in.

Large conference table, white board and tea and coffee making facilities available.

If you are in the area, please call in and say hi! We are open Monday to Friday from 8am to 5pm.

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**BOMBING OF DARWIN SERVICE**

Rhonda and I attended the Bombing of Darwin service at Adelaide River which is always a very poignant and moving service.

The students who represent their schools and attend services across the Territory are chosen for their leadership qualities and I would like to commend in particular, the students of Batchelor Area School for making their school community proud.

Principal Robyn Thorpe highlighted their exemplary behaviour and was proud to report a number of people at the service went out of their way to thank the school for bringing the students to the service and to compliment them on their behaviour and respect shown. Well done Batchelor students!

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**Pot holes? Damaged road signs?**

Those living in the Litchfield shire can now snap and send complaints directly to the council via the Snap Send Solve mobile app.

Download the SnapSendSolve app and make it easier to report incidents to council.
Australia Day seems long ago now, however while the celebrations have come and gone it is timely to make mention of the nominees and winners who have demonstrated both strength and pride in their communities.

I was honoured to be able to attend the Coomalie Australia Day ceremony where a number of highly regarded local members were recognised for their service.

Congratulations to all nominees across the Daly Electorate, many of whom volunteer their time for others. I would especially like to acknowledge our young nominees, who were recognised and continue to be strong role models for young people. A fabulous effort by all!

DON’T LET THIS HAPPEN!

Too many animals are victims of barbed wire entanglement in the rural area. Many nocturnal animals don’t see the fence and get caught, often dying if experienced rescuers can’t get to them in time.

Wildcare Inc is urging landowners to help save our native wildlife by installing fence tagging with poly-tape or reflective bunting on the top strand of barbwire. This enables the animals to pick up the fence with their sonar, reducing greatly the mortality rate of our native wildlife.

For further information contact Wildcare Inc on 8988 6121.

WIN for Coomalie

Late last year I tabled two petitions in Parliament on behalf of the Coomalie region asking Government to provide transport for residents to attend specialist appointments at Royal Darwin Hospital.

I am pleased to announce Government has listened to the community and expanded the bus service that currently provides transport for Katherine residents to Darwin and back during weekdays.

This service will now include a drop-off to Batchelor and Adelaide River for patients discharged from Royal Darwin Hospital.

Government will look at future expansion of the service to enable patients from Batchelor and Adelaide River to be transported to the Hospital.

Hospital Visits

If you find yourself in Hospital and would like a friendly visit please let us know.

Rhonda Higgins is happy to visit patients far from home who would like to see a friendly face.