



GARY HIGGINS OPPOSITION LEADER

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CORRECTIONS PROGRAMS COULD OFFER OPPORTUNITIES

Increased crime in the Northern Territory and a high rate of disadvantage and recidivism should be the catalyst for increasing programs to provide skill building opportunities, the Opposition says.

The Leader of the Opposition, Gary Higgins says that cutting budgets to programs offered in correctional facilities is counterproductive.

“In the current law and order landscape, alongside the Territory’s high rate of recidivism and disadvantage, it is irresponsible of government to even consider further cutting resources.

“Programs such as Sentenced to a Job, which provided people real and meaningful skills should be increased, not cut.

“Approximately 85 per cent of prisoners in the Northern Territory are Aboriginal.

“Training is an enabler, it would drive the generational change this government talks so much about, as well as providing positive role models and allow further opportunity for Indigenous people to be part of the community and contribute to our economy.

“Upskilling should be ran alongside additional counselling and support programs so we see less people returning to jail.

“Ideally, we would not have such crime rates to begin with, but it is common sense, not just economically, to ensure that if people are sentenced to jail, that they do not become a repeat offender.

“Education and support is a key factor in closing the gap.

“I call on the government to justify the apparent budget cuts and outline its alternative,” said Mr Higgins.

ENDS

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