



GARY HIGGINS
OPPOSITION LEADER

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For immediate circulation

Chief Minister's confusion continues

The Chief Minister's confusion around Federal Government funding into the Northern Territory and the recommendations of the *Royal Commission and Board of Inquiry into the Protection and Detention of Children in the Northern Territory* continues.

When asked in Estimates Hearings today by the Opposition, the Chief Minister contradicted recommendation 6.1 of the report (page 237, Chapter 6), which clearly references inter-governmental coordination of programs, funding agreements and selection of service providers, service outputs and evaluations.

Despite previous calls from the Opposition to open the books and outline where Federal government funding provided to the Northern Territory is being spent in the Northern Territory, the Chief Minister instead reverted to his Federal government blame game and refused to take part in an audit of Territory spending.

Leader of the Opposition, Gary Higgins said that confirming what money is being spent where, and by which body, including with non-government organisations, is an integral part of bettering the Territory's child protection and youth justice system.

"Ensuring monies are spent in the most efficient way possible to ensure the safety and protection of our most vulnerable and disadvantaged is paramount.

"Territorians should be questioning why the Chief Minister continues to shy away from opening the Labor government's books in full detail on its spending in the Northern Territory.

"It should also be noted that in the same report (page 233, chapter 6), both the Chief Executive Officer of the Department of Territory Families and the Territory's Children's Commissioner referenced the lack of coordination between programs and funding delivered by the Northern Territory and Commonwealth governments," said Mr Higgins.

ENDS

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