



GARY HIGGINS
OPPOSITION LEADER

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The Productivity Commission is vital to the Territory retaining its GST share

The Leader of the Opposition used his attendance at today's Productivity Commission public hearings in Darwin to reiterate the unique and challenging landscape in which Territorians live.

The Horizontal Fiscal Equalisation Inquiry (HFE Inquiry) is in Darwin to examine the potential redistribution of GST revenue.

Echoing Prime Minister Malcolm Turnbull's words in relation to the *2017 Closing the Gap* report, Mr Higgins said to Commissioners that:

"It is clear that Closing the Gap is a national responsibility that belongs with every Australian."

The Leader of the Opposition told the Commission that the Northern Territory is a special and unique place.

"The geographical make-up of the Territory presents ongoing challenges towards ensuring that all Territorians have access to the services and community infrastructure they deserve.

"It is simply not fair that some of the most disadvantaged and remote Territorians will be the very people who will suffer the most in any changes to HFE.

"The Northern Territory currently receives \$4.66 for every \$1 raised, and therefore, we have the most to lose from any changes to the current system of GST distribution.

"I thank the Productivity Commission for hosting its hearings in Darwin, after lobbying by the Opposition, government and key stakeholder and industry groups to ensure the Territory was included in the hearings schedule," Mr Higgins said.

ENDS

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Please see full copy of the Leader of the Opposition's speech [via this link](#).