



**GARY HIGGINS**  
**OPPOSITION LEADER**

**14 March 2018**

*For immediate circulation*

**Please see below, to be attributed to the Leader of the Opposition, Gary Higgins.**

*Keeping the safety of Territory children top of mind in Parliamentary Sittings this week, the Opposition will today bring the following motion to the Parliament:*

*That the Assembly:*

- *Expresses its deep concern at the state of child protection in the Northern Territory and condemns the Government for both its failure to prevent harm to children, and its haphazard response to the ongoing crisis in child protection; and*
- *Implores the Government to place the safety of every child in the Northern Territory at the core of all of its decision making irrespective of cultural beliefs.*

*Leader of the Opposition said that the safety of every child in the Northern Territory should be the priority for all decision making. Child protection should've been the focus of the government this week in parliament too, instead of a Ministerial Statement about tourism. Tourism is vital to the Territory economy, however given the child protection crisis and resulting national and Territory attention for almost four weeks now, it should've received prominence in the parliament.*

*Some of the Territory's children by any measure are the nation's most vulnerable people.*

*Addressing the disadvantage in the Northern Territory requires both long and short term measures, including alcohol reform, and a coordinated approach by Federal and Northern Territory Governments and Aboriginal community controlled organisations to address poverty, housing, health, education and access to services.*

*This is a complex set of problems that cannot be solved overnight, but what sort of society do we live in if we cannot commit as a nation to addressing with a sense of urgency.*

*In addition, the Opposition also used Question Time in today's sittings to draw attention to the Territory's child protection crisis, including calling on the Labor government to make the internal review public. The Minister for Territory families yesterday advised that the review had been received but would not commit to making its contents, including findings, public. The Opposition focused its questions on child protection, seeking the answers that the Gunner government should've provided yesterday, in the first day of sittings.*

**ENDS**

**Media contact:** Georgina Murphy 0432 679 567