



GARY HIGGINS
OPPOSITION LEADER

20 April 2018

For immediate circulation

Budget 2018 to halt business

Today's budget announcements simply reinforces that the Labor government does not understand business.

Leader of the Opposition, Gary Higgins said that the Labor government's lack of understanding is evident in its so-called changes to revenue measures that simply create further uncertainty for private investment and job creation.

"The changes to mining royalties will make the Territory less competitive in what is an international industry. This will stop jobs and investment.

"Before this irresponsible decision by the Labor government, the Northern Territory looked set to benefit from exploration and mining projects worth billions of dollars.

"We share the concerns of the Minerals Council, who have said that today's proposal is a long way from realistic.

"It will add uncertainty and complexity and further damage the Northern Territory's attractiveness for investment by the introduction of more onerous royalty measures.

"Placing a levy on vacant buildings only penalises landlords and will not encourage property owners to invest in their property holdings.

"Where would such a levy stop?

"This is a dangerous introduction that could be extended to vacant industrial properties, such as factories, and residential land holdings.

"The frontline of our public service is vital for the Northern Territory and a not-negotiable.

"There should be no cuts to vital frontline services like police, corrections, health staff or teachers, for example.

"Cuts should come instead from the multi-layers of Executive management," said Mr Higgins.

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