



## **GARY HIGGINS OPPOSITION LEADER**

**11 September 2018**

*For immediate circulation*

### **The pursuit of the Rights of Territorians**

Despite a very disappointing Federal Senate vote last month, the Opposition continues to pursue the removal of legislation that allows Territorians to be second class citizens of Australia.

This week, the Leader of the Opposition will join with Madam Speaker and the Leader of Government Business to present a resolution to Federal Parliament requesting that *“the Federal Parliament not determine and distinguish between the rights of Australian citizens by virtue of where those Australians reside within this country”* and calls on the House Of Representatives to consider and pass legislation to repeal section 50A of the Northern Territory (Self-Government) Act 1978.

Leader of the Opposition, Gary Higgins said that the recent Federal Senate vote denied Territorians the democratic rights some 24 million plus other Australians enjoy.

“This is not fair, not just and something the Opposition will continue to pursue.

“This is not about euthanasia.

“This week’s visit to Canberra and subsequent resolution request being presented seeks to remove the shackles of Commonwealth control over the Northern Territory and Territorians.

“I am thrilled that the debate was before the House of Representatives yesterday, a debate I had written to Prime Minister Morrison about seeking his approval to allow it to come before the house.

“Territorians deserve better than being second class citizens in our great country,” said Mr Higgins.

**ENDS**

**The following is the text of the resolution to be presented to the Federal Parliament:**

#### **MOTION: TERRITORY RIGHTS**

On Thursday 23 August 2018, Mr Gunner (Chief Minister), pursuant to notice, moved:

**1. That this Assembly recognises:**

- a) Australia's democracy is one of the best in the world
- b) Territory rights are of paramount importance to citizens of the Northern Territory of Australia
- c) the actions of the Australian Senate on the evening of 15 August 2018 in failing to agree to a legislative proposal to restore the rights of both the Northern Territory and the Australian Capital Territory to consider and pass legislation on behalf of the residents of those Australian territories is a breach of democratic principles for Territorians

- d) specifically, the failure of the Australian Parliament to repeal s.50A of the *Northern Territory (Self-Government) Act 1978* remains an impediment to democracy for Territorians.
- e) the ongoing disparity between the legislators elected by the residents of Australian territories and those elected to represent the people in the Australian states in relation to legislative capacity is anti-democratic
- f) the distinction between the capacity to legislate and any actual legislation about the rights of terminally ill persons in the Northern Territory appears to have been deliberately confused by some Senators; and

**2. This Assembly requests that:**

- a) the Federal Parliament not determine and distinguish between the rights of Australian citizens by virtue of where those Australians reside within this country
- b) the House of Representatives as soon as practicable consider and pass legislation to repeal section 50A of the *Northern Territory (Self-Government) Act 1978*.

**THE MOTION WAS AGREED TO**

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