

**The Secretary
Senate Community Affairs Committee
PO Box 6100
Parliament House
Canberra ACT 2600**

Dear Sir/Madam

On behalf of the Combined Aboriginal Organisations of Tennant Creek enclosed is correspondence we believe relevant as community comment on perceived inaction by the current and past NT Government in addressing Aboriginal issues for the Barkly Region.

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Chief Minister Hon Paul Henderson MLA
Hon Delia Lawrie MLA Treasurer
GPO Box 3146
Darwin NT 0801

Dear Chief Minister and Minister Lawrie

The Combined Aboriginal Organisations (CAO) for Tennant Creek expresses our strong disappointment and absolute disbelief in the lack of economic investment and planning; and allocation of appropriate regional funding to the Barkly Region by the Northern Territory Government.

Through the shown Northern Territory Government actions, explained below, we feel betrayed by a seemingly strong attitude of abandonment and dismissal of us being a "small voter" electorate.

- Lack of Regional executive decision making including control of budgets
- Lack of correct Local Government funding, a shortfall of \$9 Million
- Lack of allocation and placement of the Prison
- Lack of land development for private house construction
- Lack of Public Housing development in over 20 years
- Lack of Primary Health investment and Health service reduction
- Lack of Education investment
- Lack of Sporting and Recreational investment
- Lack of general industry investment thus leading to lack of employment options
- Lack of social and emotional wellbeing services and development
- Lack of commitment to "Closing the Gap" initiatives.
- Withdrawal of Territory Government services to Alice Springs or Darwin and accompanying employment positions

Nearly every facet of a Barkly resident's life has and is being directly effected to stunt growth for betterment of choice and wealth increase.

We are also being denied appropriate per capita formula based funding allocations for our population, with the added insult of having to compete with larger population areas for prioritisation of pooled public essential services and housing needs. Of course our need will show to be low given this inequitable criteria of "population".

Our own government appointed Economic Development Committee is ignored and hampered by Government, while achievements have been made regionally, no development action for our Territory, National or International investment has been committed to.



**Papulu Appar-Kari
Aboriginal Corporation**



**Northern
Land Council**



**Central
Land Council**



**Julalikari Council
Aboriginal Corporation**



**Anyinginyi Health
Aboriginal Corporation**

The Barkly has the potential to become a major international mineral supplier through evidence deposits, a major central Australian mining and complimentary industry transport hub through the rail and roads system, capacity to build further on a strong cattle supply industry; we have a rich diverse indigenous and non indigenous community both human and environmental willing and wanting to commit and invest in our Region.

From our ongoing and positive relationships with the Commonwealth we are well aware of the formulas based funding and clearly see considerable Northern Territory Government actions in continually building the areas of Darwin and Alice Springs to the detriment of other areas.

Darwin and Alice Springs have an economic base and have the ability to build upon established community wealth. This Government chooses not to say "enough is enough" but "do you want more", consideration needs to be given to a hurried implosion of these areas in the future.

We do not feel there is a balanced prioritisation of economic growth investment in the Northern Territory, it is easy to build on the pre-existing, where is our leadership in building from the ground up, a major mistake was made in not placing the Prison in Tennant Creek the opportunity to show true economic investment and its flow on effects has been lost.

We may be considered a small electorate by others, however we have shown some amazing innovative, mature, and positive regional change.

- Night Patrol, community initiated
- Grog Wars, community initiated
- Thirsty Thursday, community initiated
- Regional Health Governance and coordinated servicing, AHAC initiated
- Commonwealth Indigenous Housing program through JCAC initiated
- CDEP economic enterprise development, PAK, ACGC, JCAC initiated
- Local Government and Essential Service coordination, JCAC and TCTC initiated
- Minor private housing construction
- Private small industry development
- Community response to community need
- Strong self reliance and self development where possible
- Ongoing community major events have been through self sacrifice not through Government investment
- Lobbying of Regional identity and rights i.e. 2008 Electoral boundary denied proposal of change

We believe this Region is at the precipice of negative social change, and we lay this squarely at the Northern Territory Government's door, one generation of welfare dependant and substance misuse affected victims exists the second will be upon us in the next five years. The Northern Territory Government asks to much from us as a community, continual positive works by ourselves to advocate "it will get better", "believe in this Government" is then destroyed by false promises and ignored presentation of issues for Government assistance.

We strongly advocate and implore the Northern Territory Government to invest in our Region we are worth it and we deserve it. We are extremely disappointed by Minister Lawrie's recent visit as it was not advertised and almost consider being an embarrassment as the budget was minimal, was this the purpose, to not be challenged.

We want a positive and real outcome based relationship with the NT Government however continued partnership inaction is leading to our disillusionment. So we ask;

1. What are the recurrent and one off program allocations for the Barkly Region for 2008/2009?
2. What are the planned recurrent and one off program allocations for the Barkly Region beyond 2009?
3. Where is or when will an Economic Development Plan be developed to show major industry investment lead from the Government?

It will be to the Northern Territory Government's detriment to continue to ignore and dismiss the Barkly Region, as our collective energies, trust and commitment will be directed and engaged with parties and entities both government and non government who enforce accountability and/or procedure in partnership with us real change, real outcomes to "close the gap".

It is now up to the Northern Territory Government to show the Barkly residents that you do recognise, acknowledge and care about the Barkly Region. And that shared holistic Northern Territory economic wealth is goal of this Government for all Regions to prosper.

On behalf of the Combined Aboriginal Organisations of Tennant Creek

Mr Jeff Warner
General Manager
Anyinginyi Health AC

Mrs Patricia Brahim
Chief Executive Officer
Julalikari Council AC

17th June 2008

Ms Marion Scrymgour MLA, Deputy Chief Minister

*Dr Christopher Burns MLA
Hon Konstantine Vatskalis MLA
Mr Christopher Natt MLA
Hon Leonard Kiely MLA
Hon Matthew Bonson MLA
Hon Rob Knight MLA*

*Arnhem MCCARTHY, Ms Malarndirri
Barbara Anne*

*Barkly MCADAM, Mr Elliot
Brennan BURKE, Mr James Patrick
Fannie Bay MARTIN, Ms Clare Majella
Goyder WARREN, Mr (Ted) Edward John
Macdonnell ANDERSON, Ms Alison
Nhulunbuy STIRLING, Mr (Syd) Sydney James
Nightcliff AAGAARD, The Honourable Jane
Lesley
Port Darwin SACIOTTO, Ms Kerry Denise
Stuart HAMPTON, Mr Karl Rio*

Zappe, Ingrid (SEN)

From: Clarissa Burgen [Clarissa.Burgen@anyinginyi.com.au]
Sent: Thursday, 30 October 2008 4:49 PM
To: Community Affairs, Committee (SEN)
Subject: Inquiry into Government Expenditure on Indigenous Affairs and Social Services in the Northern Territory

**The Secretary
 Senate Community Affairs Committee
 PO Box 6100
 Parliament House
 Canberra ACT 2600**

Dear Sir/Madam

I appreciate my comments and points may not be considered given the closing date was 22 October 2008. I make the follow observations as a community member. Other than my postal address I wish for my personal phone contact details to be kept confidential and not displayed to the general public.

(a) the level of service delivery and of outcomes achieved in Indigenous communities in the Northern Territory in relation to the expenditure of both Federal and Northern Territory monies; and

No new public housing/flat construction funding has been provided by the Northern Territory Government to Tennant Creek since an R&M project in 1985 to address population expansion.

No substantial Sports and Recreation funding provided for our Region of over 6,000 residents. Funding received by the NTG from Commonwealth Sports and Recreation for specific community Indigenous Sports and Recreation Officer allocated for Tennant Creek has been relocated to Alice Springs due to "recruitment difficulties", it is understood the Department could not supply a house or vehicle for works required.

No birthing services available in our Region

No mental health services in our Region

No consistent bush mobile services from NT Health to our region both north and south Barkly

No Alcohol and Other Drugs workers in Tennant Creek

Removal of NTG positions for Tennant Creek to Alice Springs

Newspaper article

Barkly budget bypass

16/05/2008 10:58:00 AM

THE Territory Budget launch in Tennant Creek was a quiet affair because very few people were invited. Not that Treasurer Delia Lawrie would have had time for many guests anyway - she was only in town for less than two hours.

And there wasn't much news to deliver, apart from a commitment to build a new sobering up shelter and to install an electricity generator.

Not all money committed to the Barkly from last year's budget has been spent yet such as the allocation for for the main street upgrade in Tennant Creek, the new pump station at Cabbage Gum Bore and the fire safety upgrade at the local hospital.

The majority of the capital works budget is carry-over from previous years, indicating there is no real commitment to improving infrastructure in the area.

Ms Lawrie told the gathering of five her budget delivers for Territory families and invests in the future of the Northern Territory, however the investments are clearly top heavy.

There is more to be spent finishing off the Darwin Wharf Precinct than there would be spent on infrastructure throughout the entire Barkly.

Just \$8.3 million has been set aside for capital works with around \$10.5 million to be spent on repairs and

maintenance.

If the Government had number-crunched according to a per capita basis at least \$28 million, rather than \$19 million, should have been committed to infrastructure in the Barkly region.

That's \$9 million short!

Probably enough to build a prison here.

(b) whether the Northern Territory Government's expenditure of goods and services tax receipts accurately reflects the Commonwealth Grants Commission's funding formula for the expenditure of such receipts by program, by location, and by intended service recipient for meeting disadvantage and regional need.

I would not believe the level of GST expenditure is being reflected in the Barkly Region.

Clarissa (Rissa) Burgen

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