

Terry Mills Leader of the Opposition

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BUDGETING FOR VALUE FOR MONEY

The Territory Opposition will be looking for greater value for taxpayer's money when the Treasurer, Delia Lawrie, hands down her first budget tomorrow.

"This Territory Government is the highest taxing government in Territory history but consistently fails to deliver better services," says Terry Mills, Leader of the Opposition.

"Territory Labor will have \$3.5 billion at its disposal in this budget, up from \$2.2 billion in 2001/02, an increase of \$1.3 billion per annum.

"Despite an increase in revenue of 60% to cater for a population increase of just 7%, we are going backwards in many areas.

"The core responsibility of the Territory Government is to deliver improved services in health, education and law and order.

"Despite receiving rivers of GST revenue this Government has failed to curb the rising rate of violence and anti-social behaviour engulfing communities all around the Territory.

"The test scores for children at Territory schools have actually declined in many areas since Labor came to office.

"People are being treated in the back of ambulances because Royal Darwin Hospital is incapable of dealing with patient numbers.

"It is also critical that this budget contains measures to curb Darwin's skyrocketing cost of housing.

"First homebuyers and renters have been the principle victims of the Territory Government's decision to choke the release of land around Darwin.

"As a consequence of the Territory Government policies the cost of buying a home or renting a home has soared.

"The extremely high cost of housing in Darwin will undermine the long term prosperity of the Territory.

"Families will not be able to call the Territory home if they face housing costs much higher than other states."

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