The Henderson Government has rejected a Country Liberals' plan to establish an anti-corruption watchdog in the Northern Territory.

Opposition Leader Terry Mills said he was disappointed the Government voted against this important motion – which would have provided a valuable governance tool into the future.

The Territory’s population is growing rapidly, and it’s important the proper structures are put in place to ensure open, transparent and accountable Government,” Mr Mills said.

While I acknowledge the work done by existing organisations such as the Ombudsman’s office, the Auditor General and the Territory Police Ethics and Professional Standards Command, I also believe there is scope for an over-arching authority such as Queensland’s Crime and Misconduct Commission.

I believe the establishment of a corruption watchdog would allow the Territory to grow unimpeded by the type of corruption that exists in other jurisdictions.

The motion was intended as a nod to the Territory’s anticipated future expansion – although history shows Corruption in Government is an insidious process that can only be prevented through constant vigilance.

The proposed agency would also be charged with investigating the type of shameless rumour-mongering of the type spread recently by Government Minister, Chris Burns.

Mr Burns used Parliamentary privilege to attack the reputations of a number of senior Northern Territory business people and their links with the Coalition.

The Country Liberals plan was to adequately resource the new authority and provide it with the capacity to fight major crime and oversee high standards of integrity in the public sector.

It would also have ensured complaints about public sector misconduct would have been appropriately investigated.

While today represents an opportunity missed by the Government to provide a framework for an anti-corruption watchdog, such a body will one day exist in the Territory – presumably when Labor is no longer in power.”

Further comment: Terry Mills 0418 833 594