I am deeply saddened by the passing of Kwementyaye ‘Tracker’ Tilmouth.

Mr Tilmouth was a well-known Territory identity. He was a firm advocate for Aboriginal land rights, a firm advocate for Aboriginal economic rights and a firm advocate of Aboriginal people, not just in the Northern Territory but right around Australia.

Taken from his family at an early age, he was sent to Retta Dixon House in Darwin and the mission on Croaker Island.

Mr Tilmouth was not just an activist for Aboriginal issues, but he was also an effective force for real change, particularly in the areas of Aboriginal legal rights and access to proper health services. Later in life he would serve as a highly-effective head of the Central Land Council.

He was a man of great stature and someone who I spoke to on any number of occasions and my thoughts and prayers go out to his extended family.

Mr Tilmouth was never shy about letting his political allies know his views when he thought they were getting it wrong. I would have sincerely liked to have seen Mr Tilmouth take his passion for Aboriginal advancement to Canberra. He would have been the best Labor Senator never to be preselected.

I will extend the offer of a State Funeral to the Tilmouth family. We want to honour and pay tribute to a true hero to Territorians, particularly Aboriginal Territorians.

Mr Tilmouth championed economic rights of Aboriginal people. This is something sorely needed in Aboriginal affairs and will be sadly missed.

He is a man that will never be forgotten.

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