



JUSTINE DAVIS MEMBER FOR JOHNSTON

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Media Release: Accountability is not Optional: Government Must Investigate 60M Indigenous Employment Provision Scheme (IEPS) Fraud Scandal

Governments can't hit pause on accountability when it suits them. It's a responsibility, not a choice.

Wednesday, 26 March 2025

Justine Davis MLA:

"Today in parliament, I will move a motion to refer the Indigenous Employment Provision Scheme (IEPS) fraud scandal to a Parliamentary Standing Committee for investigation.

This is a government that talks about accountability – a government that last week passed a law to hold individual public housing tenants accountable for \$39 million in rent arrears optional. Surely we must also hold contractors who have defrauded the taxpayers of the Northern Territory – to the tune of 60 million or more – equally accountable. Accountability is not optional.

The Northern Territory Government's failure to investigate and recover millions lost in the IEPS fraud scandal is a disgrace. This scandal exposes a damning lack of transparency, accountability, and financial oversight. While small operators have been prosecuted, major companies and key figures appear to have escaped scrutiny entirely, undermining public trust in the Government's ability to manage taxpayer funds responsibly.

We have also heard so much in this sitting of parliament about how the Northern Territory's budget is in crisis. We have removed the debt ceiling, and we have passed bill after bill with – apparently – the aim of growing our economy.

The funds defrauded through the IEPS is money that belongs to all of us – taxpayer money that has been wrongfully misused. Can we really afford to ignore it? This is not just a matter of accountability; it's about recovering what is rightfully ours and ensuring that it is put to proper use.

Page 1 of 2



www.justinedavis.com.au
[@justine4johnston](https://twitter.com/justine4johnston)



08 8999 6620
electorate.johnston@nt.gov.au



Millner Village Plaza, Cnr of Fitzgerald St
and Bagot Rd, Millner NT 0810



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Since I first raised the IEPS fraud scandal, I have been contacted by many people within my community—and within the communities of many of my fellow members — thanking me for trying to address this matter and urging me to make it happen. I am doing this for them, and for the people of the Northern Territory. We owe it to the people of the Northern Territory to address this failure. We have a responsibility to act, to investigate, and to ensure that those who have misused taxpayer funds are held accountable.

This motion offers us the chance to bring justice to the people of the Northern Territory—to provide transparency, to recover stolen funds, to ensure such a scandal never happens again, and to draw a line under this scheme and finally answer some of the significant questions so many people have. If we want people to trust the government, we need to make sure we give them reasons to do so.

The Government doesn't have to settle for disappointment – they can take action. I look forward to the Government's support on this motion today."

Justine Davis
Independent Member for Johnston

Media contact: Vivien Clarke 0461 421 112

