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INDEPENDENT MEMBER FOR JOHNSTON

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Media Release: Lift the Standards

A Code of Conduct for a Safer, More Productive NT Parliament

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Territorians expect their elected representatives to uphold the highest standards of behaviour and do the job they were elected to do. It's time for Parliament to lift its standards to reflect those expectations.

That's why, during this week's Parliamentary sittings, I will move a motion calling for the establishment of a Parliamentary Code of Behaviour.

Robust debate is essential in any Parliament. Territorians expect their elected representatives to disagree, to scrutinise legislation, and to debate passionately for their communities. That is a healthy democracy.

But over the past 18 months we have seen repeated use of bullying, harassment and personal attacks as distraction tactics in Parliament by the CLP government.

We have also heard reports of bullying by Members of Parliament towards Department of Legislative Assembly staff, but the CLP government refuses to openly address how these incidents have been dealt with.

These behaviours are unacceptable, and they have no place in Parliament or in any workplace.

In November, I gave notice of a motion to address the disrespectful behaviours we have been seeing in the chamber – name-calling, shouting, and mocking are just a few examples.

These tactics are not only harmful, they consume valuable Parliamentary time, divert attention away from serious debate, and prevent proper scrutiny.



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When Parliament becomes a place of hostility rather than healthy debate, it creates a work environment where people feel unsafe and disrespected. That inevitably makes Parliament less productive. When Parliament is less productive, Territorians' voices are heard less clearly.

The motion asks the Assembly to:

- Note the importance of safe, respectful and professional parliamentary workplaces;
- Acknowledge that all Members have a responsibility to model integrity, dignity and respectful conduct in every setting connected to their role;
- recognises that bullying, harassment, discrimination, intimidation and misuse of authority have no place in the Northern Territory Parliament, including towards Department of the Legislative Assembly staff;
- Support the establishment of a clear Behaviour Code for Members, including independent oversight, confidential complaint handling and a range of proportionate sanctions; and
- Call on the Government to implement such a Behaviour Code as a priority, ensuring parliamentary standards reflect community expectations and are consistent with best practice across the Commonwealth.

Territorians deserve a Parliament that is safe, respectful and focused on the job it was elected to do.

A safe, respectful and productive parliamentary workspace equals a better Northern Territory for everyone.

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