



**LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY FOR THE  
AUSTRALIAN CAPITAL TERRITORY**

**2012–2013–2014–2015**

**MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS**

**No. 86**

**WEDNESDAY, 11 FEBRUARY 2015**

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- 1 The Assembly met at 10 a.m., pursuant to adjournment. The Speaker (Mrs Dunne) took the Chair and asked Members to stand in silence and pray or reflect on their responsibilities to the people of the Australian Capital Territory.
- 2 **COMMONWEALTH DEPARTMENT OF IMMIGRATION AND BORDER PROTECTION—RELOCATION FROM BELCONNEN**  
Dr Bourke, pursuant to notice, moved—That this Assembly:
  - (1) notes:
    - (a) the significant investment made by the ACT Government into Belconnen over many years;
    - (b) the importance of Commonwealth public agencies located in Belconnen which are an important part of the local Belconnen community and economy;
    - (c) the uncertainty over the future of the Commonwealth Department of Immigration and Border Protection in the Belconnen town centre; and
    - (d) that many Belconnen based small businesses would be severely disadvantaged if the department was relocated away from Belconnen; and
  - (2) calls on the Speaker to convey the Assembly’s strong request to the Federal Government to keep the Department of Immigration and Border Protection in Belconnen.

Mrs Dunne, by leave, moved the following amendments together:

- (1) Omit paragraph (1)(a).
- (2) After paragraph (1)(d), insert:



“(1A) declares its wish for Commonwealth Government departments to maintain their central offices in Canberra as a first priority; and”.

(3) Omit paragraph (2), substitute:

“(2) calls on the Speaker to convey the Assembly’s strong request to the Minister for Immigration and Border Protection to keep the Department of Immigration and Border Protection in Belconnen.”.

*Paper:* Mrs Dunne, by leave, presented the following paper:

Commonwealth Department of Immigration and Border Protection—Relocation from Belconnen—Copy of correspondence from Mrs Dunne to the Minister for Immigration and Border Protection and from Mrs Dunne to the Secretary, Department of Immigration and Border Protection, dated 7 January 2015.

Debate continued.

*Paper:* Ms Berry (Minister for Housing) presented the following paper:

Commonwealth Department of Immigration and Border Protection—Relocation from Belconnen—Stand up for local jobs—A community petition by Andrew Leigh MP.

Debate continued.

Ordered—That the question be divided.

Amendment (1) negatived.

Amendment (2) agreed to.

Amendment (3) negatived.

Debate continued.

Question—That the motion, as amended, viz:

“That this Assembly:

- (1) notes:
  - (a) the significant investment made by the ACT Government into Belconnen over many years;
  - (b) the importance of Commonwealth public agencies located in Belconnen which are an important part of the local Belconnen community and economy;
  - (c) the uncertainty over the future of the Commonwealth Department of Immigration and Border Protection in the Belconnen town centre; and
  - (d) that many Belconnen based small businesses would be severely disadvantaged if the department was relocated away from Belconnen;
- (2) declares its wish for Commonwealth Government departments to maintain their central offices in Canberra as a first priority; and
- (3) calls on the Speaker to convey the Assembly’s strong request to the Federal Government to keep the Department of Immigration and Border Protection in Belconnen.”—

be agreed to—put and passed.

### 3 BUDGET 2014-2015—REVIEW

Mr Smyth, pursuant to notice, moved—That this Assembly:

- (1) notes the Government's 2014-15 Budget Review that:
  - (a) the Territory's budget deficit has blown out from \$332.8 million to \$770.5 million;
  - (b) the Territory's deficit surpasses the deficit of all other jurisdictions except Western Australia, but on a per capita basis, is over four times that of Western Australia;
  - (c) the Territory will not reach the Government's promised surplus until 2017-18, which it originally planned to achieve by 2015-16;
  - (d) during the period between the 2014-15 ACT Budget, and the recent Budget Review, the Government's expenses have increased by approximately \$467.8 million;
  - (e) during the period between the 2014-15 ACT Budget, and the recent Budget Review, the Government's Net Debt has increased by approximately 29.5%;
  - (f) during the period between the 2014-15 ACT Budget, and the recent Budget Review, the Government's Net Liabilities has increased by approximately 12.5%;
  - (g) the Government continues to slug Canberra residents and businesses with increased taxes, anticipating an increase of over \$7 million in taxation revenue from the 2014-15 ACT Budget; and
  - (h) the Territory's deficit for 2015-16 is approximately \$250 million, which is \$118 million worse than previously forecasted; and
- (2) calls on the Government to detail the impact of the Budget Review on the ACT community.

Mr Barr (Treasurer) moved the following amendment: Omit all words after "That this Assembly", substitute:

- "(1) notes:
- (a) that the 2014-15 ACT Budget was focused on investing in Canberra, notably investing in our economy, investing in our people and investing in jobs;
  - (b) that the ACT Government has taken a proactive approach to supporting the ACT economy and community in the light of the Commonwealth's contraction, including meeting the shortfall of \$240 million in health funding that was cut by the Federal Government;
  - (c) that the ACT Government has taken an explicit decision to carry a short-term Budget deficit to support the economy;
  - (d) that the ACT Government has a measured and responsible path to return the Budget to balance, with the Budget to return to balance in 2016-17;
  - (e) that the financial position outlined in the 2014-15 Budget Review remains consistent with the 2014-15 Budget;

- (f) that the majority of the variation to the Territory's Headline Net Operating Balance in the 2014-15 Budget Review from the 2014-15 Budget is due to the Government's decision to implement the Asbestos Eradication Scheme, with the Scheme to impact the Budget by about \$530 million over the forward estimates period; and
  - (g) that the Territory retains a AAA stable credit rating, and that this rating was reaffirmed by Standard & Poor's in light of the announcement of the Asbestos Eradication Scheme; and
- (2) calls on the Government to:
- (a) maintain its commitment to supporting the ACT economy and community;
  - (b) maintain its commitment to rid the Territory of the legacy of loose-fill asbestos by continuing to implement the Asbestos Eradication Scheme; and
  - (c) maintain its commitment to a measured and responsible approach to returning the Budget to balance.”.

Debate continued.

Question—That the amendment be agreed to—put.

The Assembly voted—

AYES, 8		NOES, 7	
Mr Barr	Ms Fitzharris	Mr Doszpot	Ms Lawder
Ms Berry	Mr Gentleman	Mrs Dunne	Mr Smyth
Dr Bourke	Ms Porter	Mr Hanson	Mr Wall
Ms Burch	Mr Rattenbury	Mrs Jones	

And so it was resolved in the affirmative.

Question—That the motion, as amended, viz:

“That this Assembly:

- (1) notes that the:
  - (a) 2014-15 ACT Budget was focused on investing in Canberra, notably investing in our economy, investing in our people and investing in jobs;
  - (b) ACT Government has taken a proactive approach to supporting the ACT economy and community in the light of the Commonwealth's contraction, including meeting the shortfall of \$240 million in health funding that was cut by the Federal Government;
  - (c) ACT Government has taken an explicit decision to carry a short-term Budget deficit to support the economy;
  - (d) ACT Government has a measured and responsible path to return the Budget to balance, with the Budget to return to balance in 2016-17;
  - (e) financial position outlined in the 2014-15 Budget Review remains consistent with the 2014-15 Budget;

- (f) majority of the variation to the Territory's Headline Net Operating Balance in the 2014-15 Budget Review from the 2014-15 Budget is due to the Government's decision to implement the Asbestos Eradication Scheme, with the Scheme to impact the Budget by about \$530 million over the forward estimates period; and
  - (g) Territory retains a AAA stable credit rating, and that this rating was reaffirmed by Standard & Poor's in light of the announcement of the Asbestos Eradication Scheme; and
- (2) calls on the Government to maintain its commitment to:
- (a) supporting the ACT economy and community;
  - (b) rid the Territory of the legacy of loose-fill asbestos by continuing to implement the Asbestos Eradication Scheme; and
  - (c) a measured and responsible approach to returning the Budget to balance."—

be agreed to—put and passed.

#### **4 QUESTIONS**

Questions without notice were asked.

#### **5 PLAYGROUND MAINTENANCE**

Mrs Jones, pursuant to notice, moved—That this Assembly:

- (1) notes:
- (a) the importance of local suburban playgrounds to children, families and the broader community;
  - (b) that they are a core municipal service and maintenance and renewal is paramount; and
  - (c) that they promote an active lifestyle for children and adults and contribute to the physical and mental wellbeing of the community; and
- (2) calls on the Government to:
- (a) publish a meaningful maintenance schedule, along with a renewal plan and the list of playgrounds intended to be removed across the city; and
  - (b) conduct genuine and meaningful community consultation for each playground that is scheduled for maintenance, an upgrade or identified for removal.

Mr Rattenbury (Minister for Territory and Municipal Services) moved the following amendment: Omit all paragraphs after paragraph (1)(c), substitute:

- “(d) that the Government will continue to implement its playground maintenance schedule consistent with Australian Standards which define requirements for maintenance inspections of playgrounds;
- (e) that the Government is currently developing a playground strategy that focuses on improving ACT play spaces, in line with Australian and ACT standards and best practice contemporary play space design, which aims to improve health and recreational outcomes and will be implemented subject to future budget funding; and

- (f) that the Government is committed to undertaking community consultation in relation to the playground strategy.”.

Debate continued.

Question—That the amendment be agreed to—put.

The Assembly voted—

AYES, 9		NOES, 8	
Mr Barr	Ms Fitzharris	Mr Coe	Ms Lawder
Ms Berry	Mr Gentleman	Mr Doszpot	Mr Smyth
Dr Bourke	Ms Porter	Mrs Dunne	Mr Wall
Ms Burch	Mr Rattenbury	Mr Hanson	
Mr Corbell		Mrs Jones	

And so it was resolved in the affirmative.

Question—That the motion, as amended, viz:

“That this Assembly notes:

- (1) the importance of local suburban playgrounds to children, families and the broader community;
- (2) that they are a core municipal service and maintenance and renewal is paramount;
- (3) that they promote an active lifestyle for children and adults and contribute to the physical and mental wellbeing of the community;
- (4) that the Government will continue to implement its playground maintenance schedule consistent with Australian Standards which define requirements for maintenance inspections of playgrounds;
- (5) that the Government is currently developing a playground strategy that focuses on improving ACT play spaces, in line with Australian and ACT standards and best practice contemporary play space design, which aims to improve health and recreational outcomes and will be implemented subject to future budget funding; and
- (6) that the Government is committed to undertaking community consultation in relation to the playground strategy.”—

be agreed to—put and passed.

## 6 GUNGAHLIN—INVESTMENT IN INFRASTRUCTURE

Ms Fitzharris, pursuant to notice, moved—That this Assembly:

- (1) notes that as Gungahlin has grown and developed as one of the ACT’s newest regions the ACT Government has made significant investment in:
  - (a) education, health and community infrastructure and services;
  - (b) recreation infrastructure and services;
  - (c) roads and municipal infrastructure;
  - (d) generating employment in the Gungahlin Town Centre through the construction of the ACT Government office block; and
  - (e) public transport, especially in Capital Metro;

- (2) recognises that this investment in essential infrastructure and services has contributed to the growth of a vibrant and diverse community; and
- (3) calls on the ACT Government to continue to:
  - (a) engage with the Gungahlin community about what future infrastructure and services are needed; and
  - (b) invest in the Gungahlin region, especially through its commitment to the Gungahlin community to ease the day-to-day future burden on Gungahlin commuters through the delivery of the first stage of a reliable and fast mass public transport system—Capital Metro.

Debate ensued.

Question—put.

The Assembly voted—

AYES, 9		NOES, 8	
Mr Barr	Ms Fitzharris	Mr Coe	Ms Lawder
Ms Berry	Mr Gentleman	Mr Doszpot	Mr Smyth
Dr Bourke	Ms Porter	Mrs Dunne	Mr Wall
Ms Burch	Mr Rattenbury	Mr Hanson	
Mr Corbell		Mrs Jones	

And so it was resolved in the affirmative.

## **7 LOCAL SMALL, MEDIUM AND FAMILY BUSINESS—INVESTMENT**

Mr Wall, pursuant to notice, moved—That this Assembly:

- (1) notes:
  - (a) the importance of locally owned and operated small, medium and family business investment to the ACT economy;
  - (b) the low weighting given to local small, medium and family businesses in the tender assessment process for ACT Government contracts;
  - (c) CityWide Service Solutions, a wholly owned subsidiary of Melbourne City Council, have recently been awarded the contract for dryland grass mowing along arterial roads and connecting roads in the ACT;
  - (d) the impact on local small, medium and family business as a result of contracts being awarded to interstate and overseas contractors; and
  - (e) the flow on effect to the ACT economy as a result of keeping contracts local; and
- (2) calls on the ACT Government to:
  - (a) outline the long term economic impact to the ACT as a result of allowing contracts to move interstate and overseas;
  - (b) review the process that allowed CityWide Service Solutions to be awarded the contract for dryland grass mowing along arterial roads and connecting roads in the ACT with a review to be tabled in the Assembly by the last sitting day of March 2015; and
  - (c) ensure that a fair weighting is given to local small, medium and family business in the tender assessment process for ACT Government contracts.

Mr Barr (Minister for Economic Development) moved the following amendment:  
Omit all words after paragraph (1)(a), substitute:

- “(b) that yesterday, the Chief Minister announced that the ACT Government will create a new position of Local Industry Advocate to work with local industry to identify improvements to government procurement processes;
  - (c) Access Canberra, our new one-stop-shop to cut red tape has already started making life easier for small and large businesses; and
  - (d) that the ACT Government’s vision for growing Canberra’s economy is built on three strategic imperatives—fostering the right business environment, supporting business investment, and accelerating business innovation; and
- (2) calls on the ACT Government to maintain economic activity, to encourage investment and, above all, to grow jobs.”.

Debate continued.

Mr Wall addressing the Assembly—

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*Adjournment negatived:* It being 6 p.m.—The question was proposed—That the Assembly do now adjourn.

Mr Barr requiring the question to be put forthwith without debate—

Question—put and negatived.

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Mr Wall continued.

Question—That the amendment be agreed to—put.

The Assembly voted—

AYES, 9		NOES, 8	
Mr Barr	Ms Fitzharris	Mr Coe	Ms Lawder
Ms Berry	Mr Gentleman	Mr Doszpot	Mr Smyth
Dr Bourke	Ms Porter	Mrs Dunne	Mr Wall
Ms Burch	Mr Rattenbury	Mr Hanson	
Mr Corbell		Mrs Jones	

And so it was resolved in the affirmative.

Question—That the motion, as amended, viz:

“That this Assembly:

- (1) notes:
  - (a) the importance of locally owned and operated small, medium and family business investment to the ACT economy;
  - (b) that yesterday, the Chief Minister announced that the ACT Government will create a new position of Local Industry Advocate to work with local industry to identify improvements to government procurement processes;
  - (c) Access Canberra, our new one-stop-shop to cut red tape has already started making life easier for small and large businesses; and

(d) that the ACT Government's vision for growing Canberra's economy is built on three strategic imperatives—fostering the right business environment, supporting business investment, and accelerating business innovation; and

(2) calls on the ACT Government to maintain economic activity, to encourage investment and, above all, to grow jobs.”—

be agreed to—put and passed.

## **8 DRYLAND GRASS MOWING ALONG ARTERIAL ROADS AND CONNECTING ROADS—TENDER BRIEFING—STATEMENT BY MINISTER**

Mr Rattenbury (Minister for Territory and Municipal Services), by leave, made a statement regarding the tender briefing for dryland grass mowing along arterial roads and connecting roads.

## **9 LIGHT RAIL NETWORK PROJECT—FUTURE OF TREES**

Mr Coe, pursuant to notice, moved—That this Assembly:

(1) notes a Tree Inventory Report completed for the ACT Government found that:

(a) there were 531 *Eucalyptus elata* trees located within the median strip between Alinga and Mouat Streets on Northbourne Avenue;

(b) 75% of these trees exhibited good or fair health; and

(c) 65% of these trees had a useful life expectancy of 20 years or greater;

(2) notes that in order to construct Capital Metro, it is likely all these trees will have to be chopped down; and

(3) calls on the ACT Government to cancel the Capital Metro Light Rail project.

Debate ensued.

Debate adjourned (Mr Rattenbury—Minister for Territory and Municipal Services) and the resumption of the debate made an order of the day for the next sitting.

## **10 ADJOURNMENT**

Mr Corbell (Deputy Chief Minister) moved—That the Assembly do now adjourn.

Debate ensued.

Question—put and passed.

And then the Assembly, at 6.42 p.m., adjourned until tomorrow at 10 a.m.

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**MEMBERS' ATTENDANCE:** All Members were present at some time during the sitting.

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**Tom Duncan**  
Clerk of the Legislative Assembly