



## LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY FOR THE AUSTRALIAN CAPITAL TERRITORY

2012–2013–2014

### MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS

No. 60

**WEDNESDAY, 4 JUNE 2014**

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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 **A.C.T. BUDGET**

Dr Bourke, pursuant to notice, moved—That this Assembly:

(1) notes:

- (a) the ACT Budget provides for significant investment in the Canberra community by creating jobs and growing the economy through transformational projects;
- (b) the impact of the Commonwealth 2014-2015 Budget has put significant pressure on the ACT Budget, including funding to health;
- (c) notwithstanding this pressure, the ACT Government's priorities stand in stark contrast to the Commonwealth by our continued investment in health and education;
- (d) the ACT Budget delivers high quality municipal services;
- (e) the Commonwealth reduction of an estimated 6,500 jobs in the ACT has a disproportionate impact on the city—with a reduction of at least 2,000 jobs in 2014-2015 alone;
- (f) although the ACT Government represents less than 10 percent of spending in the economy, it does have an impact on economic activity in the region; and
- (g) the ACT Budget continues to grow and diversify the economy; and



- (2) calls on the ACT Government to continue to:
- (a) provide high quality health and education services to the community;
  - (b) support the community sector; and
  - (c) support important infrastructure projects that will transform our city, grow the ACT economy and create jobs at a time that it needs it the most.

Debate ensued.

Mr Rattenbury, by leave, moved the following amendments together:

- (1) Insert new paragraphs (1)(h) and (i):
- “(h) the ACT Budget maintains support for vulnerable groups in our community; and
  - (i) the ACT Budget provides for important measures to protect the environment;”.
- (2) Insert new paragraphs (2)(d) and (e):
- “(d) maintain support for vulnerable groups in our community; and
  - (e) recognise the importance of the protection of the environment in developing the ACT Budget.”.

Debate continued.

Question—That the amendments be agreed to—put.

The Assembly voted—

AYES, 9		NOES, 8	
Mr Barr	Ms Gallagher	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 ACT Budget provides for significant investment in the Canberra community by creating jobs and growing the economy through transformational projects;
  - (b) the impact of the Commonwealth 2014-2015 Budget has put significant pressure on the ACT Budget, including funding to health;
  - (c) notwithstanding this pressure, the ACT Government’s priorities stand in stark contrast to the Commonwealth by our continued investment in health and education;
  - (d) the ACT Budget delivers high quality municipal services;
  - (e) the Commonwealth reduction of an estimated 6,500 jobs in the ACT has a disproportionate impact on the city—with a reduction of at least 2,000 jobs in 2014-2015 alone;

- (f) although the ACT Government represents less than 10 percent of spending in the economy, it does have an impact on economic activity in the region;
  - (g) the ACT Budget continues to grow and diversify the economy;
  - (h) the ACT Budget maintains support for vulnerable groups in our community; and
  - (i) the ACT Budget provides for important measures to protect the environment; and
- (2) calls on the ACT Government to continue to:
- (a) provide high quality health and education services to the community;
  - (b) support the community sector;
  - (c) support important infrastructure projects that will transform our city, grow the ACT economy and create jobs at a time that it needs it the most;
  - (d) maintain support for vulnerable groups in our community; and
  - (e) recognise the importance of the protection of the environment in developing the ACT Budget.”—

be agreed to—put.

The Assembly voted—

AYES, 9

Mr Barr	Ms Gallagher
Ms Berry	Mr Gentleman
Dr Bourke	Ms Porter
Ms Burch	Mr Rattenbury
Mr Corbell	

NOES, 8

Mr Coe	Ms Lawder
Mr Doszpot	Mr Smyth
Mrs Dunne	Mr Wall
Mr Hanson	
Mrs Jones	

And so it was resolved in the affirmative.

### 3 QUESTIONS

Questions without notice were asked.

### 4 EARLY INTERVENTION AND THERAPY SERVICES

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

- (1) notes:
- (a) that the ACT Government will withdraw from providing services that will be met by the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS), including early intervention and therapy services for pre-preschool age children, from the end of the 2014 school year;
  - (b) the level of anxiety amongst parents, carers, teachers, therapists and advocates about what services will be operational by the end of the 2014 school year to replace existing early intervention and therapy services;
  - (c) that the ACT Government has failed to provide adequate assurances to families affected by the changes to early intervention and therapy services;

- (d) that the ACT Government has failed to detail how early intervention services will be provided in 2015 after the Government closes the existing services; and
  - (e) that the ACT Government has received \$12.5 million in Commonwealth funding to develop the market and build capacity among non-government service providers in the lead up to the commencement of the NDIS trial; and
- (2) calls on the:
- (a) ACT Government to continue to provide services through Therapy ACT and DET, including early intervention services for a further 12 months from December 2014, or until adequate replacement services are fully operational, before withdrawing from its role as a service provider; and
  - (b) Minister to report to the Assembly on details of non-government service providers intending to replace existing early intervention and therapy services in the ACT by the end of August 2014.

Ms Burch (Minister for Disability, Children and Young People) moved the following amendment: Omit all words after “That this Assembly”, substitute:

“(1) notes:

- (a) that in order to ensure the widest possible choice of service for people with disability, the ACT Government is transitioning out of service delivery as part of the move to the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS), and that this will include:
  - (i) early intervention services by the end of the 2014 school year;
  - (ii) therapy services by December 2016; and
  - (iii) group homes by June 2017;
- (b) National Disability Insurance Agency offices will open in Canberra on 1 July 2014 and will be responsible for assessment and development of individual plans for those eligible under the NDIS;
- (c) a proposed NDIS transition plan has been negotiated between the ACT Government and Commonwealth officials;
- (d) despite the scheme commencing on 1 July, no formal announcement of a detailed phasing schedule has been possible due to administrative delays at the Commonwealth level;
- (e) these major reforms, meaning significant change to disability services, have generated a level of anxiety among some in the community who will be affected;
- (f) the Government has engaged with, and will continue to engage with parents, carers, teachers, therapists and advocates on the implementation of the scheme and transition arrangements for early intervention, therapy services and other elements of the NDIS;
- (g) the Government’s commitment to ensure that details of non-government service providers intending to replace existing early intervention programs will be made available to the community at the beginning of the Term 4 this year; and

- (h) the Government's commitment that no child currently receiving government early intervention services will be left unprovided for in regards to early intervention services in 2015; and
- (2) calls on the Minister for Disability, Children and Young People to:
  - (a) continue to involve the community in the development of non-government early intervention programs in the ACT in readiness for the beginning of 2015;
  - (b) ensure that Directorates specifically engage with the families affected by the transition to non-government early intervention services in 2015;
  - (c) facilitate families receiving timely information about the early intervention services available by hosting an expo of providers in the first three weeks of Term 4, 2014;
  - (d) report to the Assembly in the first sitting week of Term 4, 2014 with an update of the readiness of early intervention non-government service providers to commence in the 2015 school year; and
  - (e) provide regular reports to the Assembly on the implementation of NDIS disability reform in the ACT.”.

Debate continued.

Question—That the amendment be agreed to—put.

The Assembly voted—

AYES, 8		NOES, 7	
Mr Barr	Ms Gallagher	Mr Coe	Mrs Jones
Dr Bourke	Mr Gentleman	Mr Doszpot	Mr Smyth
Ms Burch	Ms Porter	Mrs Dunne	Mr Wall
Mr Corbell	Mr Rattenbury	Mr Hanson	

And so it was resolved in the affirmative.

Question—That the motion, as amended, viz:

“That this Assembly:

- (1) notes:
  - (a) that in order to ensure the widest possible choice of service for people with disability, the ACT Government is transitioning out of service delivery as part of the move to the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS), and that this will include:
    - (i) early intervention services by the end of the 2014 school year;
    - (ii) therapy services by December 2016; and
    - (iii) group homes by June 2017;
  - (b) National Disability Insurance Agency offices will open in Canberra on 1 July 2014 and will be responsible for assessment and development of individual plans for those eligible under the NDIS;
  - (c) a proposed NDIS transition plan has been negotiated between the ACT Government and Commonwealth officials;

- (d) despite the scheme commencing on 1 July, no formal announcement of a detailed phasing schedule has been possible due to administrative delays at the Commonwealth level;
  - (e) these major reforms, meaning significant change to disability services, have generated a level of anxiety among some in the community who will be affected;
  - (f) the Government has engaged with, and will continue to engage with parents, carers, teachers, therapists and advocates on the implementation of the scheme and transition arrangements for early intervention, therapy services and other elements of the NDIS;
  - (g) the Government's commitment to ensure that details of non-government service providers intending to replace existing early intervention programs will be made available to the community at the beginning of the Term 4 this year; and
  - (h) the Government's commitment that no child currently receiving government early intervention services will be left unprovided for in regards to early intervention services in 2015; and
- (2) calls on the Minister for Disability, Children and Young People to:
- (a) continue to involve the community in the development of non-government early intervention programs in the ACT in readiness for the beginning of 2015;
  - (b) ensure that Directorates specifically engage with the families affected by the transition to non-government early intervention services in 2015;
  - (c) facilitate families receiving timely information about the early intervention services available by hosting an expo of providers in the first three weeks of Term 4, 2014;
  - (d) report to the Assembly in the first sitting week of Term 4, 2014 with an update of the readiness of early intervention non-government service providers to commence in the 2015 school year; and
  - (e) provide regular reports to the Assembly on the implementation of NDIS disability reform in the ACT.”—

be agreed to—put.

The Assembly voted—

AYES, 8		NOES, 7	
Mr Barr	Ms Gallagher	Mr Coe	Mrs Jones
Dr Bourke	Mr Gentleman	Mr Doszpot	Mr Smyth
Ms Burch	Ms Porter	Mrs Dunne	Mr Wall
Mr Corbell	Mr Rattenbury	Mr Hanson	

And so it was resolved in the affirmative.

## 5 PRIVATE SECTOR EMPLOYMENT

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

- (1) notes:
  - (a) in 2001, 60% of employment in the ACT was from the private sector;

- (b) the ACT Government's position over the last five Budgets that the greatest risk to the ACT economy is a Commonwealth Government downturn;
  - (c) the ACT Budget Review 2013-14 report noting the public sector's impact on other sectors due to the lack of diversification in the ACT economy;
  - (d) the ACT Budget Review 2013-14 report noting the ACT economy's lack of diversification and its effect on private sector hiring intentions;
  - (e) the decline in private sector employment in the ACT over the last 13 years;
  - (f) the ACT Government's unfair tax and charges regime, which hinders ACT business growth and investments; and
  - (g) the Treasurer's admission that "The private sector are not exactly stepping up to the plate at the moment..." (ABC 666, 13/2/2014); and
- (2) calls on the Government to lay down a concrete plan to return the percentage of private sector employment to at least 60% in the next five years through private sector growth.

Mr Barr (Minister for Economic Development) moved the following amendment: Omit all words after "That this Assembly", substitute:

"(1) notes the:

- (a) growth in the number of private sector workers in the ACT since 2001;
  - (b) diversification of the ACT economy since 2001;
  - (c) growth in exports in the ACT, which is outstripping the national average;
  - (d) ACT Government's support for businesses in the ACT and the implementation of the Business Development Strategy;
  - (e) Commonwealth's reduction of spending and employment, which will have a significant impact on private sector businesses in the ACT, and reduce employment by 2.9%; and
  - (f) continuing taxation reforms by the ACT Government, which are making taxes fairer, simpler and more efficient; and
- (2) calls on the Government to continue its plan to support the ACT's private sector, to encourage job growth and to diversify the ACT economy."

Debate continued.

Amendment agreed to.

Question—That the motion, as amended, viz:

"That this Assembly:

- (1) notes the:
- (a) growth in the number of private sector workers in the ACT since 2001;
  - (b) diversification of the ACT economy since 2001;
  - (c) growth in exports in the ACT, which is outstripping the national average;
  - (d) ACT Government's support for businesses in the ACT and the implementation of the Business Development Strategy;

- (e) Commonwealth's reduction of spending and employment, which will have a significant impact on private sector businesses in the ACT, and reduce employment by 2.9%; and
  - (f) continuing taxation reforms by the ACT Government, which are making taxes fairer, simpler and more efficient; and
- (2) calls on the Government to continue its plan to support the ACT's private sector, to encourage job growth and to diversify the ACT economy.”—  
be agreed to—put and passed.

## 6 A.C.T. MEDICARE LOCAL

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

- (1) notes that:
  - (a) the ACT Medicare Local is an important organisation in the ACT's health system and across the ACT community service sector; and
  - (b) the ACT Medicare Local plays a key role in driving and delivering many preventative health programs across the ACT and employs 60 local Canberrans;
- (2) expresses its concern at the decision of the Commonwealth Government to cease funding for the ACT Medicare Local from July 2015;
- (3) expresses its support for the work the ACT Medicare Local is doing delivering crucial programs to improve the health of our community, including in childhood obesity, mental health, advanced care plans and homelessness primary health care services; and
- (4) calls on the Speaker to write to the Prime Minister and the Minister for Health on behalf of the ACT Legislative Assembly to express support for the ACT Medicare Local, its board, staff and the continuation of its programs.

Mr Gentleman addressing the Assembly—

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

Ms Burch (Minister for Education and Training) requiring the question to be put forthwith without debate—

Question—put and negatived.

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Mr Gentleman continued.

Mr Hanson (Leader of the Opposition) moved the following amendment: Omit all words after “That this Assembly”, substitute:

- “(1) notes:
- (a) Medicare Locals were set up in 2011 having transitioned from Divisions of General Practice;
  - (b) the recommendations of the review into Medicare Locals, undertaken by former Chief Medical Officer, Professor John Horvath:

- (i) found that Medicare Locals had delivered inconsistent outcomes, dispirited stakeholder engagement, poor network cohesion and reduced sector influence;
  - (ii) recommended that the Government reinforce general practice as the cornerstone of integrated primary health care; and
  - (iii) recommended that the Government establish organisations tasked to integrate the care of patients across the entire health system in order to improve patient outcomes; and
- (c) there has been an important contribution by the ACT Medicare Local and the hard work of its staff;
- (2) recognises the need to efficiently align Primary Health Care across the community; and
- (3) supports the implementation of the Horvath Review through new Primary Health Networks to be established by the Australian Government.”.

Debate continued.

Debate adjourned (Mr Rattenbury) and the resumption of the debate made an order of the day for the next sitting.

## 7 ADJOURNMENT

Ms Gallagher (Chief Minister) moved—That the Assembly do now adjourn.

Debate ensued.

Question—put and passed.

And then the Assembly, at 6.45 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