

MEDIA RELEASE

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For immediate circulation

Country Liberal Government will toughen bail laws to enhance community safety

A Country Liberal Government will send a clear message to repeat offenders by strengthening bail laws to ensure that those that habitually offend face the consequences of their actions. This will include a presumption against bail for a serial offender (two or more convictions within the previous two years) and those that are re-arrested while on bail. Where bail is granted for serial offenders, electronic monitoring will be required with strict conditions.

The Gunner Government's 'soft on crime' attitude means many Territorians don't feel safe in their own homes and a new CLP Government will fight back by making sure that for every offence there is a real consequence, Opposition Leader Lia Finocchiaro said today.

"A Country Liberal Government has a plan to stop the cycle of crime, bail and re-offending through constructive changes to the Territory's bail legislation. The Gunner Government's 'catch and release' policy has only taught criminals they can re-offend without consequences," Mrs Finocchiaro said.

In the first sittings of Parliament following the election, a new Country Liberal Government will introduce amendments to the Bail Act, to:

- Reverse the changes made by the Gunner Government removing breach of bail conditions as an offence and remove the presumption in favour of bail for repeat youth offenders.
- Introduce a presumption against bail for both adult and youth serial offenders, defined as those convicted of two or more offences within the previous two years, in order to send a strong message that repeat offending will be treated more seriously.
- Incorporate a presumption against bail for offenders that are subsequently arrested for a separate offence while released on bail.
- Include a provision that, where bail is granted despite the presumption against bail, any grant of bail must be accompanied by a mandatory electronic monitoring order to ensure that the person is monitored 24/7 in order to discourage re-offending and protect the community.
- Implement a system whereby police are provided with real-time alerts where an offender that is being electronically monitored breaches the conditions of their bail, incorporating geofencing technology ensuring that those subject to control orders on movements (e.g. curfew, and no contact orders) are complying with the conditions of their bail.

Leader of the Opposition
LIA FINOCCHIARO MLA

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“Since 2016, house break-ins are up a third in Palmerston and Alice Springs, up by almost a half in Darwin and Katherine and up a shocking 275 per cent in Tennant Creek. This is crime out of control and a CLP Government will take action to ensure our communities are safe.

“All too often offenders are released on bail just hours after they’re arrested, only to be out on the street the same day to re-offend. Victims of crime shouldn’t have to live in fear that the same person that broke into their home on Friday night will be free on Saturday to return.

“These changes will come in addition to our four point plan to tackle youth crime, which includes, moving Youth Justice from Territory Families back to Corrections, ensuring that if diverted, youth offenders undertake mandatory community service, making sure victims are put first and a community led solution approach to youth crime.

“The Gunner Government has let crime spiral out of control making Territorians unsafe in their own homes. A Country Liberal Government will restore law and order and bring safety and certainty back to local communities,” Mrs Finocchiaro concluded.

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