



COMMONWEALTH OF AUSTRALIA

PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES



HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

BILLS

**Social Security Legislation Amendment
Bill 2011, Stronger Futures in the Northern
Territory Bill 2011, Stronger Futures in
the Northern Territory (Consequential
and Transitional Provisions) Bill 2011**

Second Reading

SPEECH

Monday, 27 February 2012

BY AUTHORITY OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

SPEECH

Date Monday, 27 February 2012
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Questioner
Speaker Macklin, Jenny, MP

Source House
Proof No
Responder
Question No.

Ms MACKLIN (Jagajaga—Minister for Families, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs and Minister for Disability Reform) (17:49): I thank all the contributors to this debate. We are looking at three bills: the Stronger Futures in the Northern Territory Bill 2011, the Stronger Futures in the Northern Territory (Consequential and Transitional Provisions) Bill 2011 and the Social Security Legislation Amendment Bill 2011. The bills together form part of the government's next steps to tackle what are unacceptable levels of disadvantage still being experienced by far too many Aboriginal people in the Northern Territory. We are determined to take these steps with Aboriginal people in the Northern Territory and, of course, with the Northern Territory government.

It is all about making sure that we can build a stronger future for Aboriginal people and with Aboriginal people in the Territory. It is also very clearly about making sure that Aboriginal people can live more independent lives, lives in safer communities without violence and the terrible effects of alcohol abuse, where children are healthy and eat healthy food, where children go to school every day, where parents go to work and where families can live in decent housing.

I think all of us know that the gap is the widest in the Northern Territory. All of the data and all of the research tell us that. That is why this legislation is in front of the House today in the way that it is. We know that if we are to achieve real change for Aboriginal people in the Northern Territory, it is going to take a long period of intensive work and significant investment. The situation does still remain critical. The measures in these bills tackle substantive problems and barriers. Some of the measures are very strong. The measures are designed to be fair. A lot of people have been consulted before decisions which will affect them have been made. It is very clear that if we are to work together in the way that we have outlined in the introduction of these bills, in the debate today and in the way in which we want to work together, none of us can walk away. All of us know that have to continue to work very hard to turn what are very difficult and critical situations around. I will shortly be moving some minor amendments to the Stronger Futures in the Northern Territory Bill to clarify the intention of the bill. These amendments will clarify that part 4 of the new act, relating to food security, has effect notwithstanding one existing Commonwealth law—the Competition and Consumer Act 2010—rather than despite Commonwealth laws generally.

I thank the opposition for their support today and indicate that we will be supporting the amendments that I understand they will be moving.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER (Ms AE Burke): The question is that this bill be now read a second time.

A division having been called and the bells having been rung—

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: As there are fewer than five members on the side for the noes in this division, I declare the question agreed to in accordance with standing order 127. The names of those members who are in the minority will be recorded in the *Votes and Proceedings*.

Question agreed to, Mr Katter, Mr Bandt and Mr Wilkie voting no.

Bill read a second time.

Message from the Governor-General recommending appropriation announced.