

2023

**LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY FOR THE
AUSTRALIAN CAPITAL TERRITORY**

APPROPRIATION BILL 2023-2024

SUPPLEMENTARY EXPLANATORY STATEMENT

**Presented by
Jo Clay MLA
Member for Ginninderra**

Appropriation Bill 2023-2024

This explanatory statement relates to the Appropriation Bill 2023-2024 (the Bill) as presented to the Legislative Assembly. It has been prepared in order to assist the reader of the Bill and to help inform debate. It does not form part of the Bill and has not been endorsed by the Assembly.

The Statement must be read in conjunction with the Bill. It is not, and is not meant to be, a comprehensive description of the Bill. What is said about a provision is not to be taken as an authoritative guide to the meaning of a provision, this being a task for the courts.

Overview of the Bill

For the past decade, the ACT Government has provided funding to the Canberra Racing Club and Canberra Harness Racing Club under a special deal to the horseracing industry via Memoranda of Understanding (MOU). Prior MOUs were not public. The current 2022-2027 MOU is a public document. It provides \$41.44M of public funding to the horseracing industry over a period of five years. At the time of writing, the MOU appeared on the ACT Government's Justice and Community Safety Directorate website: <https://www.justice.act.gov.au/data/assets/file/0019/2071135/Racing-Memorandum-of-Understanding.pdf>.

The ACT Greens opposed this MOU and oppose providing any taxpayer subsidy to the horseracing industry. In order to allow that industry to organise itself and to ensure that the people and animals involved in the industry are properly cared for during the transition, the ACT Greens propose that no further MOUs should be made and propose phasing out funding over the course of this final MOU rather than immediately ceasing it.

The purpose of the Bill is to phase out funding. Public funding to the horseracing industry is inconsistent with community expectations, ACT Government priorities and funding arrangements for other sports and recreational groups.

The MOU estimates that the funding allocation for 2023-2024 would be \$8.085M. During Budget Estimates, the Minister for Special State confirmed that \$8.085M was the amount allocated under the general Justice and Community Safety Directorate budget for 2023-2024.

This Bill proposes to reduce this amount by \$3.234M, which is 40% of the amount provided to the horseracing industry under the MOU.

A similar bill was tabled last year that proposed funding be cut by 20%. That bill was supported by ACT Greens members but voted down by other members.

CLAUSE NOTES

Clause 1

This clause omits the heading and substitutes the title 'appropriations of \$8 108 985 000.'

Clauses 2 - 4

These clauses omit parts of schedule 1 to reduce the appropriation by \$3.23M for 2023-24.