

## MEMBER STATEMENT—KEVIN O'REILLY MLA FRAME LAKE

### COMBATING CLIMATE CHANGE

June 6, 2016

**MR. O'REILLY:** Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. The past six months have brought international and federal provincial territorial developments in the fight against climate change. After almost a decade of inaction, our federal government is finally taking its first steps on climate change. But in our federation, participation and cooperation of provinces and territories is also required.

At the December COP, climate change conference in Paris, our federal government made ambitious commitments for renewed action on climate change. GNWT representatives at COP 21 met with the Nunavut and Yukon delegations to discuss a pan-territorial position on climate change. In March, Ottawa further reinforced its COP 21 commitments in a U.S.-Canada joint statement on climate, energy, and arctic leadership. The Prime Minister met with provincial and territorial leaders including our Premier Bob McLeod in Vancouver in March of this year.

The meeting recognized that a price on carbon is an essential tool in the fight against climate change and that carbon pricing will be "adapted to each province's specific circumstances and in particular the reality of Canada's Indigenous peoples in arctic and subarctic regions." The meeting also resulted in an agreement to set up working groups to study four main areas of climate change: Clean technology, innovation and jobs, carbon pricing, and mitigation. The working groups will report back in October and the findings of those reports will be used to create a Canadian framework for clean growth and climate change.

Our northern territorial Premier still appears to oppose carbon pricing, asserting that its impacts on northern costs of living are unacceptable, even though the federal government has promised \$2.9 billion over five years to help Canada meet its international climate change obligations. I am hoping the work resulting from Vancouver will sway Northern leaders to reconsider carbon pricing. Eighty per cent of Canadians now live under some sort of carbon pricing. Carbon pricing can be made to be revenue neutral and sensitive to the needs of rural and remote communities.

As one of the jurisdictions in Canada most affected by the negative consequences of climate change, we can't sit on the sidelines and wait. The federal government has been clear on the possibility that if an agreement is not reached on carbon pricing a national program can be imposed.

Advocacy for the adoption of a made in the Northwest Territories carbon tax has been underway for some years. I will be urging this government to look again at a carbon price as an indispensable and inevitable tool for decreasing emissions. I will have questions for the Premier as the primary Minister responsible for energy and climate change later today. Thanks, Mr. Speaker.