

## ORAL QUESTION—KEVIN O'REILLY, MLA FRAME LAKE

### QUESTION 173-18(2): CARBON PRICING

June 6, 2016

**MR. O'REILLY:** Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. In March, our Premier took part in the first federal provincial territorial leader submit in almost a decade. It was largely focused on climate change. At that meeting, carbon pricing was a central issue in achieving greenhouse gas reductions. Can the Premier inform us of the position he took at the meeting on the issue of carbon pricing? Mahsi, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Masi. Honourable Premier.

**HON. BOB MCLEOD:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. At the meeting, we raised the concerns that carbon pricing could have a negative impact on the cost of living in the Northwest Territories and other Northern territories, and I did point out to the first minister that it was possible to reduce greenhouse gas emissions without introducing carbon pricing. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. O'REILLY:** It's clear that carbon pricing is an indispensable element of any strategy to reduce carbon emissions and that the federal government could still impose carbon pricing if agreement can't be reached. The closing accord promised that measures could be adapted to the realities or should be adapted to the realities of Canada's indigenous peoples in arctic and subarctic regions, end of quote. Is the Premier prepared to move on achieving a sensible and sensitive carbon pricing regime for the Northwest Territories?

**HON. BOB MCLEOD:** At the Vancouver meetings, the Prime Minister did indicate he was going to work very closely with the 166 communities in the North that are solely dependent on diesel for electrical production. And we're not sure what format that will take. I expect that that will be developed during the meetings of the four federal working groups that have been set up to report in October. Certainly, we are very prepared and we are putting into action an approach to develop a new Northwest Territories climate change strategic framework for consideration by the 18th assembly. And, as part of that process, we're going to go to every community, ask the public if they support carbon pricing, and that will be part of our strategic framework.

**MR. O'REILLY:** And I thank the Premier for his answer. He's, it looks like he's actually read some of my last two questions I've got, or certainly anticipating them very well, so the Premier did mention that there are four working groups. One of them is on, specifically on, carbon pricing. So what role is the Northwest Territories taking on that particular working group, and how will the regular MLAs be consulted?

**HON. BOB MCLEOD:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We are participating in all four of the working groups, and we're very open to working out a process with my colleagues in this house. We have also, for our climate change strategic framework that we will be working on, we will be setting up our own departmental working groups and also will be consulting with aboriginal governments and community governments early in the development process. And, whatever we develop, we expect will be consistent with the commitments that were made at the Quebec summit on climate change and the Ontario Climate Summit of the Americas, as well as, I expect we will be consistent with whatever is developed with the federal government. And I think, if we haven't already written to offer a briefing where we can discuss how members would like to provide for input, we will be doing so in the near future.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Masi. Oral question. Member for Frame Lake.

**MR. O'REILLY:** Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. And I want to thank the Premier for the commitment for briefing to the standing committee on economic development and environment, presumably. The Premier did mention that there's going to be consultations taking place over the summer for Northwest Territories climate change strategy, and I believe there's also a greenhouse gas strategy renewal that's to take place this summer. So how is that work that the Northwest Territories government going to do over the summer, how is that going to feed into federal provincial territorial climate change measures including carbon pricing? Mahsi, Mr. Speaker.

**HON. BOB MCLEOD:** I believe that by participating on the four federal climate change working groups we will have the opportunity to provide for input. We certainly benefit from the interaction with other provinces and territories where we learn what their thoughts on carbon pricing are. Some provinces are looking at not developing an across-the-board carbon pricing mechanism. Maybe that's something that would be suited for the Northwest Territories, where you develop criteria where there's no development, where communities have no business opportunities, perhaps you would not introduce carbon pricing but you could develop it so you could apply, you would have, different criteria. So those are all kinds of things that we'll be looking at, and, certainly, I expect that, recognizing that the Northwest Territories or Northern territories are the most affected by climate change, it's going to be very important to us to do a lot of work in this area.