

KEVIN O'REILLY—MLA FRAME LAKE

Gender Equity on Boards

Committee of the Whole—2016-2017 Operating Budget Review

Dept. of Executive—June 2, 2016

MR. O'REILLY: Thanks, Mr. Chair. I am really glad to hear that there are folks within the Executive that actually track gender on the boards where we make appointments. I guess I am not as happy to hear that only 39 per cent of the people on boards are women. What actions are we taking to try to improve that? Do we actually have any policy on this? Thanks, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Thank you, Mr. O'Reilly. Mr. McLeod.

HON. BOB MCLEOD: Thank you. I guess I would ask the MLAs to submit more women's names. They are the group we go primarily to for recommendations. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Thank you, Mr. McLeod. Anything further, Mr. O'Reilly?

MR. O'REILLY: Thanks, Mr. Chair. Not quite sure what to make of that response. I was hoping for something with a little more teeth perhaps or a little bit more leadership whereby we could actually have a policy in place, much like we have the affirmative action policy for hiring staff, whereby there might be some minimum qualifications set for the duties for the various boards. If people meet the minimum qualifications, and there are not enough women on them, automatically a woman who meets the minimum qualifications gets the appointment. That is the kind of leadership I was expecting to hear. Can I ask the Minister if he is prepared to develop of policy on this to promote appointment of women to boards, so that they can get the experience to get more involved in politics just as our mandate has said that we would do? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Thank you, Mr. O'Reilly. Mr. McLeod.

HON. BOB MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Chair. We certainly could look at it. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Thank you, Mr. McLeod. Any further questions, Mr. O'Reilly?

MR. O'REILLY: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I am glad to hear that the Minister will consider this. Can the Minister commit to a timeframe to get back to us on how this might be done or whether he is prepared to actually implement something? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Thank you, Mr. O'Reilly. Mr. McLeod.

HON. BOB MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Chair. We set up a website to track it. It wasn't our intention to take over the responsibility to increase the number of women. Certainly, if we can't get nominations from the MLAs submitting women, certain we can change the process whereby we will go out and find women to fill these positions. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Thank you, Mr. McLeod. Any further questions, Mr. O'Reilly?

MR. O'REILLY: Mr. Chair, I am just not quite sure what to make of that answer. I don't think it was actually an answer. Is the Minister prepared to come back to the regular MLAs with a policy and when would he be able to do that? Thanks, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Thank you, Mr. O'Reilly. Mr. McLeod.

HON. BOB MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I wouldn't want to take away the responsibility that lies rightfully with the Minister responsible for women. I will work with her to develop something that we can bring back. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr.Blake): Thank you, Mr. McLeod. Any further questions, Mr. O'Reilly?

MR. O'REILLY: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I am just wandering when the Minister might be able to get back to the regular MLAs about this issue.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr.Blake): Thank you, Mr. O'Reilly. Mr. McLeod.

HON. BOB MCLEOD: Early next year. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr.Blake): Thank you, Mr. McLeod. Any further questions, Mr. O'Reilly?

MR. O'REILLY: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I do appreciate the Minister putting up with my persistent line of questioning, but it was important to nail that down. Thank you, Mr. Chair.