

KEVIN O'REILLY—MLA FRAME LAKE

Whistle Blower Legislation

Committee of the Whole—2016-2017 Operating Budget Review

Dept. of Human Resources—June 3, 2016

MR. O'REILLY: Thanks, Mr. Chair. I'm just—I think this is the right section. I'm just wondering if our witnesses can tell us what's happening with safe disclosure legislation, which is also known as whistle-blower protection. Thanks, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Thanks, Mr. O'Reilly. Mr. Minister.

HON. GLEN ABERNETHY: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Mr. Chair, we do have a safe disclosure policy in place that was negotiated with the UNW, and they are part of the review committee on that. When that agreement was put in place, we did indicate that we were going to move forward with some safe disclosure legislation here, in the Northwest Territories. We did not move forward with that in the last government. We were monitoring the effectiveness of the safe disclosure policy that we did put in place, and we had very, very few individuals who actually took up and utilized that policy. It doesn't mean we don't need the legislation, and what we are doing moving forward is we are incorporating the safe disclosure legislation within the new Public Service Act which is being worked on currently in the Department of Human Resources. So it will all be part of one act as opposed to two separate acts.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Mr. O'Reilly.

MR. O'REILLY: Thanks, Mr. Chair. So when can we expect to see the amendments to the Public Service Act come forward? Thanks, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Mr. Minister.

HON. GLEN ABERNETHY: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Mr. Chair, this is a significant piece of legislation requiring a significant amount of work. It will be done in the life of this government. We don't anticipate getting it in front of the House until 2018, which will allow us the time required to get this act into a modern state. In the meantime, with respect to safe disclosure, we do have the safe disclosure policy that was designed in cooperation with UNW for individuals who wish to disclose information or have concerns about things they see within the public service, so 2018.