

KEVIN O'REILLY—MLA FRAME LAKE

Secondary Diamond Industry Support

Committee of the Whole—2016-2017 Operating Budget Review

Dept. of Industry, Tourism and Investment—June 16, 2016

MR. O'REILLY: Mr. Chair, I do have one other question here. It is about the money for the diamond secondary industry. Can the Minister or his staff explain what we are actually getting for the \$617,000 that we spend on that? Thanks, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Thank you, Mr. O'Reilly. The 17 other program costs, that is noted as a request for detail.

We will move on to the upper programs, \$617,000 as requested by Mr. O'Reilly. Mr. Minister.

HON. BOB MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Chair. We do have a diamond division, I guess if I could call it that, that includes three people that work with the diamond industry promoting value added and also promoting the brands of the diamonds in the Northwest Territories. We are involved with marketing, and we also keep track of the trends in the diamond industry. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

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

MR. O'REILLY: Thank you, Mr. Chair. The amount of money in this line is decreasing over time. Is that what we can expect in the future as well? I am just not sure what we are getting out of the secondary industry at this point. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

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

HON. BOB MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Chair. As the Member may or may not know, through our socio-economic agreements, diamond mines could make up to ten per cent of their diamond rough production available for secondary manufacturing. This is a sector that we have been trying to make it a going concern and to make it sustainable. We are still of that view. We believe that, as the production of diamonds increases in the Northwest Territories, that we will continue to do so. We will continue to work to develop the secondary diamond industry so that we can increase the value added to here in the Northwest Territories. Thank you, Mr. Chair.