

KEVIN O'REILLY—MLA FRAME LAKE

Tourism Diversification Program

Committee of the Whole—2016-2017 Operating Budget Review

Industry, Tourism and Investment—June 16, 2016

MR. O'REILLY: Thanks, Mr. Chair. There's a reduction on the tourism diversification program, and I'm wondering if the Minister and his staff can explain that. Thanks, Mr. Chair.

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

HON. BOB MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I didn't understand his question.

CHAIRPERSON: (Mr. McNeely): Could you repeat, Mr. O'Reilly?

MR. O'REILLY: Thanks, Mr. Chair. Yes, under--so we are still looking at 249, contributions. There is tourism diversification program. There's a reduction from 2015-16, and can the Minister or staff explain the reduction. It appears in mains. Thanks, Mr. Chair.

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

HON. BOB MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Chair. This is an area where the department commits to restoring the full budget of the tourism product, diversification and marketing programs for 2016-17. An ongoing fiscal year subject to budget approval of the Legislative Assembly, the department will restore \$250,000 to the program that was proposed as a budget reduction and meet the department's reduction commitments from other program areas of ITI. The funding will be found through and across the board O and M reduction. The activities, the directorate policy legislation, communication and diamond secondary industry office. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

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

MR. O'REILLY: Thanks, Mr. Chair. I don't really understand the process here very well, but are we approving a different amount in the vote, or do the mains get reprinted or what? I'm sorry. I just don't understand because I'm new. Thanks, Mr. Chair.

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

HON. BOB MCLEOD: Thank you. The total amount does not change, but the tourism diversification program will be put back to, made whole, I guess is the best way to put it, and that funding will come from other O and M. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

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

MR. O'REILLY: Thanks, Mr. Chair. I appreciate the commitment by the Minister. I'm just trying to understand, are we still voting on the number that's listed over on page 246? Does that change in some amount, or I just don't understand how this is going to appear. Presumably, the departmental budget overall is not changing, but we're talking about--the Minister talked about some internal reallocations. How does that show up in the mains? Thanks, Mr. Chair.

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

HON. BOB MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Maybe the Finance Minister can answer in more detail, but my understanding is that the total will not change. The Main Estimates have already been printed, so we can't change that. When the budgets are loaded up, it will reflect the fact that this tourism product diversification marketing budget will be made whole, and when the budgets are loaded, the \$250,000 will come from other O and M and be reduced by that amount and added into tourism program. Perhaps through you, Mr. Chair, the Minister of Finance may have further detail to eliminate this issue. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON: (Mr. McNeely): Thank you, Mr. Minister. I will allow the Finance Minister to clarify your question. Mr. O'Reilly. It's 249, if it's the willingness of the Finance Minister to add clarity.

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: Yes, thank you, Mr. Chair. Mr. Chair, the Minister's comment is absolutely correct. The \$250,000 that the Member speaks of, the numbers in here, the overall budget for the department won't change, and the Minister has made a commitment, and I think we made a written commitment to reinstate that \$250,000, and they will find the money, as the Minister explained, in some other areas of the department. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

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

MR. O'REILLY: Thanks, Mr. Chair. Look, I'm not questioning in any way the commitment on the part of the Premier and the Finance Minister to do this, so I'll be quiet about this, but at the end of the day, I still want to sort of understand how, whether we're sort of voting on these amounts or how does it get reprinted or how does it show up at the end of the day.

I don't question the commitment in any way. This has been the subject of some ongoing discussions, and really appreciate the work that the Minister of Finance, the Minister of ITI's undertaken, so I'm just trying to understand how it shows up in a printed version, but I'll go and ask the Minister or staff afterwards rather than tie up the time tonight, but I do appreciate the commitment and the responses, and in no way am I questioning their sincerity or anything on this, just trying to understand operationally how it works, but I can do that offline. Thanks, Mr. Chair.