

KEVIN O'REILLY—MLA FRAME LAKE

Electronics Recycling Program

Committee of the Whole—2016-2017 Operating Budget Review

Dept. of Environment and Natural Resources —June 9, 2016

MR. O'REILLY: Thanks, Mr. Chair. A couple questions here. There's a fairly significant reduction in expenses called other expenses, and I'm just wondering if the department can -- or at least from the revised estimates for 2015-16. So just wondering if someone can explain what happened here? Thanks, Mr. Chair.

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

MS. CRAIG: Thank you, Mr. Chair. During 2015-16 the budget was increased partway through the year because we were implementing the Electronics Recycling Program and that was forecasted to be a one-time activity where we would increase those expenses and then in the 2016-17 budget that is being forecasted, it is back to a "normal operating year." Thank you, Mr. Chair.

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

MR. O'REILLY: Thanks, Mr. Chair. I have one other question. For the Electronics Recycling Program, people pay a fee when they purchase an item, and the fee is basically used to try to pay for the recycling of that item when it's finished. With beverage container, there's a part of the deposit you pay that's a fee to help cover the recycling cost, but there's also a deposit that you get back that's sort of an incentive then for people that bring their beverage containers into a depot and get the refund for it. So a colleague asked me to ask about the potential of having a deposit on electronics, so that when people take a TV back or something then they would get a deposit back. Then there'd be an incentive for people to take computers, mice back to the depot to get the material recycling and get their deposit back. I understand that we want to have our fees comparable to what they are in Alberta, 'cause we don't want to create an incentive for people to go down south to shop, but has the department considered a refundable deposit for electronics as part of that recycling program? Thanks, Mr. Chair.

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

MS. KELLY: Thank you, Mr. Chair. The department has committed to meeting with distributors and other interested parties in a year to review the fee structure for this program and that could be brought forward at that time. That could be considered. Thank you very much.

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

MR. O'REILLY: No. Thanks, Mr. Chair. Other than to say this is a great program. I was involved with it for a decade and really appreciate the work of the Department and the staff on this one, so thanks.