

ORAL QUESTION—KEVIN O'REILLY, MLA FRAME LAKE

QUESTION 401-18(2): SLAVE GEOLOGICAL PROVINCE TRANSPORTATION CORRIDOR

October 27, 2016

MR. O'REILLY: Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. I heard the Minister of Transportation give a statement earlier today about new transportation corridors, and in there he mentions that a route has been identified for the Slave Geological Province. Can the Minister tell us, House, is there actually a business case that's been prepared for this road route? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Minister of Transportation.

HON. WALLY SCHUMANN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The short answer is no, I do not believe there's a business case developed for this quarter yet.

MR. O'REILLY: In his statement, he says that a route has been identified that will provide the greatest economic benefit to the region in the Northwest Territories. So I'm just wondering can the Minister tell us how were environmental effects considered in the route identification.

HON. WALLY SCHUMANN: That would be determined through an environmental assessment and we aren't at that stage yet. The early work to determine a route was through the Geological Survey of Canada and input from the Chamber of Mines and others in the area how we would proceed with this road through different routing.

MR. O'REILLY: Well, it's interesting that we can locate a road based on economic benefits but we can't perhaps change the routing terms of environmental effects, but we have to wait for environmental assessment, so I'm wondering can the Minister then commit to table a map of this route in the House, and on that map could he also show key caribou habitat?

HON. WALLY SCHUMANN: I can table a map on the various routes that were proposed for this. As far as the caribou habitat, that would have to be something that would be considered to the Minister of ENR.

MR. O'REILLY: Glad to hear that we're going to get a map of the route that he mentions in his statement today, but can he then commit to work with his colleague that sits next to him in terms of getting us a map of key caribou habitat, and the reason why I'm saying this, Mr. Speaker, is the Bathurst caribou herd is a desperate situation, and we know where the post-calving, calving grounds of the herd are. I'm concerned about this road and it's routing, whether it's going to disrupt the caribou herd. So can the Minister commit to work with his colleague to table a map in this House that shows the route of the road in relation to key caribou habitat for the Bathurst caribou herd?

HON. WALLY SCHUMANN: The Department of Transportation works with all the key stakeholders on any proposed roading or highway in the Northwest Territories, and I can commit to the Member we will be working closely with ENR in any such a proposal and any other department that this takes into account including Industry, Tourism and Investment.