

ORAL QUESTION—KEVIN O'REILLY, MLA FRAME LAKE

QUESTION 619-18(2): AIR QUALITY REGULATIONS

February 21, 2017

MR. O'REILLY: Merci, monsieur le President. My question is for the Minister of Environment and Natural Resources. Earlier today I spoke about the importance of moving forward with our mandate commitment of developing air quality regulations. Can the Minister tell us how many submissions were received on the engagement materials for air quality regulations that were put out last year? Mahsi, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Minister of Environment and Natural Resources.

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, ENR, we've received 29 formal responses; 10 from the Aboriginal governments and 19 were from stakeholders. We are currently processing the feedback that we heard and, based on feedback received from the parties, we're conducting some additional legislative and legal analysis and technical research on select items in the framework. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. O'REILLY: Thanks to the Minister for that response. Does the department intend to respond to all the concerns and issues that were raised and to do so in a transparent fashion, maybe through a table of responses or some other mechanism, as I recommended in my submission?

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: Yes, we are planning on responding. We are actually distributing a "what we heard" document on the draft *Environmental Protection Act* to the parties with the possibility of bringing a draft bill to this House in the near future, and a second round of consultations will be conducted with all the interested stakeholders on the draft bill during that time.

MR. O'REILLY: Thanks again to the Minister for his response. Does the Minister, though, actually have a timetable for these steps that he's outlined? Can we expect to see a legislative proposal for the bill, this "what we heard" document, in the current session?

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: Yes, there is a new timetable. In order for us to appropriately address the feedback received from the engagement consultation, we have had a bit of a process change and therefore a change in the timeline has been required. We are pursuing components of the regulation framework through the Land and Water Board process. As far as the timeline goes, we have an LP that we're working on and we're looking to have an EPA bill, an *Environmental Protection Act* bill, passed in the fall 2017 Legislative Assembly.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Oral questions. Member for Frame Lake.

MR. O'REILLY: Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. I do appreciate the complete responses from the Minister. I sincerely thank him for that.

I've talked about the importance of sound air quality regulations for the protection of human health and the environment. Given that this is a new regulatory field for our government and one obviously of great public interest, can the Minister commit to bringing forward a draft of the air quality regulations to the Standing Committee on Economic Development and Environment? Mahsi, Mr. Speaker.

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: Mr. Speaker, we'll make an opportunity to have a discussion with committee on the draft regulations. Our intent is to have the regulations come into effect in the spring of 2018, so we'll have some opportunity before then to have some discussions with committee and all interested stakeholders.