

MEMBER STATEMENT—KEVIN O'REILLY MLA FRAME LAKE

NEW BEHCHOKO SPORTS AND RECREATION COMPLEX

February 28, 2017

MR. O'REILLY: Merci, monsieur le President. This past weekend I had the pleasure of playing hockey on the ice surface at the new Ko Gocho Complex in Behchoko. The WIMPs, or Weekly Improvement for Mediocre Players league, was invited to play a game on the new ice surface on Saturday evening with a team of young players from Behchoko. Special thanks to Dolphus Nitsiza and Chris Hunt for organizing the game. The WIMPS have been around since the early 1980s, and I am proud to say that I have been playing with them for 30 years. Yes, after 30 years I can still occasionally push the puck into the net, but more seriously, I say to young people, if you are still playing hockey at my age, that is a success story!

How about that Ko Gocho Complex in Behchoko? MLAs had a tour when we held a meeting in the community in January, but having tested the ice now, I can truly attest to its excellence. The original sports plex closed in 2007. Unfortunately, plans to renovate the building fell through. In 2013, the community voted in favour of borrowing \$9 million for a new complex. With contributions from the Tlicho and federal governments and the diamond mines, construction on the new complex started in August 2014. The \$15 million facility officially opened in November 2016. It is 50,000 square feet and includes a fitness centre, a youth centre, a kitchen, full gymnasium, ice surface, and offices. It employs 20 people. It hosts judo classes, movie nights, cooking lessons, and traditional sewing classes. The community is now positioned to host tournaments and events of territorial significance.

I cannot say enough good things about this facility and, quite frankly, it is the best all-in-one facility in the NWT. Congratulations to the chief and community of Behchoko for this fantastic facility, and I look forward to more opportunities to visit and play hockey.

I am pleased to say that I have no questions for the Minister of Municipal and Community Affairs today, but congratulate the department's efforts on supporting with this tremendous asset for the community of Behchoko and the whole NWT. Masi, Mr. Speaker.