

ORAL QUESTION—KEVIN O'REILLY, MLA FRAME LAKE

QUESTION 693-18(2): TERRITORIAL CARBON PRICING REGIME

March 6, 2017

MR. O'REILLY: Merci, Monsieur le President. My questions are for the Premier as the Chair of the Ministerial Energy and Climate Change Committee of Cabinet. As I said in my statement, I am concerned that we start the needed research and policy work in consultation with Regular MLAs and the public around carbon pricing. Since the carbon pricing system is inevitable, can the Premier say when Members will see a detailed plan for carbon pricing in the Northwest Territories? Mahsi, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Premier.

HON. BOB MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As the Member knows, consultation is being undertaken now on the energy plan and the climate change framework. We are receiving considerable feedback from the public on carbon pricing as part of that process. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. O'REILLY: Thank you to the Premier for that report, to some sort of a plan coming forward on carbon pricing. Last week, I asked whether a modelling report on carbon pricing could be shared with the public and Regular MLAs. The response from the Premier was that it could be shared with committee at some unspecified date. Can the Premier tell me whether he is prepared to table the report in the House during the current session, and if not, why not?

HON. BOB MCLEOD: Considerable work has started on carbon pricing. The Department of Finance is lead on this, and their two main components on the work to date: first, the work of the federal government to better understand the impact of carbon pricing on the cost of living and doing business in the Northwest Territories, with the introduction of carbon pricing. The second is internal work to better understand the impact of carbon pricing on the various sectors within the Northwest Territories. These will help us design an approach to implementing carbon pricing in the Northwest Territories.

MR. O'REILLY: Thank you to the Premier. I think he actually answered this question rather than the last one, so maybe I will just take another try at it here. Last week, in the presentation to the Standing Committee on Economic Development and Environment, the Premier mentioned that there was a modelling report that has been prepared on carbon pricing, and he offered to share that with committee, but he didn't give a date for that. Can the Premier tell me whether he is prepared to table the report in this House during the current session, and if not, why not?

HON. BOB MCLEOD: I believe we have committed to a meeting with the standing committee at the time of the May-June session to update Members on the work that will have been completed by that time and seek their input.

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

MR. O'REILLY: Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. Thank you to the Premier for that response. I just don't know why this report that was commissioned using taxpayers' money can't be shared with the public and committee now, but I will keep going here. The Premier mentioned, in the committee meeting last week, that there is some kind of a working group that has been established. Can the Premier tell the House who is serving on this working group and table a terms of reference before the end of the session? Mahsi, Mr. Speaker.

HON. BOB MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The working group is made up of a number of deputy ministers of various departments in the Government of the Northwest Territories that will be most affected by a carbon tax.