

KEVIN O'REILLY—MLA FRAME LAKE
Budget Cuts and Legislative Development Capacity
Committee of the Whole—2017-2018 Operating Budget Review
Dept. of Industry, Tourism and Investment—February 15, 2017

MR. O'REILLY: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I'm on page 198, Corporate Management. Under Policy Legislation and Communications, I see that last year the department was not able to spend the amount that was put into the main estimates. This year there is a further reduction. I mentioned in my opening remarks how this department has a number of important legislative initiatives that it keeps saying it's going to bring forward. Can the Minister explain to me how these legislative initiatives are going to come forward on time when the department is making reductions? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Thank you, Mr. O'Reilly. Mr. Minister.

HON. WALLY SCHUMANN: Thank you, Mr. Chair. As we have said, we have talked about it in the House a number of times on how we are going to be LPs forward. We believe that we can get the job done within the life of this Legislative Assembly, and we have a number of initiatives that are coming forward as the Member has said in his opening comments, and we will be bringing those forward in a timely manner; and we believe we will be able to do that in the length of this Assembly. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Thank you, Mr. Minister. Mr. O'Reilly.

MR. O'REILLY: Thanks, Mr. Chair. I appreciate the response from the Minister, but I'm just not sure how he can commit to bringing forward legislation while he's cutting the budget for it. I will just leave it at that for that one.

I have a further question under the expenditure category. I see where contract services is once again, last year, not all of the money was spent, and this year, there's a reduction in that. Can the Minister or his staff explain what's going on with the money allocated for contract services? Now, I presume that some of this might be used to help bring forward some of the legislation that's been promised. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Thank you, Mr. O'Reilly. Mr. Minister, the first portion was a comment to the question.

HON. WALLY SCHUMANN: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I will turn that over to the director of finance. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Thank you, Mr. Minister. Director of finance.

MS. MUNCHKIN: Thank you, Mr. Chair. The decrease from 2016-17 to 2017-18 is a result of a reallocation, an internal transfer we did to reinstate the Tourism Product Diversification Budget. Thank you, Mr. Chair...

...**MR. O'REILLY:** Thanks, Mr. Chair. I think that is all the questions I have for corporate management. I just am scrolling through. Once again, I want to go on record in saying that I find it difficult to understand how the department is going to continue with a very

ambitious legislative agenda while it is cutting its policy legislation and communications budget at the same time. We have already seen delays, and I am afraid we are going to see more delays from this department, and I think evidence, the request for qualifications for the Mineral Resources Act, we may not see that until 2018 now.

Once again, I urge the department and the Minister to bring forward this important legislation as timely as he can, recognizing he's got less money to do the work. Thank you, Mr. Chair.