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**Consumer Affairs Office**  
**Committee of the Whole—2017-2018 Operating Budget Review**  
**Dept. of Municipal and Community Affairs—February 28, 2017**

**MR. O'REILLY:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. I am looking at page 326. I'm at the top, program details. Consumer affairs is listed at \$150,000. Last week, I raised in the House concerns around our weak Consumer Protection Act, and I was pleased to hear the Minister say that there was supposed to be some sort of a plain language brochure that goes out soon to help consumers understand what their rights are under the existing legislation.

When was the last time there was any change or increase to the consumer affairs line in the MACA budget? Thanks, Mr. Chair.

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

**HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. At this point, we do not know when the last time an increase was made to the consumer affairs portion of the department. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

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

**MR. O'REILLY:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. I don't know how far back that goes. It looks like we haven't actually even tried to keep pace with the cost of living or Consumer Price Index in terms of bolstering resources for that, so there has been an erosion over time.

Is the Minister committed to looking at the work that we do in consumer affairs with regard to possibly increasing the budget for next year's main estimates? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

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

**ON. CAROLINE COCHRANE:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. When we are developing the next year's budget, we can take a look at the consumer affairs; however, I do have point out that over three years we've had less than two dozen cases that we've had to deal with. So unless our numbers pick up dramatically I can't see that there would be an increase at this point. Thank you, Mr. Chair.