

KEVIN O'REILLY—MLA FRAME LAKE
Staff Cuts Harming Rights Negotiations
Committee of the Whole—2017-2018 Operating Budget Review
Dept. of Finance—March 2, 2017

MR. O'REILLY: Thanks, Mr. Chair. I am just trying to find the page again here. It is page 114. The line item is negotiations. There is going to be a reduction between 2017-18 and 2016-17. Can someone from the department explain why we are reducing the funding for negotiations in light of the commitment and the mandate to try to finish all of these negotiations by the end of the 18th Assembly? Thanks, Mr. Chair.

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

HON. BOB MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Chair. This is the remainder of salary dollars that were aligned with reductions that were made in the previous fiscal year 2015-16. There was about \$97,000 that were reallocated within the department. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

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

MR. O'REILLY: Thanks, Mr. Chair. Just to be clear, was that funding actually reallocated or was it deleted from the budget? I understood from last year that these were deletions that were being made in light of the Cabinet's fiscal strategy. Can we get some clarification on that, please? Thank you.

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

HON. BOB MCLEOD: Thank you. Just to be very specific, Mr. Chair, the decrease is \$117,000. There was \$67,000 for elimination of a chief negotiator position and \$50,000 for reduction of implementation negotiator funding. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

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

MR. O'REILLY: Thanks, Mr. Chair. I appreciate the answer. These funds weren't actually reallocated within the department anyway; these were reductions that were part of the fiscal strategy? Thank you.

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

HON. BOB MCLEOD: That is correct, Mr. Chair.

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

MR. O'REILLY: Thanks, Mr. Chair. Are there any further staffing reductions contemplated with regard to negotiations in the current budget? Thanks, Mr. Chair.

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

HON. BOB MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Chair. There is none indicated in here, but as we go forward, as we settle land claims, my expectation is we would reallocate the GSOs perhaps, but that would be for future governments. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

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

MR. O'REILLY: Thanks, Mr. Chair. That is all I have for now. Just wanted to get it on the record that the fiscal reduction targets are driving funding that we have been allocating for negotiations. Thanks, Mr. Chair.