

MEMBER STATEMENT—KEVIN O'REILLY MLA FRAME LAKE

CARBON PRICING

February 12, 2018

MR. O'REILLY: Merci, Monsieur le President. Regular MLAs and the public have heard almost nothing from our Cabinet colleagues on the issue of carbon pricing since the fall of 2017. On July 26 of last year, the Minister of Finance released a discussion paper and public comment closed on September 15. A public survey was also conducted.

Although the discussion paper shows a heavy antitax bias, the right questions were generally asked in terms of taxes versus cap and trade, revenue use, sectoral distribution, implementation, and reporting. Where are the results of this public engagement? Here we are, five months later, and our government has not released a "What We Heard" report. There has been no policy direction, no legislative proposal, nothing in the budget, and hardly a mention in the NWT Energy Strategy or the Climate Change Strategic Framework. What are we waiting for?

The federal government released proposed legislation for carbon pricing on January 15 of this year. Letters were also sent to all provincial and territorial Premiers setting a March 30, 2018, deadline for choosing the federal backstop or developing their own system to be in place by the end of 2018.

The federal carbon pricing system has two elements:

- A charge on fossil fuels (for example, gasoline, diesel, propane, natural gas), which would be paid by fuel producers or distributors.
- An output-based pricing system for industrial facilities with high levels of emissions.

What will our government do with regard to carbon pricing? Does our government even believe in carbon pricing or climate change? There continues to be rumours of the NWT getting some kind of exemption, which this government has been pushing for all along. Has this government finally accepted our responsibility to address climate change with carbon pricing?

Since we've heard so little from our Cabinet on climate change, I will have questions later today. Mahsi, Mr. Speaker.