

KEVIN O'REILLY—MLA FRAME LAKE
Environmental Studies Research Fund
Committee of the Whole—2017-2018 Operating Budget Review
Dept. of Industry, Tourism and Investment—February 26, 2018

MR. O'REILLY: Thanks, Mr. Chair. I don't think I'm going to need 10 minutes, but I guess some of it is going to depend on the Minister's answers. On Page 230, the environmental studies research fund, are there actually any oil and gas leases out there that pay levies into this fund anymore? Given the total lack of any activity, are there any levies continuing to come in here? Thanks, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you. Minister.

HON. WALLY SCHUMANN: Thank you, Mr. Chair. My understanding is that the levies are still coming in, and the rates are staying at the same as they were last year. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

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

MR. O'REILLY: Thanks, Mr. Chair. I probably should have had a closer look at this myself before I asked the question. On 230, 2018-2019, it shows a revenue of zero or just a line, but the previous two years, either the revised estimates or the actuals, were \$292,000. What is happening in 2018-2019? Have all of those leases been given up or surrendered? Are there any revenues coming in? Thanks, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you. Ms. Mujcin.

MS. MUJCIN: Thank you, Mr. Chair. It is basically a timing situation in regard to when the levies are issued to interest holders and when they are reflected in this particular schedule. They are issued in the first quarter of a calendar year. It's basically just a timing situation. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

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

MR. O'REILLY: Thanks, Mr. Chair. If I wasn't confused before, I certainly am now. The department, then, anticipates \$292,000 coming in, but it's just going to happen at the end of the first quarter of 2018-2019? If so, why wouldn't the figure be put in here? Thanks, Mr. Chair.

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

HON. WALLY SCHUMANN: Thank you, Mr. Chair. As Ms. Mujcin said, it is a timing issue, and we should be able to maybe provide the actual number closer to the end of March, the end of this quarter, what the actual number will be, but we anticipate it is probably going to be less than the \$292,000 you see here because there are less hectares. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

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

MR. O'REILLY: Thanks. Can the Minister then commit to provide that information to committee? I am just curious to know what the levy is, how many leaseholders are out

there, or the other areas that are under lease. I am sure that stuff could be put together in a table. Could that be provided to committee? Thanks, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you. Minister.

HON. WALLY SCHUMANN: Yes, we can do that. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

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

MR. O'REILLY: Thanks, Mr. Chair. I appreciate that commitment from the Minister. I have expressed some concerns in the past about how representative and accountable the board is who administers this fund. It consists of government representatives and industry representatives. I think there is supposed to be one public representative. Is all of that going to be up for reconsideration when the Petroleum Resources Act comes up for review? Thanks, Mr. Chair.

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

HON. WALLY SCHUMANN: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Yes, I believe that will be part of the PRA review. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

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