

MEMBER STATEMENT—KEVIN O'REILLY MLA FRAME LAKE

CLIMATE CHANGE STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK

February 26, 2018

MR. O'REILLY: Merci, Monsieur le President. Since our fall sitting, two important NWT climate change events took place. The draft Climate Change Strategic Framework was finally released on January 3rd of this year, and Regular MLAs met with the Auditor General and GNWT officials to discuss the audit on NWT Climate Change.

The audit found, and I quote:

- ENR did not develop a territorial strategy to adapt to climate change;
- ENR did not fulfill its commitment to provide departments and communities with information needed to take action on climate change;
- The territorial greenhouse gas strategy did not have a significant impact on reducing emission levels; and
- ENR did not address long-standing deficiencies affecting its leadership on climate change.

ENR provided its draft action plan in response to the audit literally a day-and-a-half before the standing committee public hearing on the matter. That is in breach of at least two Consensus Government Process Conventions. The audit action plan went as far as to claim that the Climate Change Strategic Framework addresses all of the audit recommendations. Nothing could be further from the truth. There is also almost no mention of carbon pricing and the role that will play in our international and national obligations on climate change.

Both the framework and the audit action plan neglect to say why ENR continues to fail in its leadership role on climate change or to propose specific policy or structural changes. When the Auditor General did his work, ENR was down to two staff on climate change.

I'm calling on this government to make climate change a real priority. Develop and introduce a climate change act or at least a Cabinet-approved policy that gives ENR the authority to implement the framework. Make climate change a part of Financial Management Board submissions and reviews. Establish a Ministerial round table on climate change to show real leadership and get industry buy-in. Finally, give ENR the resources to actually do the work. I will have questions later today for the Minister of Environment and Natural Resources. Mahsi, Mr. Speaker.