

**ORAL QUESTION—KEVIN O'REILLY, MLA FRAME LAKE**

**QUESTION 209-18(3):  
TARGETS FOR SUMMER STUDENT AND INTERNSHIP EMPLOYMENT  
OPPORTUNITIES**

**MARCH 6, 2018**

**MR. O'REILLY:** Merci, Monsieur le President. Earlier today, the Minister of Finance made a statement about how GNWT is one of Canada's top employers for young people. I am wondering if the Minister can tell us whether our government has set specific targets for summer students for this year, or internships. Are there specific numbers that he can tell us about as targets for employment for internships and summer students? Mahsi, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Masi. Minister of Finance.

**HON. ROBERT MCLEOD:** Yes, thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I believe, in the internships, we do have a specific number, a goal that we try to reach. I will have to try to confirm that number. As far as summer students go, it is a moving number. I mean our goal is always try to get as many as we got during our highest year. Last year, we had 349, so next year we would like to get 350. As long as we can beat it, the number from the year before, then that would be our goal on the summer student side. We have encouraged the departments to try to encourage their officials to try to bring on as many summer students as possible, and we will continue to do that, but I think we are trending in the right direction. The internship number, I think we have a specific target. I will confirm that, then share it with the Member.

**MR. O'REILLY:** I would like to thank the Minister of Finance for that response. Can you tell us whether there are specific appropriations or line items in each of the departmental budgets for summer students or interns?

**HON. ROBERT MCLEOD:** Mr. Speaker, my understanding, as far as the interns go, we do have, and I believe we have an appropriated number for that. Again, I will have to confirm that number. On the summer students, there is no specific appropriation for summer students. It is just part of our department's business, and, again, we do encourage them to try to bring on as many summer students as they can, but, as far as the actual appropriation for summer students, it is not in the budget.

**MR. O'REILLY:** I would like to thank the Minister of Finance again for that. If there is no appropriation or line item in the departmental budgets, do they have to find the money internally and take from various programs or divisions to come up with summer student funding? I would like to ask the Minister: how are the summer student positions funded within each of the departments?

**HON. ROBERT MCLEOD:** A lot of the money that is used to fund summer students is through vacant positions that might be in the department, and the summer students would be on for, well, obviously, the summer. A lot of money for that is funded through vacant positions.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Masi. Oral questions. Member for Frame Lake.

**MR. O'REILLY:** Merci, Monsieur le President. I would like to thank the Minister again for that. I am wondering, though, if we can come up with some kind of incentive for departments to hire summer students. To just wait for vacant positions or see if they can scrape some money from various programs doesn't seem to me to be a very systematic or comprehensive way to fund these positions. Can the Minister commit to looking at perhaps a government-wide policy on summer student funding and setting targets and so on?

**HON. ROBERT MCLEOD:** Mr. Speaker, no, I would rather not set a specific target because that might be limiting us. Again, I will work with the departments to try to get as many summer students on as possible. We don't wait for vacant positions, but, if there is an opportunity, we use the funding for those vacant positions to bring on summer students, and it is kind of progressive employment. We get a lot of these summer students coming back year after year. I will confirm, but I would assume that some of these summer students actually turn out to be interns within the government system. I did commit to sharing some information with the Member on the number of interns. I will get that information put together, and I will share it with the Member. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.