

MEMBER STATEMENT—KEVIN O'REILLY MLA FRAME LAKE

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON CARBON PRICING

May 30, 2018

MR. O'REILLY: Merci, Monsieur le President. The federal deadline for a carbon pricing plan has come and gone, and the public has heard almost nothing from our Cabinet colleagues on an issue commanding priority attention everywhere else. I pointed out this gap in this House on February the 12th. Nothing meaningful has been revealed since then. On July 26th of last year, the Minister of Finance released a discussion paper and public comment on carbon pricing, and that public comment period closed on September the 15th. A public survey was also conducted.

Where are the results of the public engagement? Here we are, eight months later, and our government hasn't even bothered to compile a "what we heard" report. There has been no policy direction, no legislative proposal, nothing in the budget. There is hardly a mention of carbon pricing in the Northwest Territories Energy Strategy or the Climate Change Strategic Framework, which makes no sense at all.

The federal government released its proposed legislation for carbon pricing on January 15th of this year. Letters were also sent to all the provincial and territorial Premiers on December 20th, 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 government backstop in carbon pricing will kick in on January 1, 2019, and we still don't even know whether our government has responded yet.

The federal carbon pricing system has two elements:

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

What will our government do with regard to carbon pricing? Earlier in this sitting, I called on the federal government to reject Cabinet's climate change plan that is masquerading as an infrastructure proposal. Is this government finally committed to accept our responsibility, live up to our national and international obligations, and act on climate change through a carbon pricing system? I will have questions later today for the Minister of Finance. Mahsi, Mr. Speaker.