

MEMBER STATEMENT—KEVIN O'REILLY MLA FRAME LAKE

GIANT MINE REMEDIATION SOCIO-ECONOMIC BENEFITS

May 31, 2018

MR. O'REILLY: Merci, Monsieur le President. Giant Mine Oversight Board is responsible for independent oversight of the mine remediation project. That board recently held its second annual public information meeting in Yellowknife, attended by about a hundred people, including me. The meeting follows on the release of the board's second annual report. Earlier in this sitting I tabled a recent board letter to the Prime Minister of Canada on the need for an apology and compensation for the damage done by the Giant Mine. The board has also written an urgent letter to the federal Indigenous and Northern Affairs Minister and to our ITI Minister, calling for action to capture more of the massive potential benefits of the billion-dollar-plus project.

The board letter to the Ministers points out there is "no public comprehensive socio-economic strategy developed for the remediation project." Of the more than \$350 million in project work spent so far and the more than \$1 billion spending in the coming 10 years, there is little prospect of local people getting jobs, contracts, or training. In its 2017 annual report, the Giant Mine Oversight Board pointed out that the federal government spent \$40.3 million on work at Giant in 2016-2017, but only 23 per cent of the workers were from the Northwest Territories and only 4 per cent were Indigenous. The future does not look much better. Parsons Inc., a US-based multinational, was awarded a \$32 million contract to be construction manager for the work at Giant for the next two years, and will likely go on to be the project manager following the proponent's completion of water licensing.

Urgent action is needed now, Mr. Speaker. The board points out that, with only two years before remediation work begins, "the timeframe for developing the socio-economic strategy is now." The letter calls for vision and leadership from the most senior levels of both governments.

The board has called this government to action. Our government needs to step up the pressure on the federal government to make sure the people who suffer Giant's legacy at least get some benefits from the planned remediation. I will have questions later today for the Minister of Environment and Natural Resources as the lead on Giant Mine for the GNWT. Mahsi, Mr. Speaker.