

KEVIN O'REILLY—MLA FRAME LAKE
Additional Deputy Mining Recorder
Committee of the Whole—2019-20 Operating Budget Review
Dept. of Industry, Tourism and Investment—February 25, 2019

MR. O'REILLY: I think this is the part of the budget where, as I understand it, the department is looking at hiring a deputy, an additional deputy mining recorder. Is that correct? Thanks, Mr. Chair.

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

HON. WALLY SCHUMANN: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Yes, it is.

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

MR. O'REILLY: Thanks, Mr. Chair. In the department's business plan which is found on the Department of Finance's website, there's an interesting figure there. It's 12, that shows the number of claims that are in good standing, number of leases in good standing, number of prospecting permits, and virtually all of those have declined from 2014-2015 to 2017-2018. There is this declining trend of either claims being kept in good standing, leases in good standing, number of prospecting permits. Why do we need another deputy mining recorder if all of these trends are in decline? Thanks, Mr. Chair.

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

HON. WALLY SCHUMANN: Thank you, Mr. Chair. If you look at the new mineral claims that have taken place in the Northwest Territories since 2015-2016 in particular and forward, the growth has been 165 percent, 175 percent, so, as a result of this increase in mineral activity registration transaction plan inquiries, there is a need to ensure that industry clients receive timely approvals of their claims, work-report filings, related transactions, necessary device, and support for their regulatory requirements related to mineral tender and management that is administered by the mining recorder's office are met. The position is intended to provide appropriate support to the mining industry clients. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

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

MR. O'REILLY: Thanks, Mr. Chair. The Minister referred to a 165-percent increase in work. That is not what I am seeing on figure 12 in the business plan. As I said, in fact, it is a declining amount of claims that are in good standing, number of leases in good standing, number of prospecting permits in good standing. Everything is declining, so what figure is the Minister referring to? Thanks, Mr. Chair.

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

HON. WALLY SCHUMANN: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I will have to have a discussion with the Member, I guess maybe when we are done business plans, but my numbers clearly show there has been an increase in activity of mineral claims, as I said, 165 percent, 175 percent. Registered document filings are up by 695 percent. There are some

serious increased activity within this department. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

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

MR. O'REILLY: Thanks, Mr. Chair. Yes, well, whatever the figures the Minister has certainly don't square with what is in the business plan where, you know, the number of claims in good standing declined in 2014-2015: 2,256 down to 1,123 in 2017-2018. That is less than half. The number of leases hasn't declined quite that rapidly, but I just don't see an increase in workload here. I don't know what figures the Minister has that I can't see. That is not what I am seeing here, so, if the Minister could commit to share that information with me, that would be great.

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

HON. WALLY SCHUMANN: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Absolutely, we will share that with the Member. Thank you, Mr. Chair.