

MEMBER STATEMENT—KEVIN O'REILLY MLA FRAME LAKE

MINISTERIAL APPOINTMENTS

February 25, 2019

MR. O'REILLY: Merci, Monsieur le President. Last week, concerns were raised in this House, and have been raised in the media and by the general public, regarding the process used to appoint the workers' advisor. The authority of the Minister responsible for the Workers' Safety and Compensation Commission to make such an appointment is not in doubt. What is in question is the process used and the judgment exercised in making that appointment. The previous appointment was made following a public call for expressions of interest. The previous individual who served in that office has said publicly that he provided three months' notice that he did not wish to continue.

I have searched high and low for any Cabinet or ministerial policy regarding appointments. The closest I could find was an August 3, 2017 Boards' Policy signed by the Premier as chair of the Executive Council. That policy sets out a number of principles to "encourage and support good governance." The fourth principle states "the process for appointments to GNWT boards should be timely, consistent and transparent."

The Premier is accountable to the Executive Council for the implementation of this policy. Further guidance on appointments to boards include the following direction to "ensure that gender equity and local expertise in relation to mandate are considered when persons are appointed, nominated, or confirmed." Lastly, the board policy states that the Cabinet may: "establish appointment guidelines and procedures for the selection and appointment of board members."

In some cases, opportunities for board appointments or nominations are even made known to regular MLAs. I am also of the view that the Premier must exercise some oversight on ministerial appointments, including those to boards and other appointments authorized by statutes. It is now time for Cabinet to develop a policy for ministerial appointments given the public concerns raised by the recent appointment of the Workers' Advisor. I will have questions later today for the Premier. Mahsi, Mr. Speaker.