

KEVIN O'REILLY—MLA FRAME LAKE
Lands, Resources and Self-Government Agreements Negotiations Budgets
Committee of the Whole—2019-2020 Operating Budget Review
Dept. of Executive and Indigenous Affairs—February 28, 2019

MR. O'REILLY: Thanks, Mr. Chair. The Minister, in his opening remarks, talked about how there was a \$250,000 increase for finalizing and implementing lands, resources, and self-government agreements. Is that the line item that is found on page 124? There seems to be a \$250,000 increase just for implementation. Is that what the Minister's opening remarks refer to? Thanks.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you. Premier.

HON. BOB MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Chair. The \$250,000 that was in my opening remarks, I was referring to contracted facilitators. One of the actions that I took in partnership with the federal Minister of CIRNA, where we hired two ministerial special representatives, one of the recommendations was that the government should take much more of a leadership role in facilitating discussions on self-government implementation. That is what this money is for, so that we can try to help facilitate these discussions to advance the finalization of self-government agreements. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you. Mr. O'Reilly.

MR. O'REILLY: Thanks, Mr. Chair. That is helpful in understanding what the \$250,000 is for. Can someone tell me where it is found on page 124? There are obviously some changes from the 2018-2019 revised estimates to what is prepared for 2019-2020. Can someone tell me where the \$250,000 is found in those items? Thanks, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you. Mr. Aumond.

MR. AUMOND: Thank you, Mr. Chair. That increase can be found under contract services. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you. Mr. O'Reilly.

MR. O'REILLY: Thanks, Mr. Chair. That is very helpful. That is the expenditure category. Where is it found in the program detail? It looks like there is a large-ish increase in implementation. Is that the function in which this increase is found? Thanks, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you. Mr. Aumond.

MR. AUMOND: Thank you, Mr. Chair. That is correct.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you. Mr. O'Reilly.

MR. O'REILLY: Thanks, Mr. Chair. I am just wondering: what is the prospect of us actually reaching any final agreements with any of the outstanding negotiations between now and the end of the 18th Assembly? Thanks, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you. Premier.

HON. BOB MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Chair. On the larger ones, my assessment is that, probably, the one that we are making the most progress on is the Akaitcho. The NWT Metis Nation have put their negotiations on hold for the next couple of months until the new fiscal year. The Dehcho have determined that, instead of focusing on the land and resource development side, they are going to focus on self-government. Acho Dene Koe have a new negotiating team and advisors, and they are revisiting their negotiated-since mandates.

I think that we still can expect a lot of success in self-government agreements. Up and down the valley, the Sahtu community self-government negotiations are going well. The Gwich'in are back to the table with Nihtat Gwich'in and the GTC of Fort McPherson, Tsiigehtchic, and Aklavik, and I think that we will continue to make progress in those areas. To the south, the Dehcho First Nations are looking at treaty land, I believe. So that's sort of a cross section of where we're at with all these different tables. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you. Mr. O'Reilly.

MR. O'REILLY: Thanks, Mr. Chair. So just to be clear, between the beginning of this Assembly and right now, the only agreements, agreements-in-principle, that have actually been reached are for the Norman Wells self-government. Is that correct? Thanks, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you. Premier.

HON. BOB MCLEOD: No. We settled a Deline final agreement, as well.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you. Mr. O'Reilly.

MR. O'REILLY: Thanks, and thanks for that reminder. I had forgotten about Deline. I guess I'll just express some concern. I'm not sure how much progress we're going to get between now and the end of the 18th Assembly. I think the mandate commitment was that we were going to complete all the negotiations, so I'm not sure we're going to be in a position to do that, and I'm concerned about it. Thanks, Mr. Chair.