

**MEMBER STATEMENT—KEVIN O'REILLY MLA FRAME LAKE**  
**YELLOWKNIFE PUBLIC HEARING BY THE SPECIAL COMMITTEE ON**  
**INCREASING WOMEN'S REPRESENTATION**

**March 8, 2019**

**MR. O'REILLY:** Merci, Monsieur le President. On the occasion of International Women's Day, I would like to speak about what we are doing to promote women in leadership. I attended the lively public hearing in Yellowknife on January 17<sup>th</sup> by the Special Committee on Increasing the Representation of Women. There were about 30 participants, including media, and I would like to commend everyone for the respectful dialogue and the ideas that were put forward.

There were three main themes presented. One idea was to run elections for a woman and a man in each riding in the NWT to ensure that half of the MLAs are women. This is an interesting idea, but would probably not work, because not everyone identifies as binary.

Several presenters said that guaranteed representation of women through temporary seats raises issues of tokenism, may not address the root causes, and may lead others to request guaranteed representation.

Last and not least, some participants endorsed the idea of temporary special measures, where guaranteed seats is the only way to create the revolutionary change that is needed to ensure that women take their rightful place in decision-making here in the Northwest Territories.

There was also some discussion of how we can make the Legislative Assembly a friendlier place for those with young families.

This special committee has its work cut out for itself, and I thank all of the Members who have volunteered to serve on it during this last busy stretch of this Assembly. I participated in some of their meetings and truly appreciate the work being undertaken by the Members who have volunteered to serve.

The special committee is still accepting written submissions. I look forward to their report and encourage further input from Frame Lake residents and everyone in the Northwest Territories. Mahsi, Mr. Speaker.