

## **Status of Women Council Questionnaire**

### **Responses by Kevin O'Reilly, Candidate for MLA Frame Lake**

1. Will you commit to identifying a Family Violence Strategy and Action Plan, to be developed by the Government of the Northwest Territories in collaboration with relevant partners and stakeholders, as a Priority of the 19th Legislative Assembly?

Yes and I had worked towards and supported this action by the 18<sup>th</sup> Assembly. Family Violence is largely targeted at women and girls and causes trauma, injury and fear. It contributes to mental and physical health impairment and causes impaired brain development for preschool children who witness such events. It prevents them from participating fully in community life.

The strategy and action plan must consider the evolution of this problem in the context of the history of colonization and the multi-generational impact of residential schools. It should focus on safety and dignity of victims but also healing and reconciliation. Men must play an active part. We should also consider the lessons learned and best practices from other jurisdictions.

2. Will you work to ensure the territorial government implements this Call for Justice in the NWT during the first year of the 19th Legislative Assembly?

Yes. I took the results of the 2018 Auditor General's Report on the Child & Family Services in the NWT quite seriously and asked several questions of the former Minister. I have consistently supported the recommendations of MMIWG and the Truth and Reconciliation Commission. These studies investigated how we deal with Indigenous children in detail and came up with sound recommendations such as a Child and Youth Advocate in each jurisdiction, which I fully support.

3. As a Member of the 19th Legislative Assembly, please identify three (3) concrete actions you will take to advance the equality of women and girls in the Northwest Territories?

1. I will support measures to increase the percentage of women representatives in the Legislative Assembly, in Cabinet, and other leadership opportunities.
2. I will support measures that help create universal, affordable and high-quality childcare throughout the NWT. This has been estimated to cost only \$20-25 million per year but the returns will be significant for parents, especially women who will be empowered to enter the workforce.
3. I will support fair bargaining and settlement of collective agreements as this is another way to ensure that the wage gap between men and women is made

obsolete and eradicated. Iceland has achieved the elimination of the wage gap and has shown this is possible.