

## **Additional Questions from Northern News Services**

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

1. What is your position on the carbon tax and would you repeal it if the Liberal government is defeated in the federal election? How should the NWT play a part in combating climate change?

I opposed the Cabinet's carbon tax because all the authority and discretion over rebates, grants and reporting lie with the Finance Minister. We could have had a system like the Yukon where municipal and Indigenous government rebates and revenue sharing are spelled out in legislation. I am in favour of reviewing the NWT carbon tax to ensure higher rebates for low income households and remote communities, and revenue-sharing with other governments for reinvestment into renewable energy.

A Climate Crisis Act should set up the authority, partnerships, reporting and investment into renewable energy to address the climate crisis. The Auditor General of Canada said GNWT's climate change efforts have failed. We need a lead department that has the authority to work with others inside and outside government. All GNWT spending should consider climate change impacts and there should be strong public reporting. The NWT Power Corp should focus on building energy self-sufficiency, not grids and big projects. We need to invest more in renewable energy to get communities off diesel. This will reduce power bills for everyone.

Working closely with the federal and community governments, plans and programs must be developed to help adapt to the inevitable disruption that is coming.

2. How do you as an MLA intend to improve the economy?

Mining has its place if it is done at a scale and pace that maximizes benefit retention and the environment is protected. The real barriers are in commodity prices and financing, over which we have little control. Completing land rights negotiations will create greater certainty and opportunities for residents. Promoting the NWT as a great place to live, work and do business will also help.

Big infrastructure projects are being promoted but we need to consider what we would get if we invested in other areas. Investment in more housing and renewable energy will create jobs in all communities, lower the cost of living, and reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

A NWT Polytechnic University will bring transformative change towards a Knowledge Economy. It should have a Yellowknife campus as part of network

that includes community learning centres. Investment in early childhood development, childcare and the entire education system will create jobs and benefits down the road with a stronger workforce.

Tourism is booming but we need a proper visitor centre in Yellowknife that promotes opportunities for local businesses to benefit. Arts and culture continue to boom and investments in this sector will create more jobs.

3. Would you support an Indigenous-based addictions treatment centre in the Northwest Territories?

The Standing Committee on Social Development visited several centres in the south and determined that we could not maintain such a facility here because of our small population base and diverse needs. We have also seen the closure of at least two treatment centres in the past. The Committee also made recommendations around better communications of the services available and the need for follow-up and aftercare programs. We can revisit this issue in the next Assembly but we will still need regional and community-based programs and services.

Early treatment is only part of the journey in recovery from addictions. We should definitely improve our prevention, aftercare and community re-integration programs. On the land programs such as the Yellowknife healing camp run by the Arctic Indigenous Wellness Foundation is a good example. In its first year, it had over 2000 visitors. Access to counselling and community support groups are an important part of this. So is assistance in returning to work or taking training to develop skills to be able to work. Housing First plays a key role as not having a home is a major stressor for any people, let alone someone who is dealing with an addiction.

Kevin O'Reilly

Candidate for Frame Lake MLA

Campaign Office: Unit 190, Upper Level, Centre Square Mall, Yellowknife

Phone: 867-920-2929 Campaign Office 867-444-2929 Cell

E-mail: [kevin@kevinoreilly@framelake.ca](mailto:kevin@kevinoreilly@framelake.ca)

Website: <https://kevinoreillyframelake.ca/>

Twitter: <https://twitter.com/kevinframelake>

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/KevinOReillyforMLAFrameLake/>

Instagram: <https://www.instagram.com/kevinformlaframelake/>