

## **MEMBER STATEMENT—KEVIN O'REILLY MLA FRAME LAKE**

### **AVAILABILITY OF PROPERTY INSURANCE**

**February 5, 2021**

**MR. O'REILLY:** Merci, Monsieur le President. Home insurance is proving to be a growing barrier to home ownership in the NWT, and we heard the Minister of housing actually say that literally minutes ago in this House. I've had constituents contact me about their inability to obtain home insurance. This past holiday season, we had our own home insurance cancelled by Aviva Canada after five claim-free years simply because we put in a wood-pellet boiler system five years ago. The cancellation happened outside of the regular renewal period. Luckily, our broker was able to find only one other insurer willing to take us on at a 40-percent increase in premiums. As bad as it may be in Yellowknife, I can't imagine how difficult it must be for homeowners in small communities to obtain insurance. I also met with Yellowknife Catholic Schools last week, who raised the same issue of the difficulties in finding an insurer for its schools and of rapidly escalating premiums that have increased almost 600 percent over two years.

I've raised this issue before, about accessibility and affordability of home and now non-profit-sector asset insurance in the NWT. Previously, I've mentioned the Saskatchewan Government Insurance, a Crown corporation established in 1944, that offers products in five Canadian provinces. It also operates as SGI Canada in Saskatchewan, British Columbia, Alberta, Manitoba, and Ontario. It has operated in Manitoba since 1993, in Ontario from 2001, in Alberta since 2006, and in BC beginning in 2015. It offers home, farm, business, and even auto insurance.

I have asked this government to approach SGI about possible expansion of their services to the NWT, to ensure our residents, non-profits, and businesses have access to insurance as there is a failure of the private market to cover our jurisdiction. I will have questions later today to see if Cabinet is serious about ensuring our residents have access to affordable insurance. Mahsi, Mr. Speaker.