

KEVIN O'REILLY—MLA FRAME LAKE
Costs of COVID Isolation for Mine Employees
Committee of the Whole—2021-2022 Operating Budget Review
Dept. of Health and Social Services—February 25, 2021

MR. O'REILLY: Thanks, Mr. Chair. Yes. My colleague from Yellowknife North asked a number of questions I wanted to pursue. I know that Gahcho Kue mine is closed temporarily, and over 100 workers are in the isolation centre here in Yellowknife. Who is paying for those workers while they self-isolate here in Yellowknife? Thanks, Mr. Chair.

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

HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Actually, I am really glad to answer this question. Not only is the mine paying for it, but as stated earlier in the House -- I believe it was someone, Ms. Nokleby, who stated that the mines are good corporate citizens. Gahcho Kue mine has actually been extraordinary. When they had the outbreak, they went down into kind of a lower, almost a care and maintenance with them. They evacuated people. They covered all the costs, Mr. Chair. Not only are they covering the costs of the isolation centres, they also have had their own security at the isolation centres to watch the people that they are isolating, which, in fact, actually helps us because they are using the same facilities. It doubles the security. Of course, they are looking at their own, but they are covering 100 percent of the costs. I cannot be grateful enough. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Rocky Simpson): Thank you, Premier. Member.

MR. O'REILLY: Thanks, Mr. Chair. That is good to hear, that the mine is covering their own costs. Do we cover the costs and then bill them, or are they paying directly? How does that actually work on the ground? Thanks, Mr. Chair.

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

HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE: Thank you, Mr. Chair. My understanding is that they are paying it directly. Thank you, Mr. Chair.