

MEMBER STATEMENT—KEVIN O'REILLY MLA FRAME LAKE

LEGISLATIVE LETHARGY

March 1, 2021

MR. O'REILLY: Merci, Monsieur le President. We are now about a third of the way through our term. I am increasingly concerned with lack of substantive legislation from Cabinet. To date, there have been a total of 24 bills, almost half of which were appropriations. This is not quite as bad as the last Cabinet as they had only introduced a total of six non-appropriation bills at this point. The bills from this Cabinet, outside of appropriations, deal with pithy matters, including:

- a monumental effort, with some of the most convoluted wording I have ever seen, to change the Public Highway Act to absolve GNWT of liability for winter roads connecting off our roads;
- the much-vaunted Temporary Variation of Statutory Time Periods (Covid-19 Pandemic Measures) Act that has been used once;
- probably my favourite, the Miscellaneous Statute Law Amendment Act;
- housekeeping changes to the Securities Act; Apprenticeship, Trade and Occupation Certification Act; Legal Professions Act; and the Corrections Act;
- changes to the Interpretation Act that would have allowed Cabinet total discretion to change time zones and other time changes, which would not get my vote as something of importance to deal with during the pandemic;
- bills also from the Clerk's office to allow for remote sittings and to standardize more of the terms of contracts for the Assembly's independent officers. I think that is good legislation.

My point here, Mr. Speaker, is that we have yet to get anything substantive from Cabinet. We are supposed to be a Legislative Assembly, not a debating club. This less-than-ambitious legislative agenda has not put our committees to work nor delivered on the promises in the mandate nor the needs of our citizens. I am concerned that, like the last Assembly, we will have an avalanche of bills in the last few months of our term, which doesn't allow for good public input or careful consideration of improvements. I will have questions for the Premier on Cabinet's legislative inertia and lethargy later today. Mahsi, Mr. Speaker.