

Update on Energy Initiatives

The Government of the Northwest Territories committed in our mandate to advance a number of renewable and alternative energy solutions to reduce our reliance on fossil fuels and lower the cost of living. One of those commitments included implementing a new NWT Energy Strategy which we achieved in April 2018 when we tabled the 2030 Energy Strategy: A Path to More Affordable, Secure and Sustainable Energy in the Northwest Territories. This strategy defines our long-term vision and approach for transitioning to a lower carbon economy.

Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to provide Members with an update today on the progress we have made, as we mark our first year of implementing the Energy Strategy, and to share with you what we have planned.

In 2018-2019, the Government of the Northwest Territories and its partners invested over 21 million dollars in energy actions and initiatives, an unprecedented investment in energy in the Northwest Territories. We were also successful in obtaining federal funding for a large number of energy initiatives.

For example, under the Low Carbon Economy Leadership Fund, the Government of the Northwest Territories secured 31.2 million dollars over four years, for programs such as the Green House Gas Grant Program for Buildings and Industry, the Green House Gas Grant Program for Governments, and additional funding to support the Arctic Energy Alliance.

Under the Investing in Canada Infrastructure Program, we secured 30 million dollars for the Inuvik Wind Project, 15 million dollars for a new generator in Sachs Harbour, and 10.7 million dollars for upgrades to the Snare Forks hydropower generator.

In January, our government announced with the federal government a commitment for approximately 1.6 million dollars to advance the Taltson Hydro Expansion Project, including for engagement with our Indigenous government partners. We were also pleased with a commitment for an additional 18 million dollars in the most recent federal budget, and look forward to advancing the next steps of this transformative project.

Mr. Speaker, during the upcoming year the GNWT plans to invest up to 64 million dollars to continue to implement the 2030 Energy Strategy. This includes 2.74 million dollars in core funding to the Arctic Energy Alliance and an additional 2.84 million dollars to roll out enhanced programs and services for the Arctic Energy Alliance to better meet the needs of the public.

Already this fiscal year, the GNWT has launched programs under the Low Carbon Economy Leadership Fund, including the eight million dollar Green House Gas Grant Program for Buildings and Industry, and 2.4 million dollars to continue supporting the Green House Gas Program for Governments.

Our government is committed to continuing to address the cost of living and reduce greenhouse gas emissions in the Northwest Territories. We will be investing up to 18 million dollars in the Inuvik Wind Project, as well as 7.4 million dollars to begin the Sachs Harbour wind-diesel project. We will also spend up to a million dollars to engage communities, invest in engineering design and set the stage to connect Whatì, Fort Providence and Kakisa to renewable hydropower within the next few years.

We are also leading by example. This year, we have allocated 4.2 million dollars to complete efficiency overhauls on two of our own vessels – the MV Lafferty ferry near Fort Simpson and the Jock McNiven tug operated by Marine Transportation Services, in order to reduce the amount of fuel needed for operations. We are also introducing an electric vehicle rebate program through the Arctic Energy Alliance, so the public can help do its part in reducing greenhouse gas emissions.

The Department of Infrastructure will also partner with the Northwest Territories Housing Corporation to invest up to 2.9 million dollars to construct a biomass district heating system at Sissons Court in Yellowknife. This initiative will help lower the cost of heating 45 public housing units, and will offer significant greenhouse gas reductions.

Mr. Speaker, the 2030 Energy Strategy was developed to help address the cost of living in the Northwest Territories, by investing in programs and services that support energy efficiency and conservation, and deployment of alternative and renewable energy. These investments also benefit our territory by reducing our reliance on fossil fuels, and help us to meet national greenhouse gas emission reduction commitments under the Paris Agreement and the Pan-Canadian Framework on Clean Growth and Climate Change.

The increased support of our government and from federal partners in energy solutions have contributed to the Government of the Northwest Territories' goal to stabilize or decrease energy costs for communities, businesses and industry across the Northwest Territories.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.