



OCT 30 2017

MS. JULIE GREEN
MLA, YELLOWKNIFE CENTRE

Oral Questions 41-18(3) and 47-18(3): Legislative Progress

This letter is in follow-up to the Oral Questions you raised to the Premier on October 20, 2017 regarding legislative progress. I am responding to your questions as Government House Leader and the member of the Executive Council responsible for the government's legislative agenda.

With respect to the issue of drafting capacity to produce the legislation that has been identified for introduction in the 18th Legislative Assembly, I can confirm that capacity is not now, nor has it been a barrier to producing legislation in this government. The Department of Justice, Legislation Division has also confirmed that should drafting resources become overextended during the remaining two years of this government, additional drafting resources would be obtained to meet the government's needs.

The latest quarterly update of the legislative agenda was distributed to Members on October 17, 2017. Leading up to the Christmas holiday, we will again be reviewing proposed legislative initiatives and timeframes with departments in order to prepare the first quarterly update of the legislative agenda early in 2018. I will be pleased to share that update with Members at that time. I will also be pleased to speak to the government's legislative plans for the February-March 2018 sitting of the Legislative Assembly at Caucus on February 7, 2018.

As the Premier noted in response to your questions on October 20, 2017, the 18th Legislative Assembly did have a slow start in its first year due to a number of factors such as the late election and the significant resources required to establish our Mandate and its reporting mechanisms.

At present we have passed 36 pieces of legislation and 16 additional legislative initiatives are in the system.

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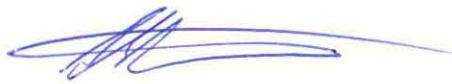
This Legislative Assembly has identified some very large legislative initiatives that are in progress. Many of those, including the 14 initiatives identified in the Mandate, require significant policy development and preliminary public consultation and engagement. Much of this work is currently underway, but it takes time.

To give you some context as to the time requirements for the development and passage of bills, data from the 14th to 17th Assemblies shows that it takes on average six months for a small bill to move from a legislative proposal to Assent in the Chamber up to an average of three years for very large bills.

This data does not include the significant amount of time and resources required for policy development, preparation of legislative proposals and preliminary consultation or engagement. It is important not to rush this early development stage. It ensures that quality legislation is brought before the Legislative Assembly for consideration and debate, and this is in the best interests of the people of the Northwest Territories.

We will continue to monitor and drive our legislative agenda and I will be happy to provide you and all Members an update once our next review is complete. In the meantime I am happy to speak to you or Caucus as a whole on our legislative agenda at any time.

I trust that this response addresses your questions regarding progress on our legislative agenda. Please note that similar questions regarding the legislative agenda were received by the Standing Committee on Priorities and Planning on October 27, 2017, and you will be copied on that response.



Glen Abernethy
Government House Leader

c. Honourable Robert R. McLeod
Premier

Mr. Tim Mercer
Clerk of the Legislative Assembly

Mr. David Hastings
Legislative Coordinator