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Plain Language Summary for
Bill 58: An Act to Amend the Legislative Assembly and Executive Council Act

The Member for Hay River South is sponsoring a bill that amends the *Legislative Assembly and Executive Council Act.* This law is usually changed in the last year of each Assembly to update MLA pay and benefits, and the names and borders of the NWT's election ridings. These changes were suggested by committees of residents from outside the Legislative Assembly. This bill also makes changes to how complaints against MLAs are handled and who sits on the Assembly's Board of Management. It also makes it clear who the employees of the Legislative Assembly work for.

If approved, the changes to how complaints against MLAs are handled will start right away. The other changes will start at the beginning of the next Legislative Assembly. MLA pay is cut by $4,000 a year. Members can earn this $4,000 back by serving as the premier, speaker or a minister, or by serving on one or more committees. Regular Members who choose not to sit on any committees will be paid $4,000 less each year. The Transition Allowance that Members get when they leave office is not changed. These changes will start after the next election
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The name of the Deh Cho riding is changed to Dehcho for the next election.

Right now, when a complaint about an MLA is made, the Assembly's Integrity Commissioner can either dismiss it or send it to a public inquiry. Because a public inquiry can be expensive and take a lot of time, the bill gives the Integrity Commissioner two new options. The Integrity Commissioner can try to resolve the complaint through mediation, or decide that the Member has done something wrong and suggest a punishment to the Assembly without the need for a public inquiry. Finally, the Integrity Commissioner will be able to fine a Member who does not fill out their conflict-of-interest paperwork on time each year. These changes will start as soon as the bill is passed.

The Minister of Finance will automatically be one of the two Ministers who serve on the Assembly's Board of Management. If the Speaker can't make a meeting, the Deputy Speaker will no longer be called on to chair the meeting. Instead, the Board will pick one if it's Members who is at the meeting to chair it.

The bill makes it clear that the employees of the Legislative Assembly work for the Speaker, not the Premier or Minister of Finance. This is to make sure Legislative Assembly employees can help MLAs and committees do their jobs, which includes monitoring and sometimes criticizing the work of cabinet and ministers.
Finally, the bill replaces some old-fashioned words and phrases with new ones that are easier to understand, without changing what they mean. In other words, they are "housekeeping" changes.

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