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Yellowknife Centre MLA Pleased with BizPal Initiative

(YELLOWKNIFE) February 25, 2008 - Yellowknife Centre MLA Robert Hawkins applauds the Government of the Northwest Territories' recent signing of a memorandum of understanding that will see the Northwest Territories join the BizPal initiative.

"I want to congratulate the Minister of Industry Tourism and Investment (ITI) Bob McLeod on seeing this initiative through and also offer praise to the previous Minister, Mr. Brendan Bell who saw the need for convenient access to the tools needed to undertake business establishment in the Northwest Territories."

Mr. Hawkins first raised the idea of NWT participation in March 2007 during the 15th Assembly's tenure in an effort to cut red tape and streamline the process for Northerners looking to start small businesses in the territory.

"It is refreshing to see ideas and initiatives brought forward by Regular Members, being picked up by the government and implemented on behalf of all residents of the NWT."

More information on the BizPal program is available at www.bizpal.ca

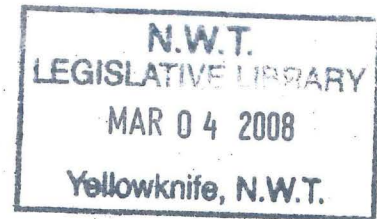
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Northwest
Territories Legislative Assembly
Member for Nahendeh



Nahendeh MLA Disappointed with Proposed Job Cuts in Constituency

YELLOWKNIFE March 4, 2008 – The MLA for Nahendeh Kevin Menicoche today expressed disappointment with the Government of the Northwest Territories' decision to consider eliminating regional community development and front-line sport and recreation workers in his constituency.

Mr. Menicoche has received telephone calls and a petition from constituents who have received letters from the Department of Human Resources indicating their positions as front line workers in the areas of community development and sport and recreation are being eliminated.

Mr. Menicoche says, "I will not support the government's intention to cut the regional delivery of these programs in favour of providing service out of Yellowknife. The communities rely a great deal on those who work in the area of community development and sport and recreation as front line service providers"

"The government made a commitment to work with the MLAs to assess the options for meeting its fiscal reductions, to evaluate the impact, and make smart decisions. This is not a smart decision. Nahendeh has a small, fixed economy where any cut will have a detrimental effect on an already delicate social balance. Removing the sport and recreation staff will affect entire communities and I'm not supportive of that at all," says Mr. Menicoche.

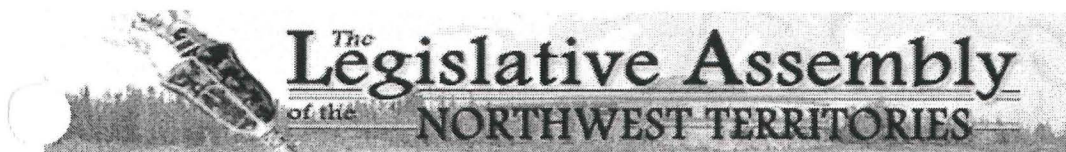
Mr. Menicoche adds, "The members of the 16th Assembly agreed that one of the priorities of this government is to focus on promoting healthy lifestyle choices and to work with the communities to improve the physical and mental well-being of our youth. That priority will not be achieved by cutting the regional community development workers and the sport and recreation workers."

The Member for Nahendeh and his constituents encourage the Minister of Human resources to reconsider his decision and focus the cost-cutting attention elsewhere.

For more information call:

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February 25, 2008

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R(16)210108034

Public Consultation on Waste Reduction and Recovery Program Expansion

YELLOWKNIFE (January 21, 2008) – The launch of public consultation to expand the Waste Reduction and Recovery Program in the Northwest Territories (NWT) was announced today by the Minister of Environment and Natural Resources Michael Miltenberger.

The consultations will determine what new waste products northerners would like to see recovered and recycled in the NWT. Under the Waste Reduction and Recovery Act (WRRRA) the Government of the Northwest Territories can develop and implement programs to reduce waste and to recycle products and materials.

“We want to build on the success of the Beverage Container Program by asking residents what new waste products they would like to be recovered,” said Minister Miltenberger.

A public discussion document, *To All NWT Residents – Help Decide What New Waste Products to Recycle Across the NWT*, provides information on the benefits of waste reduction and recycling and asks for input and advice on what new products should be added to the territory-wide program. Products under review are waste electronics, tires, lead acid batteries, fuel drums/scrapped metal, plastic grocery bags, milk containers, and paper and cardboard.

Results of the consultations will be used to determine what, if any, new waste materials should be collected and recycled in the NWT.

A copy of the discussion paper and a background report can be found on-line at: <http://www.enr.gov.nt.ca/eps/index.htm>

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Mr. Hawkins first raised the idea of NWT participation in March 2007 during the 15th Assembly's tenure in an effort to cut red tape and streamline the process for Northerners looking to start small businesses in the territory.

"It is refreshing to see ideas and initiatives brought forward by Regular Members, being picked up by the government and implemented on behalf of all residents of the NWT."

More information on the BizPal program is available at www.bizpal.ca

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Standing Committee Members Clarify Role in Proposed Public Service Cuts

(Yellowknife) April 4, 2008 – The Standing Committee on Priorities and Planning, comprised of all Regular Members, is responding to implications that Members had detailed information before the potential cuts to the public service were announced. The Committee feels strongly that Members of Cabinet have not been forthcoming with information, contrary to the spirit of consensus government.

Committee Chair Jane Groenewegen says, “To be clear, when the Premier approached Regular Members seeking agreement to focus on government affordability and sustainability, Regular Members bought in on the premise they’d be participants in the ensuing decisions. That did not happen. That’s a serious affront to the spirit of consensus government and one which Committee Members are not prepared to tolerate.”

Cabinet assured Committee Members during the February sitting of the Assembly that their input would be included in decisions surrounding position or spending reductions. One week after the sitting ended, Members were notified that letters had already been sent to potentially affected employees. Days later, Members learned which communities would be affected and weeks passed before Members learned which positions the numbers represent. Mrs. Groenewegen says, “Committee Members received more information from our constituents and from the media than we did from our Cabinet colleagues. Constituents can’t believe their elected Members had no opportunity to comment or debate the proposed reductions.”

Cabinet rationalizes its actions by saying the Budget Session will provide opportunity for dialogue and defends the early notification letters as “proactive communications”. But, the Committee feels the information sent to employees is too focused on reductions. Mrs. Groenewegen states, “This unfolded in a particularly offensive manner. We refute the insinuations Cabinet Ministers have made in the media that Committee Members were briefed in advance and are the architects of the reductions.”

The Standing Committees are analyzing the 2008-09 draft main estimates and examining where the government proposes to reduce spending. Committee Members are vigilant about identifying priority areas with significant potential for savings, less impact to the public service, and potential for increased revenue. Mrs. Groenewegen says, “The Committee expects its input to be taken very seriously and to be included in the budget announcement on May 22nd.”

For more information contact your Member of the Legislative Assembly or:

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Legislative Assembly to Welcome Youth Parliamentarians

(Yellowknife, NT) April 18, 2008 – Nineteen high school students from across the North will take part in Youth Parliament 2008 beginning on Monday, April 21 at the Legislative Assembly building in Yellowknife. The students will participate in three days of meetings and briefings in preparation for the Youth Parliament Session during which they assume the roles of their respective Member of the Legislative Assembly.

Speaker Paul Delorey says, “Youth Parliament has become a proud Northern tradition among high school students with nine years under our belt. It’s an excellent program that develops student awareness of Northern civics. At the same time, it builds on a students’ natural leadership skills and provides opportunity for personal growth in areas such as public speaking, writing, research, and interpersonal skills.”

Youth Parliament is one of several educational outreach programs offered at the Legislative Assembly through the Office of the Speaker. The program is aimed at educating Northern youth about consensus government emphasizing the Assembly, it’s function and history, and the important role the institution holds in the NWT.

The educational theme for Youth Parliament 2008 will focus on the Official Languages of the Northwest Territories and will include presentations from the Minister responsible for Official Languages and the NWT Languages Commissioner.

The participants, by constituency, are:

Deh Cho – Ms. Morgan Ranseth
Great Slave – Ms. Jessica Curren
Hay River South – Ms. Brieanne Taylor Glaicar
Inuvik Twin Lakes – Ms. Kandace Joy Sittichinli
Mackenzie Delta – Ms. Daralynn Kaye
Nahendeh – Ms. Natalie Villeneuve
Range Lake – Mr. Tyler Comeau
Thebacha – Ms. Nicole K. Labine
Weledeh – Mr. Zander Affleck
Yellowknife South – Ms. Rochelle Hilderman

Frame Lake – Ms. Amber O’Reilly
Hay River North – Ms. Frankie Ranger
Inuvik Boot Lake – Ms. Brittany Lucas-Cockney
Kam Lake – Ms. Hanna Wilson
Monfwi – Ms. Edie Erasmus
Nunakput – Ms. Chelsey Olifie
Sahtu – Ms. Hilary Andre
Tu Nedhe – Mr. Lyndon Giroux
Yellowknife Centre – Mr. Nathan Bridges

The Youth Parliament 2008 session is taking place on Thursday, April 24th, at 1:30 p.m. The public is invited to come watch the Session from the Public Gallery. Media are encouraged to arrange interviews with the students prior to the sitting day. For more information, please contact:

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Legislative Assembly of the NWT
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10 ideas to help avoid needless layoffs

(YELLOWKNIFE) May 8, 2008 - Yellowknife Centre MLA Robert Hawkins releases a list of 10 ideas to help the GNWT solve its financial difficulties and to help avoid mass layoffs.

It has been about seven months since the election and four months since regular MLA's have been informed as to the degree of the territorial financial position. It has become clear that this government needs to exercise more imagination in dealing head-on with its fiscal challenges. The GNWT has proposed to eliminate programs and to cut staff as its response, which in the views of many, is the "easy" answer lacking political will and imagination.

The potential crisis we are facing is not at the doorsteps of the Assembly and this worst-case scenario is a number of years away. It is the concern of many that the options presented are limited and fast tracked without due consideration of any other options that might avoid the layoffs and cuts put forward by the Premier and his Cabinet.

Hawkins stated, "I continue to be disappointed by the lack of imagination of this government by not examining a greater range of options that might be available. Cuts at times are necessary and demonstrate that an organization is willing to look within to ensure it is healthy and running properly. However, I am concerned that the knee-jerk reaction to deal with this potential problem has caused needless damage to members of the public service and indeed morale in general as well as negatively impacting the image of the territorial government. A thought-out and calculated approach is the only path and that appears to be the one course that is not considered here. It is my opinion that we might still have time to avoid mass layoffs and program cuts if we are willing to work together and try a little harder. That is why I am presenting a list of 10 ideas that could help to avoid layoffs."

1. **Get Canada to move the debt wall.** The territorial debt wall is a number that the federal government sets and I believe we have reached the point that it should be revisited. In essence, the debt wall is considered to be the fundamental source of our financial problems and this would be the natural first place to start. In my view, the GNWT operates fiscally responsible under good financial policies. Therefore, it's time Canada recognizes that and reviews that limit – a limit that was set when the territorial economy was different.
2. **Collect on receivables.** I have been told DIAND owes the GNWT approximately \$100 million for health-related fees and services for First Nations' and Inuit health care coverage. I believe it is time to negotiate a settlement.
3. **Open the door early.** Instead of layoffs, early retirement hasn't been promoted as an option for those people in the public service who are at retirement age or considering other opportunities.
4. **Public Service as a whole.** There has been no discussion to look at a potential government-wide wage freeze, a modest rollback, or hiring freeze. This could open up a discussion to sharing the potential burden among the public sector and we might collectively find a solution instead of letting a few carry the heavy load.

5. **Getting a devolution deal done.** A hard and firm stance on a resource deal needs to finally be taken. Either the federal government is working with us or they are working against us. We have watched those resource dollars flow by long enough. If we strike a deal, we would have something to work from going forward. We need fresh ideas here.
6. **Take a sober second look at our programs.** To date, there has been no clear program review and evaluation that looks at zero-base budgeting of government service levels offered to the public. Let that review be as widely consultative as possible.
7. **Ghost jobs sitting empty.** Immediately stop funding jobs that are not filled. If they are needed, then look at this case-by-case with pool funding.
8. **Give it back.** If the federal government isn't willing to help out during the supposedly best economic times ever in the NWT, then let them deal with some costs. The GNWT should consider options of giving programs back to the federal government if we cannot afford to run them properly.
9. **Boards and Agencies need to run effectively.** It's time to implement the three year-old boards and agencies review. In financially difficult times it would stand to reason that we should be operating more effectively in these areas.
10. **Work with our ability to raise new revenues and start collecting outstanding debts.** It's time to look at new or adjusting revenue sources. We need to take a hard look at ideas like adjustments to corporate tax rate structure to encourage a climate for large tax filers. It is also time to enforce collection on day-to-day debts like Housing Corporations loans and rental money.

“As I'm trying to highlight, a discussion needs to take place about the 'other' options. Not every idea I presented will be right answer for us. But we have to start somewhere. As I listen to people in Yellowknife and across this territory, it becomes increasingly difficult to support a budget that cuts people and programs first before any evaluation of the business of government has taken place. At this moment I am not convinced every option has been exhausted and my support for the budget will be only if the Premier demonstrates that,” said MLA Hawkins.

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Northwest
Territories Legislative Assembly
Member for Nahendeh

Nahendeh MLA wants answers for fuel spill incident

(Yellowknife) May 8, 2008 – The MLA for Nahendeh Kevin Menicoche will be asking for a full assessment of what led to 10,000 litres of fuel being spilled onto Trout Lake on Tuesday, May 7, 2008.

Mr. Menicoche and the people of Trout Lake are mindful of the importance of protecting the vitality of their traditional lifestyle. Mr. Menicoche says, “The people of Trout Lake have always been fearful of their lake being contaminated and they have worked hard at protecting it and keeping it clean. In this technological day and age there are lots of back up plans in effect to prevent incidents like this from happening.”

With years of experience working with Enbridge Pipelines, Mr. Menicoche understands how important it is to plan and train for this type of emergency situation. Mr. Menicoche says, “During training for these types of situations, the focus is on protecting the people and the environment first and foremost. The people of Trout Lake responded very quickly to the contaminated site and I understand that Northland Utilities got there as soon as they could. But why did this happen in the first place? I have to wonder why a berm was not already in place?”

These are some of the questions Mr. Menicoche will put forward during the May/June sitting of the Legislative Assembly. He wants to see more government involvement to prevent situations like this from happening in the future. Mr. Menicoche believes that, “In our small and remote communities, even more attention must be paid to fuel spill planning and preparedness.”

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Speaker and UNW Agree on Rally Protocol

(Yellowknife) May 15, 2008 – The Speaker of the Legislative Assembly, the Honourable Paul Delorey, and the President of the Union of Northern Workers (UNW), Todd Parsons, today agreed to a number of principles governing the conduct of rallies held in and around the Legislative Assembly building. The Speaker has agreed to allow the UNW to conduct rallies in front of the Legislative Assembly building on the understanding that:

- Participants will not obstruct or interfere with persons coming into or leaving the Legislative Assembly building;
- Vehicular traffic into or out of the Legislative Assembly precinct will not be obstructed;
- Rallies will not take place in the promenade area leading up to the main access to the Legislative Assembly;
- And, the formal proceedings of the Legislative Assembly will not be disrupted in any way.

"The UNW has conducted many rallies at the Legislative Assembly building and elsewhere and these have always been peaceful and productive," noted UNW President Todd Parsons. "These types of rallies are an important way for us to communicate our message and our concerns to the public and to the decision makers. I am pleased that we have been able to establish a set of principles that will allow us to continue to be active at the political level while at the same time ensuring the democratic process can play out."

"Rallies and public demonstrations are a sign of a healthy and vibrant democracy," stated Speaker Delorey. "It has always been my practice to encourage people to come to the Legislative Assembly and to participate in the democratic process. I am pleased that the UNW and the Legislative Assembly have been able to find common ground and a way forward that meets the interests of both parties."

For further information, please contact:

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Legislative Assembly Television Network

(YELLOWKNIFE) June 13, 2008 – The Legislative Assembly of the Northwest Territories has successfully concluded testing its ‘made in the North’ television-broadcasting network this month. Speaker Paul Delorey says, “The system is operational and we are receiving positive feedback from community residents. People are excited to be able to watch the House proceedings live or catch the rebroadcast later the same day.”

The broadcasting network called, *Legislative Assembly Television (LATV)*, is a public service operated by the Legislative Assembly of the Northwest Territories. Speaker Delorey says, “The technology we’re using allows the Assembly to broadcast a live television signal into the communities, simultaneously record the program, and then play it back later the same day according to a community-based schedule.”

The system uses a c-band satellite uplink installed at the Legislative Assembly building to transmit information directly into community-based receiver/decoders installed in 24 communities. Speaker Delorey says, “We put a great deal of consideration into how to best accommodate the demand for greater access to the debates in the Assembly. LATV is the answer; it’s a public service that connects Northerners to the legislature with the click of a button.”

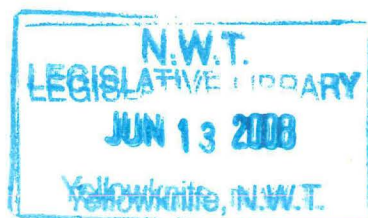
“One of the elegant features of this technology is its ability to simultaneously record the proceedings in four languages and then play back one or all of the languages to specific communities. We are testing two audio tracks during this sitting of the Assembly, one for the floor language and one for an official language of the NWT. We anticipate the regional language components to be fully operational later this year. In all, the network will provide Northerners with maximum flexibility on a community-by-community basis,” says Speaker Delorey.

The *Legislative Assembly Television* network will be available in all 33 communities in 2008. Coverage of the Legislative Assembly will continue to be provided weeknights from 7-9 pm on CKLB radio and through live webcast on the Assembly’s Internet website at www.assembly.gov.nt.ca. Visit the Assembly’s website to view a list of community channels.

The Legislative Assemblies of the Northwest Territories and Nunavut are the only legislatures in Canada to broadcast its proceedings in more than two languages.

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Audio Tours Now Available at the Legislative Assembly

(YELLOWKNIFE) June 13, 2008 – The Honourable Speaker, Paul Delorey, today introduced an innovative audio tour of the Legislative Assembly building. The audio tours are narrated in the Official Languages of the Northwest Territories and in Japanese.

Speaker Paul Delorey says, “Audio tours accommodate the increasing number of visitors to the Legislative Assembly building and they provide visitors with accurate information about consensus government and our unique building. 8,410 people visited the Legislative Assembly last year. 5,402 of those visitors preferred to come according to their own time rather than attend one of the scheduled tours.”

Speaker Delorey adds, “Audio tours make the Legislative Assembly building more accessible to visitors. They are offered in aboriginal, French and Japanese languages. Right now our guided tours are available in English and French, but with the addition of the audio tours, visitors from all of our communities and language groups are now accommodated.”

Narratives on the *iPods* and a souvenir map guide visitors to public spaces where they can hear the story of the Legislative Assembly. Included in the tour is information on how consensus government works, the official symbols of the Northwest Territories, the building’s architecture, and the history of the Legislative Assembly building. Speaker Delorey adds, “The feedback we’re hearing from visitors is very positive. People like how easy it is to use the *iPods* and they enjoy the story that’s told during the tour. Visitors are welcome to take the tour during regular building hours.”

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On the passing of the Honourable Michael A. Ballantyne

(Yellowknife) June 19, 2008 – The Speaker of the Legislative Assembly, the Honourable Paul Delorey, today expressed condolences to the family of the Honourable Michael Ballantyne, former Speaker of the Legislative Assembly, and Member of the Executive Council, who passed away yesterday.

Speaker Delorey says, “On behalf of Members of this Assembly, it is with great sadness that I offer condolences to Mr. Ballantyne’s family and loved ones. Our former colleague served as a Member of this House for 12 years, during which time he proved himself an honourable Member time and again. An astute politician and natural orator, Mr. Ballantyne provided his constituents and all Northerners with honest, fair, and impassioned representation.”

The Honourable Michael A. Ballantyne was first elected to the Legislative Assembly in 1983 representing Yellowknife North. He was acclaimed in 1987 and re-elected in 1991. Mr. Ballantyne was elected Speaker of the Legislative Assembly in November 1991 and remained in that office until 1993.

In 1987, during the 11th Legislative Assembly, Mr. Ballantyne was appointed Government House Leader, Minister of Justice, Minister of Finance, Minister Responsible for the NWT Housing Corporation, Chair of the Legislation and House Planning Committee, Chair of the Financial Management Board, and Member of the Standing Committee on Rules, Procedure, and Privileges. In April of 1989, Mr. Ballantyne was named Minister Responsible for the Public Utilities Board. He also served as a Member of the Special Committee on Aboriginal Languages from October 1989 to April 1990, and was the Chair of the Standing Committee on Finance, the Caucus Chair, and a Member of the Special Committee on Housing.

The flags at the Legislative Assembly building in Yellowknife are lowered to half-mast to recognize the passing of a distinguished Northern leader.

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Regular Members Propose Milk Coupons for Northerners

(YELLOWKNIFE) September 22, 2008 – Regular Members of the Legislative Assembly are calling on the government of the Northwest Territories to initiate a discount program to offset the cost of milk in all Northern communities. The Chair of the Standing Committee on Social Programs, Mr. Robert C. McLeod, says, “Members are encouraging the government to offer redeemable coupons so that milk can be affordable and accessible to all northerners.”

Mr. McLeod says, “Milk is the single most important nutrient that young children require for healthy development. But in the North, it is also the most expensive. Making sure children have enough milk to drink means preventing considerable health problems from developing late in life.”

Mr. Bob Bromley, MLA for Weledeh, researched and presented the suggestion to the Standing Committee and received unanimous support from all Regular Members. Mr. McLeod says, “Providing milk coupons to Northerners is perfectly aligned with the Vision and Goals of the 16th Legislative Assembly. Caucus agreed it is a priority to improve the lives of Northerners by promoting healthy lifestyle choices. We can make significant and positive steps toward that goal by reducing the cost of one of the basic food items required for healthy development and healthy lifestyles.”

The Standing Committee on Social Programs wants the milk coupons to be available in the next fiscal year.

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Legislative Assembly Meets With Sahtu MLA Norman Yakeleya

(Yellowknife) September 30, 2008 - The Caucus of the 16th Legislative Assembly met today with Norman Yakeleya, the MLA for Sahtu, to discuss the procedural implications of the criminal charges he faces.

Caucus Members engaged in a frank exchange of information with Mr. Yakeleya regarding his roles as both a Member of the Executive Council and a Member of the Legislative Assembly. All Members have agreed to use the next 24 hours to reflect on today's discussion and will meet again on Wednesday, October 1, 2008 to decide how next to proceed.

Members agreed not to comment on the matter until the conclusion of tomorrow's meeting.

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Nahendeh MLA disappointed with talk of Power Rate Increase

(YELLOWKNIFE) October 1, 2008 – The MLA for Nahendeh, Kevin Menicoche, is disappointed the NWT Power Corporation is considering raising power rates across the Northwest Territories. Mr. Menicoche is responding to reports that the NWT Power Corporation is seeking approval from the Public Utilities Board to increase its rates. “Now is not the time to introduce an increase of rates. Increasing the cost of power will place an extra financial burden on our people,” says Mr. Menicoche.

Mr. Menicoche adds, “People in my constituency are already worried about the high power rates; it’s going to affect everyone’s standard of living. I don’t think people are going to be able to meet their needs. Especially since I believe the communities in the Nahendeh riding are going to be the most affected by these higher rates”

Mr. Menicoche will be raising this point during the Second Session of the Legislative Assembly which begins on October 1, 2008.

For more information call:

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Speaker Convenes the Territorial Leadership Committee

(YELLOWKIFE) October 1, 2008 – The Speaker of the Legislative Assembly, the Honourable Paul Delorey, has called a meeting of the Territorial Leadership Committee (TLC) for Monday, October 6, 2008 at 10:00 AM to select a member to serve on the Executive Council. The proceedings will take place in the Legislative Assembly chamber.

The vacancy on the Executive Council comes after Members voted unanimously in favour of a motion to revoke the appointment of Sahtu MLA Norman Yakeleya to the Executive Council on Wednesday, October 1, 2008.

The Caucus of the 16th Legislative Assembly has agreed to maintain the regional balance on Cabinet, meaning only those Members representing northern constituencies will be eligible for nomination to the vacant cabinet position. The northern constituencies include:

- Inuvik Boot Lake;
- Inuvik Twin Lakes;
- Mackenzie Delta;
- Monfwi;
- Nunakput, and
- Sahtu

A secret ballot vote will be held and the results will be released to the public. The appointment will subsequently be ratified by way of a formal motion in the House. The public is welcome to view the proceedings from the Public Gallery.

For more information, please contact:

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Territorial Leadership Committee Selects a new Executive Council Member

(Yellowknife) October 6, 2008 – Members of the Territorial Leadership Committee (TLC) of the Legislative Assembly of the Northwest Territories today selected a new Member to serve on the Executive Council. Mr. Robert C. McLeod, the MLA for Inuvik Twin Lakes will be formally appointed to the Executive Council by way of a motion today.

A swearing-in ceremony, presided over by the Commissioner of the Northwest Territories, will be held on Tuesday, October 7, 2008 at 11:30 AM in the Legislative Assembly Chamber.

Mr. R.C. McLeod was elected in a by-election in 2004 to the 15th Legislative Assembly of the Northwest Territories as the Member for Inuvik Twin Lakes. He was re-elected in October 2007.

Mr. McLeod was born in Aklavik, NT in 1960 and was raised in Inuvik's west end. He moved to Aklavik in 1982 where he lived for the next 22 years. He currently lives in Inuvik. He previously served as a hamlet councillor in Aklavik from 1983 to 1985, and served as the community's Mayor from 1987 to 1989.

He began working as an apprentice carpenter with the Department of Public Works before holding two different positions with the Aklavik Housing Association; Maintenance Carpenter and Maintenance Supervisor. Mr. McLeod was most recently Maintenance Manager for the Inuvik Housing Authority. He was also a private contractor in Aklavik from 1997 to 2003.

Mr. McLeod attended Sir Alexander Mackenzie School and Samuel Hearne Secondary School in Inuvik and went on to study at New Brunswick Community College in Moncton. He then attended Lakeland College in Vermilion, Alberta where he obtained his Journeyman Carpenter certification and his Interprovincial Red Seal.

For more information contact:

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Frame Lake MLA Supports Donation of Food Act

(Yellowknife) October 6, 2008 – The Member for Frame Lake, Wendy Bisaro, presented Bill 19, Donation of Food Act, for First Reading today. The Act protects donors and businesses from liability when donating food to those in need.

“If this Act is passed, it will benefit non-profit groups and non-government organizations who struggle to provide food to the less fortunate,” says Ms. Bisaro. “In all of our communities we have residents who face challenges to feed themselves and their families. At the same time food businesses and food suppliers throw out useable food on a daily basis. As it stands right now, businesses and volunteer groups are not protected from liability when it comes to donating or distributing food. This Act will provide them with the necessary protection.”

The Donation of Food Act was given First Reading during session today.

For more information, please contact:

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MLA for Great Slave Pleased with Children's Dental Surgery Decision

(YELLOWKIFE) December 12, 2008 – The MLA for Great Slave, Glen Abernethy, is pleased with the decision made by Health and Social Services Minister, Sandy Lee, to offer the Stanton Territorial Hospital's operating room for one day per month for the scheduling of dental surgeries for children. During the May/June 2008 sitting of the Legislative Assembly, Mr. Abernethy posed numerous questions to Minister Lee regarding children's dental surgery in the Northwest Territories and Yellowknife in particular. At that time, Mr. Abernethy said, "I think it's great that the Health Minister thought that this was an important thing to do and I am supportive of the initial steps being taken, but I would like to see further action."

Although Mr. Abernethy believes that one day per month is a significant step in the right direction he continues to be a strong advocate for making more operating days available for dental surgery in Yellowknife. "The Stanton Territorial Health Authority closes its operating room for approximately six weeks per year in 3 separate two week blocks (Christmas, Easter and summer). Making that room available to dentists for one of these two week blocks of time, on top of the one day per month, would go a long way to reducing the dental surgery backlog in the Northwest Territories," says Mr. Abernethy.

Mr. Abernethy will be raising more questions to the Minister of Health and Social Services during the upcoming sitting of the Legislative Assembly in February 2009.

For more information, please contact:

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