

**MEMBER STATEMENT—JULIE GREEN, MLA YELLOWKNIFE CENTRE**  
**TERRITORIAL AGREEMENT ON FEDERAL HEALTH CARE TRANSFERS**  
**February 3, 2017**

**MS. GREEN:** Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the Health and Social Services budget is the largest in the GNWT, at \$414 million for this fiscal year, and, incredibly, it's not enough to meet existing or future healthcare needs. The new healthcare funding deal announced last month isn't going to make a huge difference to the bottom line. Thanks to a decision by the Conservative government, beginning April 1<sup>st</sup> this year, the Canada health transfer was scheduled to drop to 3 per cent a year.

When the Premiers met in December, they wanted a 5.2 per cent increase, but, in a bilateral deal reached last month the Premier walked away from the coalition and settled for a 3 per cent annual increase for the next 10 years. That's half of what we get today, and it's important to note this is a 10-year deal. Ottawa is offering a continuation of the medical travel and healthcare money, as well as \$7.4 million in targeted money for healthcare infrastructure and \$6.1 million for mental health initiatives for youth. That still leaves a significant shortfall.

Almost a year ago, the Minister of Health and Social Services released the long-term care study. It revealed an additional 259 beds will be needed in the next 10 years. He estimated that it would cost \$200 million to build or provide these beds, and an additional \$33.5 million annually to provide services to those clients.

Mr. Speaker, a \$7.4 million contribution by the feds over the next ten years is literally a drop in the ocean, and spending to meet these long-term care bed needs should be under way already. Where is the money going to come from? Not from Canada, under the terms of the current deal, so that means that GNWT will have to find the money from other sources. That means making cuts or increasing revenue. Anxious Northerners want to know.

Healthcare is a hot-button issue with voters, and rightly so, but information is hard to find. The GNWT hasn't even issued its own media release on the deal. Contrast this approach to the hoopla that accompanied the announced federal funding for the road to Whati. Is the Premier not proud of deciding to walk back his commitment to negotiate with his colleagues on a national health deal rather than participate in a bilateral agreement? Is he not proud of the money he's bringing to the Territories for healthcare?

The Premier told CBC's Power and Politics of the negotiations with Ottawa that "we got what we needed and wanted." If that's the case, Mr. Premier, tell us how this healthcare deal is going to accomplish those goals, because the math that we have now doesn't add up. I will have questions. Mahsi.