

ORAL QUESTION—JULIE GREEN, MLA YELLOWKNIFE CENTRE

**QUESTION 865-18(2):
AURORA COLLEGE FOUNDATIONAL REVIEW**

September 22, 2017

MS. GREEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I welcome the Minister's statement about the next steps in the foundational review, but I also have some concerns. When the standing committee wrote to the Minister at the end of August, what we said was that we were concerned about the project's strict timeline because the contract, at that point, had not been awarded, so I am wondering how that became advice to delay the project. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Minister of Education, Culture and Employment.

HON. ALFRED MOSES: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. There was a delay in the contract, but we want to make sure that we do this review the best way we can for the residents of the Northwest Territories so that they have access to the best education possible. It is the responsibility of this government. Our next steps outlining will help us create a long-term solution for post-secondary education in the Northwest Territories.

MS. GREEN: I did not hear the Minister answer my question. I want to be very clear that the committee did not ask for a delay in the foundational review. We realize that the stakes are very high for the students whose programs have been put on hold pending the outcome of this exercise. What, in fact, will the impact of this delay be on them?

HON. ALFRED MOSES: As I mentioned, we want to make sure we do this review right and that we get the best possible report moving forward to provide the best education for the residents of the Northwest Territories. We appreciate committee's input into this.

MS. GREEN: I am not sure that the students in the social work and teacher education programs are going to find that response very helpful. They were told that their program would be on hold for a year while this took place. Clearly now it is going to be more like two years. What is the Minister going to tell the students and the staff in those affected programs about the future of their program?

HON. ALFRED MOSES: When decisions were made about the two programs, we mentioned that our social work and TEP program students are still going to continue to get the support from our department and get the support, also, from the Aurora College staff to help them on their path to a career and a future education.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Oral questions. Member for Yellowknife Centre.

MS. GREEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I am not sure that the original announcement cancelling these programs and then later suspending these programs really prepares students and staff for what has become a very long and arduous process. It is not clear to me, and I would like to ask why this delay happened in the first place. The Minister announced the foundational review in March. The contract was not awarded until

September. Why did it take that long? Thank you.

HON. ALFRED MOSES: Anyone knows that, when you are going through a procurement or a contract, it does take time. This is the same thing. We want to make sure we do it right, and we want to make sure that our students have the best opportunity for the best services and programs in post-secondary education, and we are committed to that. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.