

## MEMBER STATEMENT—JULIE GREEN, MLA YELLOWKNIFE CENTRE

### ROAD CONDITIONS ON HIGHWAY NO. 3

September 28, 2017

**MS. GREEN:** Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to talk about the condition of Highway No. 3, especially about the 100 kilometre section from Behchoko to Yellowknife. People in Yellowknife complain about this section of the road all the time, but by the reckoning of many drivers, the road was at its worse this summer since it was paved.

Highway No. 3 is not just another NWT highway. Forty per cent of all the kilometres driven in the NWT are driven on this section of Highway No. 3, or about 70 million kilometres a year. The drivers are residents, tourists, trucks resupplying the diamond mines, and commuters between Behchoko and Yellowknife, among others. What they experience is a road that has frequent and unmarked dips, potholes, and loose gravel. Even drivers who slow down and drive less than the 90 kilometre-an-hour speed limit report broken shocks, struts, and trailer hitches, as well as flat tires and cracked windshields. It's not just vehicle damage. The road is a hazard to personal safety.

Mr. Speaker, Spectacular NWT doesn't say a word about this segment of the highway. Tourists who drive it are appalled not only by the terrible condition of the road but by the lack of warning from the GNWT or on the road itself. Many of the people who make it to Yellowknife with their campers and motor homes vow never to come back. So much for growing our tourism sector.

Thousands of truckloads of fuel and supplies come over the road to Yellowknife in preparation for the trip to the diamond mines. They, too, have to put up with the damage inflicted by the road. The government describes mining as the most important segment of our economy, but you wouldn't know that from the segment of this road.

Mr. Speaker, capital investment on Highway No. 3 is pitiful, amounting to 10 per cent of all road expenditures in this capital budget. In the last capital budget, it was less than 5 per cent. That's despite the volume of traffic and the importance of the road to residents and industry alike. The Department of Infrastructure has acknowledged that "the road needs strengthening and drainage improvements to provide a safe operating surface." Now would be a good time to implement a solution.

Mr. Speaker, before they start budgeting for new roads, the government needs to improve maintenance on the roads they have, starting with Highway No. 3. Thank you.