

## ORAL QUESTION—JULIE GREEN, MLA YELLOWKNIFE CENTRE

### QUESTION 10-18(3): EMERGENCY PROTECTION ORDERS

October 17, 2017

**MS. GREEN:** Masi, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I have a second set of questions on my statement I made today about intimate partner violence. This set of questions is for the Minister of Justice. As I mentioned, I am referencing the same report about how to improve service to women who experience intimate partner violence. One recourse women have is to apply for an emergency protection order. Research has shown that there is no correlation between the number of EPOs issued and either the prevalence of intimate partner violence or the community population. Does the Minister have any ideas about why this discrepancy exists? Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Masi. The Minister of Justice.

**HON. LOUIS SEBERT:** No, I don't, Mr. Speaker. I haven't read the report that was referred to earlier, that I understand was prepared by the Aurora Institute. I certainly would like to take a look at that and perhaps address the concern raised by the Member opposite. What we have seen is EPOs as an important tool in reducing and preventing family violence, but we certainly are looking at ways in which we could improve the program. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MS. GREEN:** That's good news, that the Minister is open to looking again at this program. I will be tabling this report at the appropriate time. He will have a copy ready to hand.

The researchers indicate that men may be using the EPO process to get back at women who want to keep them away by filing for their own EPOs. What kind of oversight is in place to ensure that this retaliatory type of action doesn't happen?

**HON. LOUIS SEBERT:** I understand that about 75 application for EPOs are heard each year. It has been noted that the number of male applicants has increased in recent years. Of course, the department does provide training in this area, annual training for RCMP, public information, and outreach. The materials are distributed to communities each year. I would be very disappointed to know that this very good program would be used for the purpose of getting back at the victim.

**MS. GREEN:** As disappointing as that may be, it is something that I believe is worth investigating. To that end, since the EPOs were introduced in 2005, what kind of review or evaluation has been done of them and made public?

**HON. LOUIS SEBERT:** I'm not certain of any recent evaluation. It sounds as though the Aurora Institute has done some research, and I very much would like to review that research.

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

**MS. GREEN:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. What the report does is plot uses of EPO with incidents of intimate partner violence on a map. The research is not what I would call a

thorough review. Obviously, in my view, there needs to be a thorough review. Can the Minister commit to doing a review of the Emergency Protection Orders in order to improve their use and efficiency? Thank you.

**HON. LOUIS SEBERT:** Mr. Speaker, of course, we are always trying to improve our response in this area. I certainly would be prepared to look at this legislation and the use of EPOs. I am quite surprised by the information that has been provided by the Member opposite. I said earlier I am very disappointed to hear that there seems to be an inappropriate use of EPO. Certainly, I will look into this matter. Thank you.