

MEMBER STATEMENT—JULIE GREEN, MLA YELLOWKNIFE CENTRE

MANDATE LETTERS

December 10, 2019

MS. GREEN: Masi, Mr. Speaker. Mandate letters for Ministers are a recent innovation in the Northwest Territories. They have been used in the last two Assemblies to detail the actions required to implement the priorities agreed by all 19 Members. It is my hope that the new Premier will continue this practice for her Cabinet and that we will see mandate letters for them soon.

In the meantime, I have written a mandate letter for myself. First, I am grateful to the people who live in Yellowknife Centre for re-electing me to continue my advocacy work. I am here for all of you, determined to make a difference for each of you in the issues you talked about, such as the need for economic diversification, reconciliation with Indigenous people, more affordable housing and electricity, a stronger continuum of education from early childhood development to post-secondary education, and a downtown where everyone feels safe. Your priorities are my priorities.

Cabinet is now working on how these goals will be accomplished. First, I want the finished mandate itself to be as "S.M.A.R.T." as possible, meaning that it includes actions that are specific,

measurable, achievable, realistic, and timely. I want to see an evidence-based approach to measure outcomes. I don't want to see weasel words like "advancing," "capturing," and "expanding." I want to see bold words and ideas that will result in tangible improvements in the most fundamental issues that are holding us back.

Second, I am going to work on these priorities in collaboration with Cabinet. That means I am going to cooperate, yet I must be persuaded that the proposed actions are in the best interests of my constituents. In the last Assembly, the word "collaboration" was drained of meaning as Cabinet and Regular Members worked in segregation. We ended up with an arrangement that was called "consensus" but in fact was hyper-partisan, with government and its allies on one side and the remainder of Regular Members on the other, not all the time but often, especially when we were under pressure to wrap up the business of the 18th Assembly. These were some of our best moments and also our worst, where "compromise" became a dirty word.

Third, my mandate includes holding the government to account. Expect me to ask hard questions and lots of them. Expect me to continue talking about best practices in policy in other jurisdictions and how they could be applied here. Expect me to be as tough on the women in Cabinet as I am on the men. In short, expect me to continue to be an advocate for my constituents, residents of the Northwest Territories, and a champion for all. This is my mandate. Thank you Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Member for Yellowknife Centre.