

## **MEMBER'S STATEMENT — JULIE GREEN, MLA YELLOWKNIFE CENTRE**

### **GLADUE REPORTS**

**March 12, 2020**

**MS. GREEN:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I am continuing with my Justice issues theme week. The Yukon is piloting a new approach to the overrepresentation of Indigenous people in corrections. The Department of Justice there is funding a three-year pilot program to train people to write what are called Gladue reports. A Gladue report provides detailed information about the offender's background, including time spent in residential schools, in the care of child welfare, family and community history, as well as struggles with mental health and addictions; essentially, accounting for the traumas and tragedies of colonialism. The reports are named after a Supreme Court of Canada decision given 20 years ago, which asked judges to consider unique factors when sentencing Indigenous offenders.

A Gladue report is a piece of a toolkit for the courts to consider when sentencing the offender. The intention is to encourage the consideration of restorative approaches to sentencing, rather than jail time or fines. During the first year of Yukon's pilot program, Gladue writers produced 37 reports for use during sentencing. What is new here is that the Yukon has formalized the production of these reports. Instead of someone doing them off the side of their desks, there is now a group of staff experienced in writing the reports. Further, the reports have been standardized so that the information is consistent and readily available to the judiciary.

Mr. Speaker, there are some noteworthy aspects to the Yukon's pilot project. First, it's collaborative. It includes both the Yukon Legal Services Society and the Council of Yukon First Nations. Second, there has been a focus on training Indigenous people as report writers because of their innate understanding of the context of the convicted. Third, the cost of the pilot project is \$530,000 over three years. To me, this is a reasonable investment, considering the higher costs of jailing offenders and continuing the cycle of trauma.

There is no equivalent to the Gladue reports in the Northwest Territories. Pre-sentence reports are written by probation officers and focus on risk and risk management. In short, they serve a different purpose. Mr. Speaker, I will have questions for the Minister of Justice. Mahsi.