

MEMBER'S STATEMENT — JULIE GREEN, MLA YELLOWKNIFE CENTRE
REFLECTIONS ON COVID-19 PANDEMIC

May 26, 2020

MS. GREEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We in the NWT are experiencing a much-needed pause in the pandemic. It's time to reflect on what has happened and to plan for the second wave of COVID-19 which we are told is coming.

Mr. Speaker, - I wish I printed my statement out - We ended up sitting in a time of high anxiety. In my family, both my daughter and my partner were tested for COVID and quarantined until the results came back negative. Our family business, the funeral home, has had to adapt to a new way of helping families, because funerals are not allowed. It has been difficult for us and for grieving families to find new ways to say goodbye, but we are committed to, and we have followed the Chief Public Health Officer's orders, and we have adapted.

My constituents are also anxious. I had more calls than ever before, seeking exemptions to the public health orders as well as complaining about a perceived lack of enforcement; constituents worried about being evicted from their homes, and about not having a home to self-isolate in. Personal services businesses wondered how they could pay for their bills when their revenue dropped to zero, and from retailers who also saw similar drops. - I'm sorry, Mr. Speaker, I'm having technical difficulties.

Good things have happened. The Chief Public Health Officer's orders have contained the spread of the virus in the Northwest Territories. People in all walks of life have innovated to keep us going, from new restaurant take-out options, to the beginning of a managed alcohol program, to teachers taking up the challenge of delivering distance learning. The United Way has been busy fundraising for communities around the NWT. The Yellowknife Co-op has generously shared its profits to help people who need food. The Yellowknife Community Foundation has doubled its scholarship offerings to assist students who do not have jobs this summer. Yellowknifers have been very generous to one another, from offering to pack hampers, donating to non-profits, and offering personal acts of kindness.

Mr. Speaker, now that we are emerging wisely, we are trying to get back to activities and services that are part of everyday life. Once again, the Chief Public Health Officer is guiding us through this process, and we need to continue listening to her advice and apply that to ourselves, our families, and friends. Throughout this stressful time, we have shown that we are indeed stronger together. Mahsi, Mr. Speaker.