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Review of Boards and Agencies

Mr. Ramsay: Today I'm going to speak about an issue that I've raised numerous times with the last government. That is the boards and agencies review that was done by the last government.

Some of the best work that I've seen as a Member of this House was done via that review. The review was shelved before decisions were to be made. The last government wasn't interested in pursuing the review. I don't believe they had the intestinal fortitude to carry through with the work and the decisions that were required to make a difference. So to the shelf it went.

Here we are three years after the review was mothballed trying to find ways to reduce spending. This government should immediately dust off the agencies and board review and get to work addressing the legitimacy, requirements, governance and competence of these boards and agencies.

My colleague Mr. Hawkins spoke a couple of days ago about the need to find board appointees from amongst residents of the Northwest Territories. I agree with him. If you do not live in and contribute to our economy here in the Northwest Territories, then sorry: go find a board appointment in BC or in Alberta or, wherever you are residing.

As a government we need to address the competency of boards and the governance they should be providing. We should not have boards that simply rubber-stamp annual budgets and reports. There has to be a more conscientious effort on behalf of this government to ensure that boards and agencies are fulfilling their mandates.

Mr. Speaker, given our current financial outlook, we need to look at more focused community services boards. I'd go so far as to suggest today that we look at amalgamating the health authorities across the Northwest Territories into one territorial body, with representation from each region. If we did this, we could save ourselves \$7 million per year. Plus, the authorities would not have to compete for staff, and the staff could work in different communities without the hassle that they currently have to go through.

Mr. Speaker, I'll have questions for the Premier at the appropriate time.