

# 16<sup>th</sup> Legislative Assembly

## Second Session

### Third Sitting

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#### Resource Revenue Sharing Agreement

**Mr. Ramsay:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I want to speak today about the ongoing developments on the devolution and resource revenue sharing negotiations with the federal government.

The Premier recently shared with Regular Members some correspondence between our government and the federal government, and I must say I was quite surprised with the new tack being taken with the negotiations. Aside from what I read in the correspondence, I have also heard the Premier mention this new proposal in his Sessional Statement to the House on Wednesday. There have also been news reports and interviews of both the Premier and the Finance Minister talking about this new proposal.

Perhaps this new infrastructure partnership proposal will be an integral component of an overall devolution and resource revenue sharing deal, as the Premier states. However, why do Regular Members and aboriginal governments and leaders have to find out about this new proposal through the Sessional Statement and media reports?

How many times has the Premier heard that we need to work together? We need to form consensus as Northerners in order to move forward. The GNWT has got to be the lead in bridging gaps and bringing aboriginal governments together so we can move forward collectively.

I am not sure why the Government of the Northwest Territories would all of a sudden be asking for a billion dollar cost shared infrastructure partnership with the federal government as part of the negotiation on devolution and resource revenue sharing. I would like to know why Regular Members were not briefed on this new proposal. Why weren't aboriginal governments aware of this substantial new proposal?

The Premier is quoted in the news story this morning as saying he is confident most Regular MLAs and aboriginal governments will support the proposal, but the fact remains that we have not seen it. I am wondering why the government would put a substantial deal on the table like this prior to an election? They should have instead used that time to shop the deal to Regular Members and aboriginal governments and get buy-in from them first.

As an elected Member of this House, I would appreciate and I would expect that the government would share this type of proposal with all Members first. Obviously that did not happen, and once again Regular Members and aboriginal governments are on the outside looking in. It's just not good enough, Mr. Speaker.