

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

**Third Session**

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**Transfer of Responsibility for Social Housing**

**MR. RAMSAY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In the five and a half years that I've been a Member of this House, some decisions that the last government made are still causing me to wonder what they were thinking. Of course, nothing will ever top the Deh Cho Bridge, Mr. Speaker, and I'll just have to accept that I may never understand that decision.

Right behind that was the decision to take \$30 million for Social Housing Policy from the Housing Corporation and transfer it to ECE. The program was being delivered by Housing staff throughout the Territory and for all intents and purposes the system was not broken. For reasons still unknown to me, the government decided to grab the \$30 million, transfer it to ECE and then hire 14 people to deliver the same program that was being delivered by Housing with their existing staff.

Mr. Speaker, not only did ECE have to hire 14 new employees, it cost the government \$1.5 million more per year to administer the program. I believe this is completely ridiculous. That \$1.5 million could be better spent in other areas of our operation. Mr. Speaker, I don't have a crystal ball, but the economy does not seem to be getting any better and you can rest assured our revenues are going to be shrinking. To be spending \$1.5 million that we don't need to be spending is foolhardy.

In 2006, Members passed a motion calling on the government to reconsider the transfer. The last government didn't listen to us at the time, Mr. Speaker. The government wants us to keep waiting for things to improve, but the bottom line is things are not getting any better. Maybe there is some hope.

The mover and seconder of the motion back in 2006 are now both Cabinet Ministers. I know they supported sending the money and the responsibility back to Housing. It was something they believed in. My colleague from Inuvik Twin Lakes, Mr. Robert McLeod, stated during the debate on the motion that "I really challenge the government to be big enough to listen to what they are being asked to do." My colleague from Range Lake, Minister Lee, stated "it is not the right move, the government has not met the burden of making their case."

Mr. Speaker, here we are over two and a half years later and the government still has not made their case. How much longer are we going to allow this to continue? Where is the proof, Mr. Speaker, that this is actually working? Mahsi.