

KATRINA NOKLEBY

FOR **MLA GREAT SLAVE**



Thank you for an opportunity to respond to the NWTAC's candidate questions. Many of the issues you have raised are significant to my constituents as well as all NWT residents. Please accept these answers to your questions and I look forward to discussing them in greater detail once elected as the new MLA for Great Slave.

1. A \$40 million shortfall still exists for community governments. What is your position on the funding formula for community governments and the significant shortfall not being addressed over the past five years?

The funding shortfall was identified by Government in the 17th Legislative Assembly and very little has been done to address the problem in a meaningful way. It appears that some minor movement has been made over the years to decrease the funding gap (Cabinet suggested they had invested several million over the life of the 18th Assembly), however, they seem to be minor increases with no meaningful plan to close the gap once and for all. The 19th Assembly must do better.

2. What steps will you take to ensure that communities funding shortfall as identified by MACA is addressed and do you commit to prioritizing funding?

It is not realistic, given the fiscal situation of the GNWT, to assume the shortfall can be closed completely in a four-year term. However meaningful progress must begin and be sustained. I believe that all MLAs need to work together and commit to increasing funds over the life of the 19th Assembly to begin closing this gap once and for all. A minimum rate of growth must be established. Based what I have read about the fiscal realities of the GNWT I believe it is reasonable to increase funding by \$2.5M annually over the life of the 19th Assembly and set this policy direction into the ongoing fiscal strategy moving forward. This will ensure that these annual increases continue through future Assemblies until the funding gap is fully closed. This balanced approach will allow noticeable improvements to community funding (\$10M over the term) and still leave room for many other priorities of the 19th Legislative Assembly.

3. Homelessness, mental health and addictions are serious issues in the North. Are you willing to work to ensure these issues get addressed and potential solutions put in place in a timely manner?

Absolutely. Working to address vulnerable populations in the NWT is one of my priorities. The Northwest Territories has no comprehensive relapse prevention program and we send our most vulnerable citizens, who are struggling with mental health and addictions, to other parts of Canada.

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As an MLA I commit to working with communities as I believe these issues could be solved at the community level as best determined by the community to meet their unique needs and priorities. The GNWT must be flexible in their delivery of programs to ensure that community-based solutions are not bogged down in the bureaucracy. The 19th Assembly must ensure that programs such as housing, addictions treatment, employment, and mental health are focused on outcomes rather than just getting the programs set up and running, and then checking the complete box.

4. How do you think communities can prepare for the climate change crisis that is presently occurring in many communities and what is your position on the Territorial Government finding solutions and taking a leadership role with funding?

The GNWT works to mitigate the effects of climate change through the design and construction of their capital assets and through programs like the Capital Asset Retrofit Fund. This allows them to reinvest savings, achieved through replacement of old infrastructure with greener infrastructure, into new efficient upgrades. Based on the success of the Capital Asset Retrofit Fund I believe there is an opportunity to develop a community Capital Asset Retrofit fund which could be accessed by individual communities interested in participating. Ultimately it could really help communities with limited financial capacity to upgrade their infrastructure. The GNWT could also explore industry partnerships to supply green technologies to the communities purchased in bulk for cost savings. In addition, I believe expanding our all-weather road system is key to ensuring communities in the NWT are not left stranded as the reliability of ice roads decline.

5. What are your views on the issue of the early childhood education deficiency in the NWT and how it relates to post-secondary success of students and do you support an Auditor General Review of the education system?

Graduation rates across the territory continue to be low and many students are unable to meet post-secondary requirements even with a high school diploma. I have heard from many constituents that the education system is of concern to them and we discuss this often at NAPEG with regards to increasing the number of northern and Indigenous engineers and geoscientists.

I'm not convinced that an Auditor General Review will tell us anything we don't already know. The AG office is responsible for auditing existing systems and letting us, the public, know whether the GNWT is following its own legislation and policies. I believe we need to take a

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critical look at the system itself and not waste four to five years of valuable time with a review and subsequent action plan.

In order to be effective, MLAs must strike a special committee consisting of Members and Ministers and subject matter experts early in the next Assembly. This committee should review early childhood development programs as well as Junior Kindergarten – 12 with a focus on coming up with real and meaningful recommendations for improving outcomes for children across the NWT. We can't wait any longer.

6. The 2018 Federal Budget affirmed that its expectation is that a 25% portion of the revenues from cannabis excise taxes provided to the Territory and Provinces be transferred to municipalities and local communities. What is your view of the GNWT deciding that there will be no revenues passed on to the municipalities from the Territorial Government?

Much of the monitoring and enforcement of no-cannabis smoke zones is left to communities, increasing demands on resources such as by-law and other community staff. As such, the 19th Assembly should review the decision of the 18th Assembly in this area. I'm committed to working with the NWTAC to develop a better understanding of this issue so I can advocate effectively on behalf of Great Slave Constituents and all residents of the NWT.

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