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Wednesday 5 October 2016

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Mercredi 5 octobre 2016

**Standing Committee on
Estimates**

Ministry of Aboriginal Affairs

**Comité permanent des
budgets des dépenses**

Ministère des Affaires autochtones

Chair: Cheri DiNovo
Clerk: Eric Rennie

Présidente : Cheri DiNovo
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ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE DE L'ONTARIO

STANDING COMMITTEE ON
ESTIMATESCOMITÉ PERMANENT DES
BUDGETS DES DÉPENSES

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The committee met at 1549 in room 151.

MINISTRY OF ABORIGINAL AFFAIRS

The Chair (Ms. Cheri DiNovo): Who knew? We ended petitions early again today. It's a brave new world, my friends. The minister is here. We're all good. Good afternoon. We are now going to resume consideration of vote 2001 of the estimates of the Ministry of Aboriginal Affairs. There is a total of 50 minutes remaining.

Before we resume consideration of the estimates, if there are any inquiries from the previous meetings that the minister has responses to, perhaps the information can be distributed by the Clerk. Are there any items, Minister?

Hon. David Zimmer: I think not yesterday but the day before, MPP Mantha posed quite clearly three very precise questions and wanted answers to them. I have those and I can read them into the record. It's just one page.

The Chair (Ms. Cheri DiNovo): Or could you distribute them? Could we get those distributed? Is that possible?

Hon. David Zimmer: At your pleasure, Chair.

The Chair (Ms. Cheri DiNovo): Let's distribute them because we have such limited time.

Hon. David Zimmer: Okay.

The Chair (Ms. Cheri DiNovo): Thank you.

Hon. David Zimmer: It's here. Just for the record, these are the answers to the three very specific questions that MPP Mantha asked.

The Chair (Ms. Cheri DiNovo): Right. Thank you very much.

When the committee last adjourned, the government had seven minutes left in their round of questioning. Ms. Kiwala, the floor is yours.

Ms. Sophie Kiwala: Thank you, Madam Chair. Thank you, everyone, for being here. Thank you to your staff as well for being here and supporting you today. It's always great to see them.

We left off with a discussion talking about land treaties. Minister, I think you had a few other items left to discuss that you were anxious to inform the committee of. I'd be pleased to hear the rest of that conversation.

The Chair (Ms. Cheri DiNovo): Minister, the floor is yours.

Mr. Arthur Potts: I think you'd call this a pregnant pause.

The Chair (Ms. Cheri DiNovo): A pregnant pause, yes.

Hon. David Zimmer: Thank you very much. Yesterday I was walking people through because I thought everybody was interested—and I could tell by the look on your faces that everybody was interested—in the actual process of negotiating a land claim because we hear about the negotiation process—it's a big word, “negotiation” process.

I walked through the five or six steps. I made some general comments about the process. The first step was submitting the claim, and I elaborated on that. Then the second step was doing a lot of research, an assessment of the claim and then identifying the parties to the negotiation. Then the negotiation got started and then what happens during the negotiation. I talked about moving to agreement in principle, then a settlement agreement, then ratification and then implementing the agreement. That's where I stopped, and I said I was just at the denouement in implementing the agreement.

We're at the stage now where we want to actually implement the details of the agreement, and I had said that the parties then start implementing the agreement and carrying out the obligations they've agreed to and that are described in the agreement. Financial compensation is usually paid shortly after the settlement agreement has been signed by all three parties: the province, the federal government and the First Nation.

So this is new then: If the settlement includes transferring land to the federal government to be set apart as the reserve, then Canada has to do certain things. On a land claim, if it's, say, crown land in Ontario, and the deal is that that Ontario crown land will be turned over to the First Nation, Ontario first has to transfer the land to the federal government because, of course, the federal government is responsible for on-reserve or creation of reserve, if you will. The ownership of the land gets transferred to the federal government and they, in turn, transfer it back to the First Nation and they add it to their reserve or whatever else the plan is to do with the land.

But in order for Canada to do that, then Canada will survey the boundary lines of the land that's going to be turned over. There's a detailed inspection of the lands to make sure they're in an acceptable environmental condition, and this is very important because sometimes, particularly close to municipalities, mining sites or whatever, there is remediation that needs to be done—land cleanup and so on.

Then, assuming they get through the environmental review of the lands, the lands are set aside as part of the reserve, and then the federal government has to go through issuing various appropriate mechanisms under the Indian Act for the continued use of lands by third parties. So there may be a hydro right-of-way or a cottager's right-of-way or something like that.

It can often take several years to fully implement the details of a land settlement after it's been agreed upon and all the steps have gone through. But we have a new person with us today. You'll notice that Assistant Deputy Minister Shawn Batise, who is the negotiations deputy, is not here. He's been called to—where is Shawn today?

M^{me} France Gélinas: Mattagami First Nation.

Hon. David Zimmer: Yes, that's right. He's up in Mattagami because that was a big issue yesterday. He said he was going up today to work on those very issues that you raised yesterday—the derailment and the spill and so on.

The Chair (Ms. Cheri DiNovo): Minister, you have three minutes.

Hon. David Zimmer: With those three minutes, I'm going to ask Shawn Batise's right-hand person in negotiations to just walk you through, perhaps, one of the more recent negotiations we've done, to give you the flavour of how it all plays out.

Come and sit up here and give your name. You've got about three minutes to offer your thoughts on some claim that you've been through recently.

Ms. Selina Young: Hello. Thank you. I'm Selina Young. I'm the deputy director of the negotiations and reconciliation division in the ministry.

A couple of things to carry on from what the minister was saying: Recently, we were very lucky; we have a new claim—or I shouldn't say a new claim, but we've just entered into the implementation phase with Chapleau Cree First Nation. So recently we had—Sophie was there, our parliamentary assistant—a wonderful ceremony to celebrate the settlement and to launch us into the important elements of implementation, so all of the work that the minister was taking about figuring out details about the land.

During that process, we worked really closely with our federal counterparts. I just had a conversation today, actually, with a lands manager with Indigenous and Northern Affairs Canada to work out some of those details for Chapleau Cree so that we can keep moving that forward to being fully implemented.

Hon. David Zimmer: I hope that has given you a sense of the flavour of a negotiation, because you would be surprised at the number of people who ask the questions, “Well, I've heard about these negotiations. What is a negotiation? What does it actually look like? What's the process? How long does it take? How is it conducted?”, and all of that stuff. I think it's important to get a sense of that, because you then understand both the complexity and why some negotiations take a long time, some take a more moderate bit of time and others are concluded relatively quickly.

But the point is—and I take you back to my answers to some things yesterday or the day before—that in the last number of years, we have shortened the process considerably. Before 2003, the process was about 18 years, I believe, to do a claim. We've been making that shorter and shorter, and now we have a process where, if a claim is filed, we make a decision about whether to accept the claim for negotiation within—we try to do it within three years. Then we sit down and start negotiating.

The point is that claims that are just out there hanging in the air don't do a lot for reconciliation and, in many, many ways, are counterproductive to the idea of reconciling. If someone has a claim, it should be resolved.

The Chair (Ms. Cheri DiNovo): Thank you, Minister. We now move to the official opposition: Mr. Miller.

Mr. Norm Miller: Thank you. How much time do I have, Chair?

The Chair (Ms. Cheri DiNovo): You have 20 minutes. Oh, no, sorry; about 13 minutes. He's lost a few.

Hon. David Zimmer: Thirteen? Norm, that's not even enough time for you to get warmed up.

Mr. Norm Miller: True. So, I wanted to go back to education, partly because I think it's the most important thing that the government could do to improve the outcomes for indigenous people in the province of Ontario. It's also partly motivated because the first thing I heard when I woke this morning was a CBC series looking into the gap in education for indigenous people.

I wanted to start by quoting a bit from an article on the CBC's website: “First Nations Education a Cash-Strapped ‘Non-System,’ Bureaucrats Tell Minister.” I'll just cite from a couple of parts of that.

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Hon. David Zimmer: Sorry, I missed that. Could you just repeat that again?

Mr. Norm Miller: The headline was “First Nations Education a Cash-Strapped ‘Non-System,’ Bureaucrats Tell Minister.” I'll just give you a few of the highlights.

“Most of the individually run, band-operated schools don't have proper curriculum development, teacher training, testing and quality assurance and the larger support structures—like a school board, elected trustees or an education ministry—that make schools work, the briefing note”—this was a briefing note to the minister—“from November says.

“Experts have also pointed to the near total absence of any formal plan to improve educational outcomes as another roadblock to success. Indeed, the short- and medium-term goal of the department is for band schools to simply record ‘incremental improvements in academic achievement year over year.’”

It goes on to say, “‘Additional funding [is] required to support a new system more comparable to provincial systems,’ the 14-page briefing note cautions the minister.”

It goes on to say, “It has also commissioned many expert studies and yet has done little to implement their recommendations.”

It talks about the funding crunch: “Indigenous programming has been hampered by a 2% cap on annual spending increases since it was imposed by former finance minister Paul Martin in the 1990s. This spending has been well short of population and inflation growth rates.”

It goes on to say that there’s “an absence of an actual system to support individual schools....

“In 2013-14, only 21% of on-reserve boys in Ontario reached or exceeded provincial literacy standards, while a paltry 18% were competent in mathematics, according to statistics produced by the department. The figures were marginally higher for girls.”

Because provincial off-reserve schools are doing better, “As a result, she said, federally funded First Nations schools have ceded large portions of their enrolment to provincially run schools because they are seen to be better run.

“Indeed, 33% of First Nations learners normally living on a reserve now attend provincially operated or private schools.”

That’s one article I wanted to quote from.

I have a document, I believe, from your department, pointing out the advantage—first of all, highlighting that there is an aboriginal education gap. It’s called “Closing the Aboriginal Education Gap.”

This is the aboriginal educational gap: No matter what level of education, aboriginal people have lower graduation rates, and twice as many aboriginal people have not completed high school—twice as many—so it’s huge. It goes on to say what the huge benefits would be if we could close that gap.

I really do believe that that’s a really important thing that the government could do. I know that it’s part of your mandate letter, which was supplied and is public. Your mandate letter states: “Supporting the Minister of Education’s work to improve educational outcomes, closing the achievement gap for indigenous learners by 2020 and significantly increasing graduation rates for indigenous learners.”

I would be interested in knowing what you and your ministry are doing to achieve that very important goal in your mandate letter.

Hon. David Zimmer: Well, thank you for that question. Just for the record, I’ll note that the news piece that you saw in reference to the 2% funding cap and so on and so forth, was, essentially, a piece on the federal government and what it’s doing or not doing in education.

Mr. Norm Miller: That’s correct.

Hon. David Zimmer: So let me tell you what Ontario is doing and what we do to work with the feds or prod the feds.

First, I couldn’t agree with you more. I know that everybody at the ministry—and when I travel and visit First Nations and visit their leadership, the chiefs and their band council members and other indigenous leaders across Ontario, I would say that education—health and so on and economic opportunity one very, very, very important, but education is always raised as the key to the

future. Obviously, we want to keep people healthy today and have jobs today, and so on, but in the long term, there is a clear sense out there that education empowers people to have the ability and the facility and the opportunity to lead a better life—skills training, education and so on. That’s why, in fact, in *The Journey Together*, which I’ve referenced many times—I’ve talked about the five themes, how we’re responding to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission. At page 25, some things that Ontario is doing to address this—it’s under the heading “Classification of First Nation Schools Within the Education Act.” Right now, there’s an issue about how they’re classified or not classified within the Education Act.

“Ontario will explore the possibility of creating a new classification for First Nation/federally operated schools. This could enhance collaboration between the provincially funded education system”—that’s the school board in Bracebridge, for instance, in your riding—“and First Nation schools to help build greater capacity (e.g. professional development and learning resources) in First Nation schools.”

Mr. Norm Miller: So that would be the schools that are on-reserve that I was quoting that are doing so poorly?

Hon. David Zimmer: Yes, we could change the Education Act, and they could enter into relationships with off-reserve school boards.

In fact, as we speak, we’re working with indigenous partners to close that achievement gap between indigenous and non-indigenous students through a couple of programs. One is—and it’s proved very successful—the elementary summer learning, and the other is the Aboriginal Education Strategy. Last year, we announced \$97 million in funding over three years for indigenous post-secondary education and training. We are working with indigenous partners and the post-secondary education stakeholders—so the school boards off-reserve in the communities.

We want to develop a stand-alone aboriginal institutes policy. The idea is that that would incorporate indigenous-owned and controlled post-secondary education institutes into Ontario’s post-secondary education and training system.

The reason that we want to do things like that is because, as long as the First Nation education structure is sort of parked on its own, on the reserve and not getting the attention for it from the federal government that it should, to the extent that we can integrate them or roll them in or have them benefit from the education structures off-reserve, that’s a very good thing. Because right now—the numbers are often debated—and over the past few years, roughly, the numbers are that the feds put in, some people say, \$2,000, \$3,000 or \$4,000 per student, and the province, if you’re off-reserve, going to a school in Bracebridge, Ontario, is spending \$5,000, \$6,000 or \$7,000.

Mr. Norm Miller: I don’t know whether this article is necessarily correct, but it says that the federal department

pays \$8,000 if it's on-reserve, but if that same student goes to Timmins off-reserve and participates in the provincial system, they pay \$16,000. That's in the article. I don't know whether it's correct or not, but that's what it says.

Hon. David Zimmer: The point is that there's probably a 50% spread between what's spent on-reserve and off-reserve. The number, whether it's the number you quoted or other numbers, is what they factor in—some factor in salaries and structure costs and so on.

The Chair (Ms. Cheri DiNovo): You've got three minutes.

Hon. David Zimmer: But the point is that Ontario wants to work with the federal government, wants to work with indigenous on-reserve communities and share with them the benefit and the capacities and the things that the school boards and the school structures off-reserve can offer. It's a way of levelling the playing field—I shouldn't say, "level the playing field"; I should say, "bringing up the on-reserve education system to the same standard as the off-reserve."

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The irony is, if you're, say, in Fort William First Nation, which bumps up against the municipality of Thunder Bay, and you're an indigenous parent and you keep your child, for whatever reasons, and go to school on the Fort William First Nation, you get a significantly lesser amount of money spent for your child at that school. If you get up every day and drive across the road into Thunder Bay and go to the Thunder Bay school system, you're in a school where the amount spent on that student is, I'll just say roughly, 50% more. That's a lot of money. That directly affects the quality of the teaching, the quality of the books, the quality of the classroom that the child is in, the quality of the school trips—right across the board. So we have to close that gap, and that's what we're trying to do in partnership with the feds, First Nation schools and the Ontario school system.

Mr. Norm Miller: How much time do I have?

The Chair (Ms. Cheri DiNovo): You have a minute and a half.

Mr. Norm Miller: Well, I'll pose a couple of questions. They're not related.

The Truth and Reconciliation Commission recommends, in the question of overrepresentation of indigenous youth in the child welfare system, that there be annual reports provided on the number of aboriginal children in care compared to non-aboriginal children. Is your government doing those annual reports, or is that something that has started?

Hon. David Zimmer: The first step of tackling a number of these issues—for instance, the issue that you've just raised—is to get the right data: How many children are in the system compared to the numbers off-reserve, and so on? We are working with our indigenous partners, the federal government, MCYS, the Ministry of Community Safety and so on to get the actual numbers.

I can tell you that we've committed to transforming the way children and youth services are designed—and

not only how they're designed, but how those services are delivered in the province. We recognize that we have to have consistent and reliable collection of data as an important step in making the right policies and the right decisions about the question that you've asked.

The Chair (Ms. Cheri DiNovo): I'm afraid your time is up, Mr. Miller.

We now move to the third party: Madame Gélinas.

M^{me} France Gélinas: My first question, I hope, will be a short one. It has to do with Attawapiskat and De Beers, the diamond mining company. There are tensions right now between those two partners. I was wondering: In your role as the Ministry for Indigenous Relations, what is the work of the government to help those two partners?

Hon. David Zimmer: Sorry. Just give me the tail end of that question again—just the last few words.

M^{me} France Gélinas: Your ministry is the Ministry of Indigenous Relations. There is a tense relationship right now. What can your ministry offer?

Hon. David Zimmer: This is a direct responsibility of our "indigenous relationships" title to the ministry. There was a reason why we moved from the title "aboriginal affairs" to "indigenous relations and reconciliation": a big emphasis on relationship building.

With respect to the resource and its resource benefit sharing particular to Attawapiskat and the diamond mine: I've been up to Attawapiskat. I've been to the mine site. I've been to the community of Attawapiskat, and I've met with the people at the mining site and at the Attawapiskat First Nation. There also may be some potential to develop a second mine some eight or 10 kilometres down the road from the Victor mine, which is the one that has been there for four or five years.

We are committed to engaging with indigenous partners on approaches to enhance participation in the resource sector. We want to do that by improving the way that the benefits of the resource sector are shared with the indigenous communities. We'll work to consider in advance how revenue sharing in both the mining and the forestry sectors—our ministry works closely with the Ministry of Natural Resources and the Ministry of Northern Development and Mines.

We have begun engagement with First Nations on these issues of resource benefit sharing. We are continuing those discussions. We have a forum, a body, in which we have those discussions: How can we help on this resource benefit sharing piece? That body, if you will, is called—and you might want to make a note of this—the Ontario First Nations Economic Forum. That's being held in October of—well, this month, October 2016.

Ms. Alison Pilla: The 12th and 13th.

Hon. David Zimmer: The 12th and 13th of October.

I'm going to ask Assistant Deputy Minister Pilla to speak on how that forum has been organized, because it's a joint effort of the First Nations and us, and it's going to address particularly those kinds of issues.

M^{me} France Gélinas: I would like, Assistant Deputy, if you could stay focused on—there is tension right now between the mining—De Beers—and the Attawapiskat

First Nation, so I'm more interested in a focus on, if this relationship fails, then—the minister started by saying that he has been there, so is he the one who bears the brunt of the failure? How do we make sure that it becomes a successful partnership between those two in view of your focus on indigenous relations? This is a relationship that is tense right now. It is your mandate to ensure indigenous relationships are built. What are you doing specifically between Attawapiskat and De Beers?

Hon. David Zimmer: Just before the deputy speaks, the principal lead on the negotiation on the Victor mine and the mine down the road, or the potential mine down the road, is the Ministry of Northern Development and Mines.

Having said that, the Ministry of Northern Development and Mines looks to us for advice on relationship building. We have relationships with the chiefs—the chief in particular here—and other band leadership, and so we will communicate with Attawapiskat First Nation. We will be in communication with De Beers. We will continue to support this economic development proposal up there by providing—and here's what we do specifically: We provide consultation and engagement capacity for the First Nation—in this case, Attawapiskat—and we do that through something called our New Relationship Fund.

The New Relationship Fund has a significant chunk of money in it. That is used to help indigenous communities like Attawapiskat and other organizations so that they can engage with the government and the private sector on resource issues, such as—

M^{me} France Gélinas: Are those funds available to them now?

Hon. David Zimmer: That fund has been up and running. But now I'm going to let Assistant Deputy Minister Pilla respond to that.

Ms. Alison Pilla: So it's Alison Pilla. I'm assistant deputy minister for policy in the Ministry of Indigenous Relations.

The New Relationship Fund is a fund that is accessible to First Nation communities and Métis organizations on an annual basis. It's there to provide sufficient funding so that communities can have available a coordinator to manage consultation and partnerships with industry and with government.

As the government, we have a duty to consult with First Nations when there are resource developments that potentially have an impact. The ministries that are responsible for that are, in this case, as the minister said, MNDM, the Ministry of Northern Development and Mines. The funding from the New Relationship Fund is there to help communities address those issues where resource development or other activities may be occurring on the land, for which they need to engage the industry partner or discuss with the ministry. It gives them some capacity funding for that. It is available every year.

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M^{me} France Gélinas: So if the relationship right now is becoming tense, the resources are those annual resour-

ces for capacity building—is there anything else that's springing into action?

Hon. David Zimmer: We've talked about capacity building. We've used that expression many times in the course of the 14 hours. So what is capacity building? The question you ask about the De Beers Victor mine and the potential new mine down the road is a chance for me to explain how we actually help with capacity building. What does that mean?

So we had this New Relationship Fund. Now put yourself in the mind of a First Nation, and you're sitting down with a large company—in this case, De Beers, an international company all around the world—and they have the best talent available at a negotiation or a discussion about how to share the benefits of the resource or how to move ahead with the development. They have got engineers, lawyers, consultants and all of the expertise.

A First Nation like Attawapiskat obviously does not have those resources. They don't have the engineers, the consultants, the geologists, the economists and so forth. The New Relationship Fund will provide them with the resources so they can get that advice from the best professionals. They can sit across the table—

M^{me} France Gélinas: How much money are we talking about for Attawapiskat, coming out of this fund on an annual basis?

Hon. David Zimmer: Let me tell you—how much is in the New Relationship Fund?

Ms. Alison Pilla: For the full amount of the fund, I'm going to turn to my colleague here. Hillary Thatcher actually manages the fund. I think that it's around \$14.5 million a year that is available. Communities are required to apply for the funding. The fund is split up into a couple of pieces: One is for the core consultation, and there's a smaller amount available for other kinds of projects. That's how the fund is structured.

M^{me} France Gélinas: Right now, if I want to know how much is available to Attawapiskat in this fiscal year, how much is that?

Hon. David Zimmer: I don't know, but perhaps someone at the ministry knows.

M^{me} France Gélinas: I think she's looking it up.

Hon. David Zimmer: Yes.

If they've made the application—what triggers the process is that the First Nation calls and says, “We want to sit down and engage with company X on a development project. They're bringing all of their expertise and so on, and we need some help” —

M^{me} France Gélinas: So how much were they successful in securing for this year?

Hon. David Zimmer: I'm not sure if they've applied. I know that other First Nations have applied, but I'm just checking—

M^{me} France Gélinas: I think she has the answer.

Ms. Hillary Thatcher: I'm Hillary Thatcher, assistant deputy minister. The New Relationship Fund is provided to all communities. As we have procedures to ensure that the funds are being used and that we get reporting from

communities, we help oversee the communities' use of the funds.

For the last three years, Attawapiskat hasn't been receiving the New Relationship Fund. We continue to work with them on ensuring that their reporting is adequate to meet the need so we can continue funding.

Other funds are available through the province through the Aboriginal Economic Development Fund, which they're also eligible to apply for. We work with communities that indicate their needs and support them in that capacity.

The Chair (Ms. Cheri DiNovo): Madame Gélinas, you've got two minutes left.

M^{me} France Gélinas: How much was Attawapiskat able to secure from this other fund for this fiscal year?

Ms. Hillary Thatcher: To my knowledge, they haven't made an application for that fund.

Hon. David Zimmer: There is \$95 million or \$94 million—

Ms. Hillary Thatcher: It's \$95 million.

Hon. David Zimmer: —in the Aboriginal Economic Development Fund over 10 years. But a contribution from the fund is triggered by a request or application from the First Nation.

M^{me} France Gélinas: I just wanted to put it on the record that Attawapiskat and De Beers's relationship is really tense. You have a responsibility within your ministry under indigenous relations to look at indigenous relations. This is a relationship right now that needs a little bit of attention, and the tools that you have shared with me to help them are not helping them because they get zero dollars out of your ministry from those two—

Hon. David Zimmer: But it has to be triggered by an application. If you're going to Attawapiskat this weekend, speak to the band council, speak to the chief—and we're here. I've been up there. I've discussed these issues with the chief. I don't know why an application has not been made. Many other First Nations make regular applications and receive capacity funding. I've talked about capacity funding many times in the last 14 hours. It's one of the most successful and necessary pieces that we've got to level the playing field between sophisticated, private sector negotiation teams and First Nations negotiation teams.

Ms. Cheri DiNovo: Thirty seconds.

M^{me} France Gélinas: I'm just curious to see: Was any money allocated to the political accord that was signed with Grand Chief Isadore Day? All good; I just wanted to know how much expenditures were made or triggered by this accord.

Hon. David Zimmer: Just give me a second.

The Chair (Ms. Cheri DiNovo): You've only got about five seconds, so could you perhaps table that and get back to Madame Gélinas with that?

Hon. David Zimmer: Yes, all right.

The Chair (Ms. Cheri DiNovo): We now move to the government side: 13 and a half minutes. Ms. Kiwala.

Ms. Sophie Kiwala: Thank you once again for being here with us for this last few minutes of your time at estimates committee.

The first thing I want to say is, we've been discussing a little bit about Attawapiskat, and I just want to give a shout-out to my colleague, MPP Potts, and a group in his community, the Beaches Recreation Centre, which has raised \$3,500 for some hockey equipment for Attawapiskat. I just wanted put that on the record.

The item that I would like to talk to you about today is the significance of Treaties Recognition Week and what we're doing to promote it. I think it came out at the same time perhaps as the treaty map did. I'm not sure if I'm remembering that correctly. I'm wondering if you can talk a bit about that in the last few minutes that we have remaining.

Hon. David Zimmer: The significance of treaties: I think yesterday or the day before—I believe it was yesterday—I talked about the significance of treaties and so on and this concept, or this expression—it's more than an expression—this commitment that we make now and that we use regularly in our discussions and communication with First Nations, the private sector and members of the public. That's the phrase, "We are all treaty peoples." What we mean by "we are all treaty peoples" is that there are 43 treaties in Ontario. Treaties cover, essentially, all of Ontario.

Another way to think of a treaty is as a contract. They started to make treaties in the mid- and late 18th century, and they've made them regularly ever since. The last treaty was Treaty 9, which was done in 1906. Then there was something called the adhesion to Treaty 9, which was done in 1929. The remaining treaty that we're working on is actually out for ratification. I walked you through that negotiation piece, and that treaty negotiation is out for ratification as we speak.

But put your mind back 200 years ago or 150 years ago. The British government is here and they're moving north. They sit down with a First Nation in the north—perhaps it's near your area—and they negotiate a treaty. I have some of these original treaties, facsimiles of them, in my office, in the library, and I've looked at them. I looked at one treaty—I've looked at a number of treaties, but I remember one in particular.

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It was several long pages—five, six, seven pages—done in the late 18th century, beautifully handwritten script by an English scribe, all in proper 18th-century English, grammatically correct, with the 18th-century spellings and grammatical conventions of the day. Then, at the bottom you can see where the crown agent or the lieutenant governor or the local general, whoever was there, signed on behalf of the crown, and the Great Seal was put on it. Then, on the other side, there are a series of Xs.

I researched some of the history of that. We have some historical people in the ministry who have PhDs in First Nations history, and they told me the history of this particular treaty. It was the British land agent who had concluded the treaty, and then drew the treaty up and sat

down with the First Nation. I stand to be corrected on this, but the language was either Ojibway or Cree. The question was: How does one translate this? They got somebody who knew some English and some Cree or Ojibway—I forget which it was—who took the six- or seven-page treaty drafted by, I suppose, English lawyers and so forth and so on, and sort of gave the gist of the treaty.

A treaty is really a contract: If the government signs a treaty and the First Nations sign a treaty, one side says, “We’re going to do this,” and the other side is going to do that, and all the details are spelled out. Imagine yourself: You’re a First Nation, you’re at the signing ceremony and someone who has a sprinkling of English and Ojibway sort of says, “Well, this is the gist of the treaty. That’s what it means,” so you put the X and the treaty is signed.

It wasn’t until generations later when First Nations men and women who had become businesspersons and lawyers and accountants, and who had a good education and a full command of English, sat down and said, “Oh, I’m just going to have a look at this treaty,” and read the treaty through. When they got through the process of reading the treaty and examining it closely, the penny dropped. They said, “Ah, for the last 50 years” or 100 years or 150 years “we were supposed to be getting this and that, and the crown was supposed to be doing this and that. We were supposed to have this piece of land and have these rights, and the crown was going to pay this amount. And it never happened.” It never happened.

So as anybody else would do when there’s a contract between parties and they’ve agreed to do things for the mutual benefit of each other, the new breed of indigenous leaders, the businesspersons and lawyers and so on, came to the government and to the courts and wanted rectification. That’s what a lot of these negotiations are about: “Look at the treaty. There was a responsibility and an obligation to do thus and thus and it never happened, so you have to do it now. We’re looking for compensation for the past breaches of that treaty.”

In that regard, what we did was Treaties Recognition Week, in which we announced that there’s legislation that has proclaimed that the first week of November—so that will be this coming month—of every year as Treaties Recognition Week. What is Treaties Recognition Week? It establishes the week as a part of Ontario’s treaty strategy, which I talked about the last few days, to revitalize that treaty relationship and pursue reconciliation of the relationships with First Nations through dialogues—and not only dialogues, but then actions that one should reasonably take or follow up on as a result of the dialogues. Treaties Recognition Week is also a part of our government’s response to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission. It specifically calls on governments to raise awareness of treaties and indigenous histories.

If I can tell you another anecdote about Treaties Recognition Week—I think I told you the story earlier about the map on my wall and the businessperson who came through and didn’t realize there were 133 First Nations in Ontario. He was quite taken by the map,

because it has colour-coded the 43 treaties and the dates of the treaties going back to the late or mid-18th century.

That map, as I said earlier, has gone out to 5,200 or 5,400 elementary and high schools in Ontario, with an instruction to the school through the school board and through the Ministry of Education—Minister Sandals, as she then was. The treaty is posted in a prominent place in the school. There is a series of talks around the map and what it means.

I arranged to have the first map done in a school in Willowdale. An elder from the Mississaugas of the New Credit was there, and we arranged to have Mr. Justice Sidney Linden come. They spoke about the treaty map and what treaty awareness means and told them the story that I’ve just told you about the treaties that were entered into by very sophisticated crown agents and First Nations who did not have a command of English, and all the efforts that we’re doing to sort that out.

The Chair (Ms. Cheri DiNovo): Minister, you have three minutes left.

Hon. David Zimmer: Proclaiming Treaties Recognition Week in Ontario has been an enormous success. We sent out 5,300 or 5,400 of those maps to the schools, but I understand now that our print is up to 11,000. What we’re finding is that industry and the private sector and churches and municipalities across the province have found out about this map, and they call us and say, “Send us a copy of the map.”

I know that down at Maple Leaf Gardens, I think there’s a copy up there because Larry Tanenbaum, who’s at Maple Leaf Sports and Entertainment, decided that he wanted to have a map up in his office so that all of the people who came through his office could understand what treaties were all about. He’s very interested in that because he plays an important role in Right to Play, which makes an enormous contribution to young First Nation and Métis and Inuit athletes who want to learn to play hockey and sports and so on because it gives them discipline and confidence and so on.

I would, as a parting comment, urge each and every one of you to get one of those maps and to promote it in your school. I can tell you that at St. Paul’s university, which is a constituent college of the University of Waterloo, they have got an indigenous room set aside, and that map is prominently displayed—

Ms. Daiene Vernile: Yes, in the United church.

Hon. David Zimmer: It’s in the church there, and it has generated a lot of activity. I get many requests to speak to schools, church groups, women’s clubs, men’s clubs, Rotary clubs—they really want to understand this concept of treaties and this idea that we are all treaty peoples and what that means. That, of course, then leads to discussions on all of the issues that we’ve been talking about today: health, education, resource benefit sharing and why it’s necessary and it’s the right thing to do all of those things, because all of those things sort of grow out of treaty obligations, and we are all treaty peoples.

I’ll stop there, Chair.

The Chair (Ms. Cheri DiNovo): You’ve got 30 seconds, if you want to say something.

Hon. David Zimmer: I have three seconds?

The Chair (Ms. Cheri DiNovo): Thirty.

Hon. David Zimmer: Thirty seconds. Well, the next time I'm up in Bracebridge and I'm near the town hall, or perhaps your constituency office, Mr. Miller, I will pop in and expect to see a treaty map on the wall.

Mr. Norm Miller: I've got one in my office.

Hon. David Zimmer: See? He's got one in his office. That's why you're the critic, because you have a—

M^{me} France Gélinas: Also because you gave us all one. I have one in my office.

Hon. David Zimmer: You have one in your office? Well, if anybody hasn't seen the treaty map, it will trigger a whole lot of questions and ideas and interest. It's the way to get started.

The Chair (Ms. Cheri DiNovo): Thank you, Minister. This concludes the committee's consideration of the estimates of the Ministry of Aboriginal Affairs. Standing order 66(b) requires that the Chair put, without further amendment or debate, every question necessary to dispose of the estimates. Are the members ready to vote?

Shall vote 2001, the Ministry of Aboriginal Affairs program, carry? Carried.

Shall the 2016-17 estimates of the Ministry of Aboriginal Affairs carry? Carried.

Shall I report the 2016-17 estimates of the Ministry of Aboriginal Affairs to the House? I will do that.

Thank you all.

By the way, we now stand adjourned until October 18 at 9 a.m.

Hon. David Zimmer: May I just take 15 seconds? I just want to thank the committee for the 15 hours of their attention and interest, and I hope that you all have a better appreciation of these issues. I certainly have a better appreciation of the issues that I've gained from some of the very pointed questions on these issues. It's given me and officials from the ministry things to think about. Thank you for the questions from the opposition parties and from my colleagues on the government side. It's a dialogue.

The Chair (Ms. Cheri DiNovo): Thank you all.

The committee adjourned at 1642.

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