

# NDP Caucus News

For Immediate Release

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## **NDP Presses Government on Referendum Logistics, Calls for Transparency**

Transparency must always be at the forefront of governing. That is why Newfoundland and Labrador NDP Leader Jim Dinn (St. John's Centre) wrote to Premier Wakeham over a month ago calling for clarity on what a referendum would look like. Dinn has yet to receive a response.

In the letter, Dinn emphasizes the need for public education, noting that the memorandum of understanding (MOU) is a complex agreement requiring meaningful, unbiased public engagement to ensure voters fully understand what they are being asked to decide. Dinn pointed out that even MHAs spent four full days in the House of Assembly questioning experts, yet many questions remained unanswered.

"You are anticipating the report of the Churchill Falls MOU Oversight Committee to be publicly available at the end of April and have stated you are committed to holding a referendum on the agreement. Considering the above we are seeking answers to the following questions:

1. When will the Referendum be held?
2. Will the results of the referendum be binding or simply advisory?
3. Will the question require a simple yes/no vote or will there be multiple parts?
4. What measures will be put in place to ensure the public is fully informed about the MOU and the report of the committee so that they know What they are voting on?
5. What is the estimated cost of information sessions?
6. How will the referendum take place? Will it take place similar to a provincial election? Will it be online?
7. What is the estimated cost of a referendum?
8. What is the threshold for acceptance? 50% plus 1? 60? 75%
9. What is the threshold for voter turnout? For example, if only 30% of eligible voters vote, is that enough to consider the result of the referendum valid?
10. What would the release date and review, and referendum at some point thereafter, mean for the deadline of April 30th for the final signature? That date has been committed to in the signed MOU approved by QC and NL. Is NL Hydro contractually able to break that date, or are they negotiating to gain more time so they and the provincial government can do all the consulting they need before signing any final agreement?
11. If for some reason the final agreements are not ratified and the deal falls through, what are your government's plans to ensure Labrador West accesses the power it needs to grow and sustain itself?"

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“Like you, the NDP seeks transparency and the best possible deal for the people of our province. Transparency also applies to the referendum process. The people of the province need assurance that you have a well thought out plan for the referendum and informing the public,” Dinn concluded. “In light of Premier Legault’s resignation, we ask for the opportunity to meet with you to discuss our concerns and questions with the purpose of working together to get the best deal for Newfoundlanders and Labradorians.”

A copy of the letter is attached.

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