

NDP Caucus News

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NDP Raises Transparency Concerns Over Lack of Detail in Bay du Nord Announcement

NL NDP Leader Jim Dinn (St. John's Centre) and MHA Sheilagh O'Leary (St. John's East–Quidi Vidi) used Question Period in the House of Assembly today to press government on the lack of transparency and substantive detail surrounding last night's Bay du Nord announcement – an event that opposition members were neither invited to attend nor provided with a formal briefing on.

Dinn began by addressing the lack of transparency around the announcement, noting that it was eerily similar to the Liberals surprise announcement of the Churchill Falls MOU. He said the lack of a decision being made by Equinor on the deal until 2027 highlights that even though the PCs are against “flashy announcements” when done by Liberals, they themselves have now taken a page out of their books.

“Speaker, yesterday, the government pulled out all the stops in its announcement of a benefits agreement – not a final deal. Equinor will not be making their final investment decision until 2027. So, will the Premier admit that without a final investment decision from Equinor that yesterday's announcement was, as the Minister of Health put it when discussing the MOU announcement, a “sexy, glamorous” public relations exercise?

“It's familiar, Speaker – the same approach we saw with the MOU on Churchill Falls: no details, no transparency, no debate,” Dinn said. “I ask the Premier: why has his government taken a page from the Liberal playbook on secrecy instead of transparency?”

O'Leary followed, raising concerns about the unknown amount of public dollars that will be spent by this government to get the deal over the finish line. She points out that the provinces fiscal situation is dire, and that with PC campaign promises already projecting a \$30 million deficit, she wonders what this will mean for our fiscal reality.

“This year alone, we have an almost 1-billion-dollar deficit. People in this province cannot afford to heat their homes, put food on the table as the affordability crisis continues to grow. Yet, last night the Premier said he would spend “whatever it takes” to push this oil project forward but refused to disclose the amount. I ask the Premier: how much public money will be spent on corporate welfare handouts to support a multi-billion-dollar company?”

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