

# NDP Caucus News

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## **Dinn Condemns Government’s Handling of MOU Report Release as “a Farce”**

NL NDP Leader Jim Dinn (St. John’s Centre) is condemning government for its handling of the Independent Panel Report on the Churchill Falls MOU, saying Premier Wakeham walked back promises of transparency by failing to make any of the panel members available to answer questions following the report’s release.

After the panel delivered its report, Premier Wakeham told media that panelists would be available to answer questions – prompting Dinn to call for them to answer questions in the House of Assembly so MHAs could fully examine the findings and the public would be able to watch. Today, government announced the panelists will not be available, and questions will instead be taken by the Premier and the Minister of Energy and Mines. Dinn says this is unacceptable and damages the credibility of the report.

“This is a farce, I don’t really know what else to say at this point,” said Dinn. “After all this talk of transparency, the Premier and the Minister are choosing to be the mouthpieces of this report to the public – which calls into question just who is running the show? The public expected the panelists to be available for questions on the report, as the Premier said himself. Why? Did the panelists not want to do that? Did the Premier not want the panelists to answer questions? We deserve answers here.”

“The NDP was very vocal about the way the MOU was announced, highlighting the same lack of transparency with the former Liberal government, but I will give credit to the groups who did come to speak to members in the House of Assembly last winter when we first discussed the deal,” Dinn continued. “JP Morgan, NL Hydro, they made time to come answer our questions for days. So, why now do we not get the same commitment from the panel?”

“I have to ask, is this about the deal, or about managing the message? Does the Premier think that partisan politicians presenting what was an independent report will create trust that what is being said is truth? All of the arguments they made against the Liberals around transparency could be thrown right back at them now. Look at all the political messaging around this report – do they think people won’t question why these paid panel members themselves are not answering questions on their work?”

“The people of the province deserve better than this.”

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For further information, contact Stephanie Curran, Media and Communications Officer, NDP Caucus at 330-0328 (o), or [stephaniecurran@assembly.nl.ca](mailto:stephaniecurran@assembly.nl.ca)