

Censure of the Minister of Health and Social Services

WHEREAS the Legislative Assembly of the Northwest Territories operates under a system of consensus government wherein Members of the Executive Council are elected by, and serve at the pleasure of, the Legislative Assembly;

AND WHEREAS accountability, transparency, and a steadfast commitment to the well-being of the residents of the Northwest Territories are fundamental prerequisites for holding a seat on the Executive Council;

AND WHEREAS the May 2026 Report of the Auditor General of Canada on Child and Family Services in the Northwest Territories has exposed severe, chronic, and unacceptable failures within the department, including a 71% failure rate in meeting safety deadlines for high-risk investigations, an absence of mandatory monthly contacts for 91% of children in care, and a complete lack of required cultural support plans for two-thirds of Indigenous children;

AND WHEREAS the Minister of Health and Social Services has failed to execute immediate, corrective operational remedies to protect vulnerable youth, notwithstanding the existence of clear, actionable recommendations for structural reform delivered by the Standing Committee on Social Development in the 19th Legislative Assembly of which the Minister was a Member.

AND WHEREAS these ongoing administrative deficiencies have resulted in the direct and documented endangerment of vulnerable children within the territory - conditions of risk that were entirely foreseeable and about which the Minister possessed explicit, long-standing awareness, yet failed to enact decisive interventions to mitigate;

AND WHEREAS the territorial healthcare system under the Minister's current leadership continues to experience profound operational degradation, resulting in critical service reductions, extended healthcare facility closures across regional communities, acute frontline nursing shortages, and escalating wait times that directly compromise the medical safety of NWT residents;

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Date of Notice: June 2, 2026
Date de l'avis : 2 juin 2026

Date of Introduction:
Date de présentation :

Disposition: Withdrawn
Disposition : Retiré

Carried:
Adoptée :

Moved by: Mr. Testart
Proposée par : M. Testart

Seconded by: Mr. Edjericon
Appuyée par : M. Edjericon

Ruled Out of Order:
Déclarée irrecevable :

AND WHEREAS the Minister has not implemented comprehensive reforms to medical travel policies, failing to establish transparent, compassionate exemptions as mandated by two separate motions formally adopted by the 20th Legislative Assembly

AND WHEREAS the Minister's failure to address persistent systemic deficiencies within both the child and family services framework and the broader healthcare delivery model has allowed these systems to continue to disproportionately harm Indigenous peoples, thereby actively reinforcing systemic racism and undermining reconciliation efforts within the Northwest Territories;

AND WHEREAS the Minister has failed to present an emergency, crisis-level mitigation strategy to stabilize either the child welfare workforce or the broader territorial healthcare delivery network, instead relying on external operational challenges as an excuse rather than presenting a substantive, internal corrective action plan;

NOW THEREFORE I MOVE, seconded by the Member for Tu Nedhé-Wiilideh, that this Legislative Assembly formally censures the Member for Inuvik Twin Lakes, the Honourable Lesa Semmler, for her poor performance as Minister of Health and Social Services and her failure to uphold the operational and accountability standards required of her portfolio.