

Written Question

Asked by:

MLA Yellowknife North

March 15, 2018

My questions today are for the Minister of Education, Culture and Employment, and relate specifically to changes to the Seniors Home Heating Subsidy (SHHS) program. In the Minister's Statement on March 6, 2018, he announced updates and changes to this program, but the guidelines currently published on the Department's website are from June 2016.

1. The Minister announced increases in the income threshold to determine eligibility and the amount of the subsidy. Can the Minister explain the details of the changes in eligibility to the SHHS, specifically, how are the income thresholds and income limits going to change?
2. Changing to a monetary-based subsidy could conceivably make the value of the subsidy subject to market changes in the price of fuel. Can the Minister explain the rationale for changing to a monetary-based subsidy and how it will avoid a scenario where seniors are exposed to cost fluctuations?
3. Under a monetary-based subsidy, the Government will provide funding to suppliers of fuels who will track deliveries to consumers. How will the change to a monetary-based subsidy affect consumers who want access to two or three types of fuel, such as a homeowner who uses both heating fuel and wood or pellets?
4. The level of subsidy is partly determined by a zone system. Can the Minister explain if the zone system for communities has changed, and what the rationale was for making this change?
5. The Minister announced that the program will now be extended to renters, not just homeowners. Can the Minister explain how the SHHS will apply to seniors who rent their homes?

