



September 3, 2020

MR. RYLUND JOHNSON
MLA, YELLOWKNIFE NORTH

Oral Question 197-19(2) Business Incentive Program

This letter is in follow-up to the Oral Question you raised with the Minister of Finance on March 12, 2020 regarding the inclusion of Walmart in the Business Incentive Policy (BIP).

I can advise that Walmart was approved as a BIP business in June 2005 pursuant to a provision in place at the time that made non-resident-owned businesses eligible after operating in the Northwest Territories for ten consecutive years.

The BIP was amended in 2010 after lengthy consultations with regular Members, indigenous governments, industry and the general public. Among the amendments was removing the eligibility of non-resident-owned businesses but those that had already been approved were “grandfathered” into the amended BIP. Walmart was one such business.

I recognize that there are a number of concerns with the BIP in its current form. The one that you raised is among them, but the policy question is bigger and more complex than removing the BIP status of any particular business.

We committed in the 2019-2023 Mandate to reviewing and improving our procurement policies and practices, including the BIP, and the status of non-resident-owned businesses will be a part of that review. Internal work on the review is underway along with developing next steps. I also look forward to the briefing on procurement that will be provided to the Standing Committee on Government Operations.

Thank you for raising this issue and I look forward to working with you on the review going forward.

Shane Thompson
Minister
Industry, Tourism and Investment

c. List Attached

Honourable Caroline Wawzonek
Minister of Finance

Mr. Tim Mercer
Clerk of the Legislative Assembly

Mr. David Hastings
Legislative Coordinator, Executive