



Alternatives North

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COUNTDOWN CLOCK IS RUNNING ON DEVOLUTION CONSULTATIONS

Alternatives North has launched a Devolution Countdown Clock to keep track of the shrinking period available for public input into the Draft Devolution Final Agreement. There are now 36 days left in the government-mandated consultation period, which runs out May 10.

After the March 11 signing of the agreement, Premier Bob McLeod promised 60 days of 'unprecedented public consultations' for citizens to share their views on the details of the draft, and on the future of GNWT natural resource management.

"Devolution will bring about changes even greater than when the NWT divided in 1999," says Alternatives North spokesperson Gordon Hamre. "Yet three weeks into the promised consultation window, NWT citizens are still waiting to learn how their voices will be heard, and, especially, how their input will be reflected in the final agreement."

"That's in spite of the fact that an EKOS poll commissioned by Alternatives North revealed that just over 7 in 10 respondents said they want to vote on the agreement."

"MLAs voted down a plebiscite as a means for citizens to express their view on the deal. The period for public study and feedback is collapsing. The lack of action and clarity on a meaningful consultation process calls the worth of these activities into serious question," he said.

Devolution information documents are posted on the Alternatives North website, including analysis of the Yukon devolution experience and conditions in Nunavut. Alternatives North will participate in public activities to promote informed discussion on the devolution agreement, and to improve the quality of resource management that will be developed after the transfer of responsibilities.

"A government web site, ads and a few information sessions is not consultation. The Premier promised 'unprecedented' consultations, which means a two-way exchange that can influence the outcome. The public is waiting for him to deliver."

See the Alternatives North Devolution Countdown Clock and information documents at www.alternativesnorth.ca

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