

IN RESPONSE

'Petty spin' on CEMI story shows 'uglier side of politics': Clement

(Re: CEMI stories appearing in the May 28 and June 2 issues of Northern Life)

Tony Clement



I feel it necessary to set the record straight. I think that everyone needs to be privy to some of the facts surrounding the spin, to bring a bit more balance to the Centre for Excellence in Mining Innovation (CEMI) Knowledge Infrastructure Program (KIP) story. Here are the facts.

The Government of Canada through KIP can only fund new projects that: a) submit a funding proposal, b) have a proposal that qualifies for funding within the program criteria (e.g. the funds are used for building and renovation, not operations, and that the project will be completed by March 31, 2011) and, c) have matching funds from either the province or the university or college. The KIP program can only match funds for renovation projects up to 50 per cent.

Laurentian University did not apply for funding for CEMI under the Knowledge Infrastructure Program.

Laurentian University applied for their Living with Lakes project and our government was proud to award over \$5.1 million towards it. Unfortunately, due to the ridiculous "perceived snub" story spun by the local MPP and the Sudbury Chamber of Commerce, this very positive story received almost no media coverage.

For the majority of projects awarded KIP funds, the Government of Ontario provided 50 per cent of funding, thus, as a partner, the majority of funding decisions for this program were joint.

The University of Toronto's Innovation Centre for Canadian Mining Industry, founded in 1878, has provided mining education to thousands of Ontarians for over a hundred years. Many Canadians, who

Laurentian University did not apply for funding for CEMI under the Knowledge Infrastructure Program.

make a living in the mining sector, including those around Sudbury, received their formal education at this institution. Their project was selected because it applied for funding and it met the criteria.

KIP has proved a valuable stimulus tool, creating jobs for Canadians over the next two years, while building our province's post secondary capacity to teach and train for future generations of Canadians. The petty spin that has taken over this story shows the uglier side of politics, and it is regrettable that not every publication represents the full story.

Tony Clement
Minister of Industry

Editors note:

The spin of this newspaper is to stand up for Sudbury. We have nothing against the positive intent of KIP and applaud the investment in the Land of Living Lakes program at the university. That said, the governance model for northern Ontario is broken. Funding mining innovation centres in Toronto when there is already one up-and-running in Sudbury (notwithstanding the federal governments refusal to support it) does long-term harm to the mining cluster in Sudbury and it is lousy economic planning.

We think it is fair to expect more from our senior levels of government and feel it is our job to point it out.

MA

