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Time for Williams to wade into PUB debate: Jones

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Premier Danny Williams is evading his responsibilities under the Public Utilities Act to set down the terms and conditions of St. John's Mayor Andy Wells's appointment as the full-time chair of the Board of Commissioners of Public Utilities (PUB), Opposition Leader Yvonne Jones is charging.

"So far, the premier has avoided public discussion on the matter and now it's time for him to wade in," Jones said in a statement released today.

"In wanting to remain mayor of St. John's while simultaneously acting as chair of the PUB, Andy Wells is putting himself and the board in a conflict position; the PUB will not be able to properly handle hearings and issues that may arise related to the capital city without tainting the process."

Jones cited a section of the Public Utilities Act that gives cabinet the responsibility for setting the terms and conditions of Wells's appointment.

"Resolving this issue is in the hands of Premier Williams," Jones said.

"It's simple: Premier Williams must ask Andy Wells to resign his position as mayor if he wants to take the position as chair of the PUB. He can keep one job or take the new job but he can't have both jobs at the same time."

Wells has indicated he will stay on as mayor until at least September. His job at the PUB begins March 1.