

Government reviewing Torbay bypass route

Minister maintains current plan is best

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A road proposed more than 30 years ago and announced last year is being put under the microscope once again.

During question period at the House of Assembly on Monday, Liberal transportation critic Roland Butler asked Minister Dianne Whalen if she's looked at the numerous petitions he has tabled in the House about the route for the Torbay Bypass Road.

Whalen said she has met with a committee of people from the area who have concerns.

"We have made a commitment that we would review that file again," said Whalen. "That file has been ongoing now for 30 years and we have heard many concerns from the area.

"But right now, the best route that I've been told is the route that is now proposed. But we are, indeed, reviewing that file again."

Butler asked when the minister



Roland Butler

would get back to the people of the area.

Whalen said it was still being reviewed, but she would meet with the concerned residents once that review is complete and she has some answers for them.

The proposed plan would see a five-lane highway go through a part of the town.

"The major concern that the people have there is that school children may have to cross this highway to get to the bus stops," said Butler who then asked Education Minister Joan Burke if that goes against any policy in her department.

"Once the highway is in place ... the busing company or the (school) boards, depending on who operates the bus, they would certainly look at what would be the most appropriate place for bus stops at that time," replied Burke.

Several residents told The Telegram last month the proposed bypass road will cause people's properties to be taken away, their homes subjected to high traffic volumes and possibly congestion problems.

The \$10-million highway project was announced a year ago and was expected to be finished by the fall of 2009.