

Williams reaffirms Muskrat Falls support

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Danny Williams is once again voicing his support for the proposed Muskrat Falls hydroelectric project.

The former premier waded into the debate with a major speech to the St. John's Board of Trade on Monday.

"I fully support and endorse the development of Muskrat Falls," he told a packed audience at the St. John's Convention Centre.

"It is time to choose our destiny. It is time to act. It is time to take our place on the world stage as a true energy warehouse."

Williams' words came as no surprise, since negotiating the terms of the multibillion-dollar hydro deal was his last major act as premier.

He also defended the provincial government and Nalcor against criticism from the project's opponents, and stood up for Premier Kathy Dunderdale. He backed up her claim that Quebec is an issue in the deal.

"I've seen up close and personal the lengths to which Hydro-Quebec will go in order to disadvantage Newfoundland and Labrador," Williams said.

"It is not a myth or an urban legend. It is a reality."

Williams also defended himself. He currently plays a central role with Alderon, a company with significant mining interests in Labrador and with a need for affordable electricity.

Critics say it's a conflict of interest for Williams.

"I most certainly would not jeopardize years of working for this province or my own personal reputation for the sake of Muskrat Falls or a mining company," he said.