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Portion of loan to boost seal hunt repaid

By Staff

The Canadian Press

ST. JOHN'S, N.L. – The government of Newfoundland and Labrador has been repaid just over half of a \$2-million loan it provided a company to help boost this year's commercial harp seal hunt.

Provincial fisheries minister Derrick Dalley rose in the legislature today to announce that Carino Processing Ltd. has made the first payment of approximately \$1.1 million toward the loan.

The original ceiling on the loan was for \$3.6 million, but Carino didn't draw down the full amount for pelt and blubber purchases.

A spokesman for the provincial Fisheries and Aquaculture Department says that's because difficult ice conditions reduced the number of harvesters able to participate in this year's hunt.

Dalley said the program was a success because it helped provide a market for about 430 harvesters and 388 vessels who were involved in the harvest.

The cabinet minister said the province remains "proud to support the seal harvest," saying it is a centuries-old part of the province's heritage.

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