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The Honourable Paul Delorey, Speaker

Legislative Assembly of the Northwest Territories

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Box 1320
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Tel: (867) 669-2200 Fax: (867) 920-4735 Toll-Free: 1-800-661-0784
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YELLOWKNIFE, NORTHWEST TERRITORIES**Thursday, June 4, 2009****Members Present**

Mr. Abernethy, Mr. Beaulieu, Ms. Bisaro, Mr. Bromley, Hon. Paul Delorey, Mrs. Groenewegen, Mr. Hawkins, Mr. Jacobson, Mr. Krutko, Hon. Jackson Lafferty, Hon. Sandy Lee, Hon. Bob McLeod, Hon. Michael McLeod, Hon. Robert McLeod, Mr. Menicoche, Hon. Michael Miltenberger, Mr. Ramsay, Hon. Floyd Roland, Mr. Yakeleya

The House met at 1:37 p.m.

Prayer

---Prayer

SPEAKER (Hon. Paul Delorey): Good afternoon, colleagues. Welcome back to the Chamber. Orders of the day. Item 2, Ministers' statements. The honourable Premier, Mr. Roland.

Ministers' Statements

**MINISTER'S STATEMENT 86-13(6):
HEALING AND RECONCILIATION**

HON. FLOYD ROLAND: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, next Thursday, June 11th, will mark the one year anniversary of the Government of Canada's apology to aboriginal victims of the Indian residential school system.

The Assembly of First Nations has called on provincial, territorial and national governments to celebrate this day annually, as 'the National Day of Reconciliation'. This reconciliation is currently honoured and recognized across our country on a variety of dates between May 26th, as recognized by the 15th Assembly, and June 21st, National Aboriginal Day.

The residential school experience is an indelible part of our history and our culture in the Northwest Territories. As Northerners, we continue to work together to heal the many ills that were created during this chapter of our society.

As a government, we are working to support this healing, through our work with the Residential Schools Interagency Committee.

Through the Department of Health and Social Services, we continue to provide trauma support, counselling and referral to advanced psychological services. The Department of Justice funds community programs that support and encourage healing. Meanwhile, the Department of Education, Culture and Employment continues to work with former students to provide records related to their school years and the topic is now covered at age-appropriate levels at several points in the NWT's Social Studies and Northern Studies curriculum.

Mr. Speaker, as we reconcile the history of residential schools, it is important that our children understand the full legacy of these schools in the

Northwest Territories. As communities, families and educators, we must not shy from discussions of this topic.

We need to work together to ensure that the children of tomorrow are confident and empowered, and that the cycle of misfortune that was created from the residential school experience is now over.

Bishop Murray Chatlain's apology to NWT Dene last week and the appointment of new individuals to lead the work of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission for residential schools are other important steps that have recently been taken in this journey.

This anniversary is an opportunity for us all to consider this part of our history and the much more positive future that we can build from the closure that was begun by the Prime Minister's apology, one year ago.

It will represent an opportunity for all Canadians, political and aboriginal leaders, to join together and declare their broad commitment to acknowledge the past and work together for a better future. I encourage all NWT residents to recognize and embrace the National Day of Reconciliation as part of the journey of healing that we must all take together.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Roland. The honourable Minister responsible for Industry, Tourism and Investment, Mr. Bob McLeod.

**MINISTER'S STATEMENT 87-16(3):
ECONOMIC INCENTIVES FOR
SMALL BUSINESS**

HON. BOB MCLEOD: Mr. Speaker, many small businesses in the Northwest Territories are now experiencing the impacts of the economic downturn and commercial credit crunch. As a government we recognize that one of the roles that we must fill in an economic downturn is to take steps to encourage and assist the business sector to maintain employment levels and expenditures so as to sustain economic activity levels.

I am pleased today to advise Members of this House that the Department of Industry, Tourism and Investment and the Northwest Territories Business Development and Investment Corporation have introduced new initiatives to assist Northwest

Territories small businesses, while encouraging investments and expenditures in our economy.

The sector support initiative under the department's Support for Entrepreneurs and Economic Development Program provides an interest incentive of up to \$15,000 per year for a maximum of two years for businesses in designated sectors that borrow money to establish or expand. Given the economic challenges that Northwest Territories businesses face, I have designated all sectors as being eligible for this assistance for the current year.

The Business Development and Investment Corporation has also launched some new lending initiatives including variable interest rate financing, a Working Capital Guarantee Program, winter/summer resupply financing, and BDIC seasonal production financing. Each of these initiatives is designed to bring greater flexibility in tailoring business credit to meet the needs of northern businesses.

In addition to these programs, I am very pleased to announce today that the Business Development and Investment Corporation will offer to all borrowers an interest rate renewal option to renew their loans at the current base rate of prime plus 2 percent, subject to some conditions. This is another important measure that will assist our northern business community during challenging economic times.

We have stated as an Assembly that we are committed to developing a diversified economy that provides all communities and regions with opportunities and choices.

I would like to thank the members of the Standing Committee on Economic Development and Infrastructure for their suggestions and ongoing support. These new tools are designed to enable us to better support small businesses in all of our communities and regions. I encourage all small businesses to take advantage of the programs and services that are in place to help them manage through the challenging times and position themselves for the future.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. McLeod. The honourable Minister responsible for the NWT Housing Corporation, Mr. Michael McLeod.

MINISTER'S STATEMENT 88-16(3):
INVESTMENTS IN NORTHERN HOUSING

HON. MICHAEL MCLEOD: Mr. Speaker, I rise today to provide details on the federal and territorial investments in social housing over the next two years.

On May 22nd, 2009, I, along with my fellow housing Ministers the Honourable Jim Kenyon of Yukon and the Honourable Hunter Tootoo of Nunavut, and the Member of Parliament for Prince Albert,

Saskatchewan, Randy Hoback, attended an announcement and signing ceremony here at the Legislative Assembly. On that date the governments of Canada and the Northwest Territories announced in excess of \$117 million in investments in housing in the Northwest Territories over the next two years. These investments are intended to be an economic stimulus and job creation initiative, as well as an important investment in social housing.

As Members may be aware, the bulk of the federal investment comes through funding dedicated to northern housing. The NWT will receive \$50 million of the \$200 million provided to the three territories.

In addition to the Northern Housing Fund, the NWT will receive allocations under four other housing initiatives. The NWT will receive \$520,000 over two years specifically for low income seniors and a further \$100,000 will be provided for housing solutions for persons with disabilities.

In addition, the federal government's extension of housing construction and renovation programs originally scheduled to lapse on March 31, 2009, will provide another additional \$3.68 million over two years. I am also pleased to inform the House that the NWT will receive a \$4.68 million contribution to complete renovations and energy retrofits on existing public housing. These investments recognize that the unique housing needs of the Northwest Territories cannot be solved through per capita funding arrangements.

All dwellings constructed or repaired with federal funding must be built to a high standard of energy efficiency. The NWT Housing Corporation's new EnerGuide 80 housing designs will exceed the minimum standards being asked for by Canada. Our new construction standards, together with the energy audits and retrofits we will complete this year, are an important part of the Housing Corporation's contribution to achieving the 16th Assembly's goal of an environment that will sustain present and future generations.

Our government is also making a substantial investment in housing over the next two years. The Government of the Northwest Territories will provide in excess of \$55 million in new construction and repairs in order to make substantial improvements in the quality of our housing stock. Every community in our Territory will see investments in housing. We will build units through the Public Housing Program, as well as our Housing Choices Home Ownership Program. The NWT Housing Corporation has recently announced improvements to these programs. The income levels used to determine eligibility have increased to include more of our households and the subsidy levels have been increased to better reflect the true cost to operate a home. Our programs are now even more flexible and will help provide home

ownership and repair assistance to households, while helping to reduce the cost of living for our residents.

Our investments in housing over the next two years will go a long way in achieving the goals we have set out as the 16th Assembly to improve the lives of our residents now and into the future. Housing is a key contributor to the goals of sustainable, vibrant, and safe communities, environmental sustainability, improved health and education rates, as well as being a key economic contributor in every community in our Territory. Our housing investments, together with the other initiatives of our government, are the right approach for these times of economic challenge.

I would also like to extend thanks to this Assembly for the role that you played in this effort. In May of 2008, this Assembly unanimously passed a motion calling for the federal government investments in housing to be extended beyond March 31, 2009. In the months since this motion, Members have actively raised this issue of federal housing funding both in public and during Legislative Assembly proceedings, and have been supportive of our efforts to lobby for renewed investment. It is clear evidence of the successes we can achieve when we speak with a common voice to bring more focus to the issues facing our Territory.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. McLeod. The honourable Minister responsible for the Worker's Safety and Compensation Commission, Mr. Robert McLeod.

MINISTER'S STATEMENT 89-16(3):
52ND MINE RESCUE COMPETITION

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. This month we celebrate our rich northern history. Alongside the many events planned to mark Yellowknife's 75th birthday, the Mine Rescue Competition of the Northwest Territories and Nunavut commemorates the North's 52 years of mining safety success.

The Workers' Safety and Compensation Commission will host the Mine Rescue Competition on Friday, June 12, and Saturday, June 13, in Yellowknife. The competition is an excellent venue to evaluate and compare the quality and effectiveness of mine rescue training programs in the NWT and Nunavut. It is an open event and all mines operating in the NWT and Nunavut are welcome to compete for the surface and underground Commissioner's trophies.

The Mine Rescue Competition is part of Mining Week, which runs from June 8 to 13. Mining Week recognizes the many contributions our leading industry makes to building and sustaining a sound northern economy. Friday's events take place at the Giant Mine site and are closed to the public.

Saturday's competition runs from 9:00 in the morning to 3:30 in the afternoon at the Yellowknife Community Arena. The public is welcome to attend and support our northern miners. Over the lunch hour the NWT and Nunavut Chamber of Mines will host its annual miner's picnic, a free community barbeque.

In closing, I encourage your participation in Mining Week events and the Mine Rescue Competition on Saturday, June 13th. Join the WSCC in celebrating the many safety achievements of our fellow Northerners.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. McLeod. Item 3, Members' statements. The honourable Member for Nahendeh, Mr. Menicoche.

Members' Statements

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON CONGRATULATIONS TO HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATES

MR. MENICOCHÉ: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. This is the time of year for our graduations. The Thomas Simpson School in Fort Simpson is holding theirs this weekend and I'm proud to be attending, to wish our students well into the future. There will be 14 students attending graduation ceremonies in Fort Simpson and in the community of Fort Liard, six.

These students are to be congratulated because they have worked very hard to complete their high school requirements. This can be especially challenging in a small community with few library resources and fewer teachers and students to study and share learning. I think today, however, the Internet has given students in remote communities a leg up in this learning.

More than the Internet, though, it is the teachers, principals, superintendents, and other school staff who deserve recognition for the work they have done to teach and support these students. In last week's Deh Cho Drum there was a report on two activities, one at the Thomas Simpson School, a motivational presentation called Turtle Camp and talks about careers with Aurora College in mining, oil, and gas, by volunteers Mr. Wilbert Antoine and Mr. Bob Norwegian.

I also have to commend the community for all the activities it has been involved in to give the young people opportunities. They have had the opportunity to participate, gain confidence, and learn new skills in many school and community events. I'm referring to activities like learning to play an instrument at the Kole Crook Fiddle Camp and fun competitions at the Beavertail Jamboree.

And, of course, we cannot forget the support from families. It is time for parents, grandparents, aunts, and uncles to be proud of their graduates.

Finally, I'd like again to congratulate every student. This is just the beginning. I look forward to seeing their future accomplishments in education and at the workplace. I wish them well and hope they enjoy their lives in whatever path of lifelong learning they take.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Menicoche. The honourable Member for Weledeh, Mr. Bromley.

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON
FINANCIAL SECURITY FOR
ENVIRONMENTAL REMEDIATION
ON COMMISSIONER'S LANDS

MR. BROMLEY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I want to follow up on the proposed Bill 13, An Act to Amend the Commissioner's Land Act. Following committee review of the bill, including a public hearing with submissions, the bill was sent back for further amendment to correct a crucial deficiency. The issue was specific: the act must be amended to include a requirement for financial security adequate to cover the cost of abandonment and remediation of industrial and commercial sites throughout the full phases of development, operation, and closure.

Any one of us could rattle off a list of the cases that have taught us this harsh lesson: Giant Mine, Rayrock, DEW line sites, Colomac. The list goes on and on. On lands under territorial control, examples include the \$23 million and annual ongoing liability left to the GNWT for the Giant Mine remediation; up to a million dollars to clean up the abandoned Tremingo Ptarmigan Mine property on the Ingraham Trail; and the potential for millions more dollars for the Norman Wells project and pipeline cleanup.

The taxpayers have had enough of this and the environment can't take it. The solution is simple and can be easily achieved. As a priority in the next session, we need to approve a legislative amendment that lays out the specific conditions for the posting of financial security, together with amendments providing for the mandatory writing of regulations.

The delay is frustrating and possibly costly. The committee has been working on this since the legislative proposal a year ago. However, we need to get this done and I have to say that I am pleased by the Minister's commitment to incorporate this essential feature beginning this fall.

When use of the NWT land is granted, the government is acting in trust. In carrying out this trust, government's decision must be based upon sound risk management, environmental stewardship, and full cost accounting. The taxpayers and environment have had enough of the resources of tomorrow paying for the mistakes of today.

Again, I am very pleased with the Minister's commitment to address this crucial need. I urge prompt action to bring this forward in the fall so that we can close this gap as soon as possible.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Bromley. The honourable Member for Tu Nedhe, Mr. Beaulieu.

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON
UPCOMING CONSTITUENCY EVENTS
AND MEETINGS

MR. BEAULIEU: Mahsi cho, Mr. Speaker. [Translation] Today what I'm working with with all the people working here, the Tu Nedhe people, I would like to thank everybody for that. [Translation ends]

Today I would like to take the opportunity to let my constituents know what I have planned for the coming months. From June 17th to 19th I will be in Fort Resolution to meet with constituents and hold a public meeting to update the community. On June 23rd to the 25th I hope to attend the Akaitcho General Assembly. On June 30th I'll be visiting Lutselk'e with the honourable Minister of Health and Social Services, Sandy Lee.

In August from the 17th to the 19th I'll be in Lutselk'e to meet with constituents, hold a public meeting, and from the 25th to the 28th I'll be in Fort Resolution to visit with constituents and community leaders.

On behalf of the important committee work that we do as Members of the Legislative Assembly, I'll be travelling to various communities over the next few months. I would like to take this opportunity to acknowledge those Ministers that were able to make it to my riding to meet directly with my constituents and I look forward to continuing this important working relationship with Ministers and the constituents of Tu Nedhe.

I'd like to take this opportunity to thank the hardworking staff here at the Legislative Assembly. There are many people behind the scenes that make our jobs much easier.

Finally, I'd like to thank the many constituents that have brought forward important issues to my attention and I encourage them to keep doing so. I am working on all issues and together we'll make Tu Nedhe a better place to live.

With that, I would like to wish you and the rest of the hardworking colleagues here in the House a safe, productive, active summer break until we see you again in October.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Beaulieu. The honourable Member for Mackenzie Delta, Mr. Krutko.

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON
OPPORTUNITIES FOR SUBCONTRACTORS
ON LARGE INFRASTRUCTURE PROJECTS

MR. KRUTKO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I got a call from a rate contractor out of Inuvik, Mr. Mike Baxter, in regards to his business. He provides welding services out of Inuvik. He was in business for 25 years, yet he is nowhere closer to getting any benefit from a \$100 million school which is presently being constructed out of Inuvik. After being told or getting the run around, he was told to call Jim Carter out of Whitehorse. Apparently Mr. Carter is managing the project now from Whitehorse. This individual was told, well, we'll hire you for \$25 an hour as a welder. Excuse me, he said his labourer makes more than \$25 an hour in Inuvik.

At the same time, the contract to this company is \$100 million in Inuvik. The same company has two contracts with the one they just completed in Tulita for \$22 million and now they have another negotiated contract for \$24 million in Fort Good Hope. This company has negotiated contracts of \$146 million, yet they are not hiring Northerners, contractors, and people who basically have made their life's work in the Northwest Territories, established their businesses. They basically are trying to find whatever they can.

There was a \$6 million contract that was let to do the foundation work. Again, the majority of that work was done by southern companies. Again Mr. Baxter received 24 hours of work on that jobsite, yet there were welders there from Newfoundland who were working in excess of 200 hours. Again I have to ask, what is this government thinking when they think they can get away with a \$100 million contract, telling us that it is a negotiated contract, it's going to benefit the North, it's going to benefit the community and, more importantly, benefit the contractors who make it their business to take advantage of these opportunities and not being heard.

I believe Mr. Baxter has spoken to the Premier and Mr. McLeod on this issue, yet he is getting nowhere. I think as a government we have a duty to consult on any of these large-scale projects in excess of \$100 million. Yet when the little dinky curling rink in my riding was reamed over by the media, the Construction Association of the Northwest Territories from \$900,000...

MR. SPEAKER: Mr. Krutko, your time for Member's statement has expired.

MR. KRUTKO: Mr. Speaker, I seek unanimous consent to conclude my statement.

---Unanimous consent granted.

MR. KRUTKO: In regards to the contract that was let in my riding for a curling rink, as I stated, was scrutinized by the NWT Construction Association

and the media. Yet with regard to a \$100 million contract and a company that has a \$146 million in negotiated contracts with this government and nothing is being said, yet they continue to break our rules in regard to preferential treatment and ensuring those benefits flow to Northerners.

With that, I will be asking the Minister of Public Works questions on this matter later.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Krutko. The honourable Member for Hay River South, Mrs. Groenewegen.

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON
OPPORTUNITIES FOR SUBCONTRACTORS
ON LARGE INFRASTRUCTURE PROJECTS

MRS. GROENEWEGEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I wasn't planning to make a statement today, but this is the beauty of politics in the North. I also received a call from Mr. Baxter in Inuvik. I don't know the details of the contract. I don't live there and it's not my constituency, but there are some basic questions that could be asked about this, because there is a principle involved here. We recently had a situation in Hay River where there was a large contract that looked like it was going to go outside of the Territories, but due to some complications with the Alberta bidder, the work stayed in the North and we were very happy to hear that. And I really appreciate the Minister of Public Works and Services understanding, as he does, of these kinds of issues.

We do fight to ensure that maximum opportunities for northern residents and businesses do accrue. If the processes are not in place to ensure that contracts are benefiting Northerners, then we need to ask questions about it.

As I said, although this is not my constituency, we have all agreed to a process with respect to the Inuvik school on the premise and commitment that this work and these contracts would benefit NWT companies and that the content would be northern. The phone call that I received alleges that components of the work related to the Inuvik school was not even tendered and that the contract for the work that Mr. Krutko speaks of actually is being provided through a company in the Yukon. I really hope that this is not the case and, as I said, of course, I don't know all the details, but there are a few questions that can be asked which are very straightforward and should have straightforward answers. I will be asking those questions to the Minister of Public Works and Services today.

The relevant questions are: Was this work contracted? Was this work put out to tender as per the specifications of the northern content which lead this to be a negotiated contract with the general contractor? I'll be asking those questions. If the answer's no then we do have an issue.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mrs. Groenewegen. The honourable Member for Great Slave, Mr. Abernethy.

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON
YELLOWKNIFE ASSOCIATION FOR
COMMUNITY LIVING FAMILY INITIATIVES

MR. ABERNETHY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to draw attention today to the positive impacts of the Yellowknife Association of Community Living's Family Project has on our Territory. Over the last 10 years, work of the federally funded Family Project has resulted in increased services for people with intellectual disabilities and their families.

Some of its recent initiatives offer families of persons with disabilities opportunities to learn from each other, share information about resources available to them, and help families better address their children's special needs in the K to 12 school system.

Publications such as the Social and Recreational Inclusion Guide help businesses and service providers include people with disabilities. Through Family Project funding, the Yellowknife Association for Community Living can hold workshops for people with disabilities, parents, professionals, and the general public. Family Project publications are available for free and are an excellent resource for the implementation of programs for inclusive living.

Two Family Project services, the Employability and respite services, are being expanded across the Northwest Territories. The Employability service provides a full range of employment possibilities for persons with disabilities and their employers. Respite services offer social respite for families caring for disabled individuals.

The Yellowknife Association for Community Living is committed to providing quality programming for persons with disabilities and their families. The goals of the Family Project are in keeping with our strategic vision for a healthy, educated people and to work with families, communities, and schools to improve the physical and mental well-being of our youth. That includes persons with disabilities.

In the past, GNWT support for the Yellowknife Association for Community Living's family activities has created much greater positive impact on individuals with disabilities and their families. The support we provide has a ripple effect across our Territories. It has resulted in the expansion of services throughout the Northwest Territories. It has helped us work towards being truly inclusive people.

At the appropriate time I will have questions for the Minister on funding for the Yellowknife Association of Community Living's family initiative.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Abernethy. The honourable Member for Kam Lake, Mr. Ramsay.

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON
REPORT OF THE AUDITOR GENERAL OF
CANADA ON CONTRACTING
FOR GOODS AND SERVICES

MR. RAMSAY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. This afternoon I'd like to discuss the 2009 June Report of the Auditor General of Canada Respecting the Contracting for Goods and Services by the Government of the Northwest Territories. The Auditor General used 40 random contracts from across three departments -- Public Works and Services, Health and Social Services, and DOT -- to develop this report.

This is a very interesting and important piece of work for this government. During the 2007-2008 fiscal year, this government spent upwards of \$163 million of public funds. The government's objectives for contracting are to acquire goods and services in a way that enhances suppliers' access to contracts, encourages competition, reflects fairness, transparency, and accountability in the spending of public funds. Therefore, it is vitally important that contracting be carried out in accordance with policies and regulations designed to achieve those objectives.

The GNWT's policy framework is what governs the procurement of goods and services in our Territory. The Auditor General's review points out that we are missing a couple of key things.

Firstly, we do not have an independent dispute resolution process for suppliers. Also, we have policies and guidelines that are disbursed throughout numerous documents and sources government wide, making it very difficult for government employees to be aware of all the necessary components of the contracting process.

The Auditor General found that between 78 and 93 percent of contracts in the three departments that were examined were awarded in a fair and open manner. I would suggest that 100 percent of contracts should be our goal and anything less, as suggested by the Auditor General, should get our full attention.

The most alarming claim of the Auditor General's report was in the administration of contracts after they were awarded. There were deficiencies or weaknesses of one sort or another in the majority of contracts that were audited. These included, for example, receiving goods or services before the contract was issued, not issuing a contract change order in accordance with GNWT policy, exceeding spending authority, and approving payments prior to obtaining required certifications. Although no one single type of error was more pervasive than any other within or across departments, one or more of

these types of errors were present in over 57 percent of the contracts that were sampled. For an organization of our size and the amount of public money we spend every year, how is it possible...

MR. SPEAKER: Mr. Ramsay, your time for your Member's statement has expired.

MR. RAMSAY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I seek unanimous consent to conclude my statement.

---Unanimous consent granted.

MR. RAMSAY: For an organization of our size and the amount of public money that we expend every year, how is it possible that in more than half of those contracts there were some serious and very serious issues with those? The sample size and the fact that it was conducted in three different departments make me believe that the serious issues raised in the Auditor General's report run rampant throughout our government's procurement effort. I'll be interested in hearing how this government is going to act on these findings.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Ramsay. The honourable Member for Frame Lake, Ms. Bisaro.

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON IMPACT OF FUNDING REDUCTIONS ON CBC NORTH RADIO AND TELEVISION

MS. BISARO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Today I want to speak to the plight of our dear old Canadian Broadcasting Corporation. The Mother Corp, I think the employees call it. Some months ago the federal government announced major funding cutbacks to the CBC; cuts which will hit the CBC hard and will impact news, drama, radio, and TV programs all across Canada.

The CBC is part of the cultural fabric of our country and it's a service which is particularly important to Canada's three northern territories. The CBC links us as individuals and communities to each other and to the world. The radio is often the one and only information link in our small and remote communities. For those of our residents who spend time on the land, the radio, our CBC, is their connection to news and information about their community, their Territory, and the rest of the world.

Northerners have relied on the CBC for generations and this valuable service to Northerners is in jeopardy due to the funding cuts. The northern division of CBC, the CBC North, has indicated that there will be layoffs here and that, with a smaller staff and a smaller budget, something will have to give, to quote them. Experience shows that it is northern programming that will give, and by that I mean that programs will be eliminated.

Earlier this year the Government of the Yukon passed a motion in their Assembly urging the federal government to provide sufficient resources to the CBC; resources that would keep northern

radio and television services intact; resources that would maintain the excellent high standard of service that we now have and need to keep. We can do no less, Mr. Speaker.

The CBC in the NWT, as CBC North, is an essential communication link and it cannot and should not be diminished or reduced in any way. This government, this Assembly, must urge the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation to reconsider its reduction of funding for the CBC and, as a result, the reduction of our northern programming.

I ask that the Premier write to the head of the CBC, Mr. Hubert Lacroix, advising him of our concerns and demanding a reinstatement of CBC North funding to its previous levels.

I look forward to seeing a copy of the Premier's letter very soon. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Ms. Bisaro. The honourable Member for Yellowknife Centre, Mr. Hawkins.

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON RARE EARTH MINERALS

MR. HAWKINS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Canadians live in a very increasingly smaller world and everywhere we look, we need partnership and understanding. As such, the global world increasingly needs Canada and especially the North. Mr. Speaker, Canada ships and receives goods, material and minerals all over the world. What is hot today in the world market changes on a dime and this can affect the North.

Today I would like to speak about a particular case in point. I will start with the consumer's side of the market. We hear a lot about greening our world and working on reducing reliance on fossil fuels. To that end, new and expanding industries are emerging from environmental technologies. These industries certainly need raw materials. One resource that is in great demand is called rare earth minerals. This resource, according to the Wall Street Journal, is an important element for wind turbines, especially hybrid cars, and certainly is indispensable for the world if we want to convert to electronic vehicles.

Japan is the world's biggest importer of rare earth metals and it is companies like Toyota and Honda that use these metals. Right now, China has a near monopoly on the raw materials, with 95 percent dominance of the world's supply. China is planning to reduce its export quota. Experts in Australia predict that the global supply will crash in three years.

Mr. Speaker, now does the name Thor Lake ring a bell? What about Avalon Rare Metals Incorporated? Avalon Rare Metals is a mineral exploration and development company and owner of the lake zone deposit on Thor Lake. That is just 100 kilometres southeast of Yellowknife. According to the

Canadian Mining News, the Thor Lake find is emerging as one of the largest undeveloped rare earth elements resources in the world. That makes the NWT one of the few potential sources, outside of China, for rare earth elements.

Mr. Speaker, many people in the NWT see this as an opportunity to help broaden our economic face, but the reputation sometimes it has in the view of many is the NWT is one of the worst environments to work in when you want to bring, discuss and develop economic opportunities.

Mr. Speaker, our government needs to tear down those walls, push aside those roadblocks and, certainly, snip that red tape. Mr. Speaker, with ever decreasing corporate revenues which are certainly taking a beating, we need to seize an opportunity such as this that will bring good corporate taxes and jobs to the North. Mr. Speaker, an environment that could either tax cut, I would say let's foster growth for our northerners and get them jobs. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Hawkins. The honourable Member for Nunakput, Mr. Jacobson.

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON
TUKTOYAKTUK ALL-WEATHER GRAVEL
SOURCE ACCESS ROAD

MR. JACOBSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We in Nunakput would like to express our satisfaction with the progress made on construction of our all-weather access road from Tuktoyaktuk to Source 177.

---Applause

Approximately 10 kilometres of the 22-kilometre access route has been completed this winter. The work was completed in high technical standard, in an environmentally sensitive manner, safely and without any major incidents, with the greatest levels of local Inuvialuit employment and business participation. This success was achieved only through close cooperation and excellent working relationships established between the Department of Transportation, the Hamlet of Tuktoyaktuk, local contractors, the Inuvialuit Regional Corporation and myself.

We believe a cooperative model used before the construction of this access road to be continued on our other highway projects within our region such as the construction of the Tuktoyaktuk-Inuvik Highway, which leads me to ask the Premier and the Minister of the Department of Transportation to clarify the government's position with respect to the continuation of this road project. We understand the GNWT Highway Strategy and, in particular, the construction of the Mackenzie Valley Highway remains a high priority for the GNWT. It considers the Mackenzie Valley Highway project among the

highest priorities in discussions for infrastructure funding for the federal government.

We have previously been informed by this government that the Inuvik-Tuktoyaktuk Highway is an integral component of the Mackenzie Valley Highway proposal and the completion remains an essential part of this proposal. However, at times it appears that the Inuvik-Tuktoyaktuk Highway is not being supported or advocated by this government at the same degree as the other NWT road construction projects. Therefore, I would like to ask the Premier and the Minister of Transportation to confirm that the Inuvik-Tuktoyaktuk Highway remains an important component of the Mackenzie Valley Highway project and the GNWT Highway Strategy and will be pursued for infrastructure funding and priority basis within the GNWT Highway Strategy. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Jacobson. The honourable Member for the Sahtu, Mr. Yakeleya.

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON
REFLECTIONS ON THE IMPROVED
QUALITY OF LIFE IN THE NORTH

MR. YAKELEYA: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As I mentioned earlier in the House, this spring I had the opportunity to spend some time with my family up at Old Fort Point, just 30 miles south of Tulita. Old Fort Point is a special place for my family, Mr. Speaker. It is a place where there is a real connection to my family. My mother had a cabin there and over the past number of years, before she passed away, she always went to Old Fort Point during the spring and fall times. So when I go back, it is a very spiritual place for me. It is where I connected. I am really happy that I show a lot of gratitude to my mother for bringing us there and showing us the importance of life by coming to Old Fort Point. Certainly when I go there, I certainly miss my mother when I am there, and the rest of my family.

Mr. Speaker, in these times when I get back to Old Fort Point, I sometimes sit there and wonder and look at things that I need to be grateful for, grateful for some of the things that are happening in the Northwest Territories. One of the things I really look at are the single parents. This year students are going to be graduating from high school, post-secondary school, colleges, certificate institutions, all kinds of programs that are happening in the Northwest Territories and in Canada. The single parents, the mothers and fathers, day in and day out, make sure the children get up, have breakfast, get them to school, pick them up, look after them when they are sick. I am really grateful for the parents for doing that.

We in the Legislative Assembly sit here and we are very busy. We are doing good work for our people. There are very fine MLAs here to speak very strong

on their issues for their people. I am grateful for the families that support these MLAs here in this House and, more importantly, for getting the children to the school, for pushing them through and disciplining. Sometimes it is very hard. I am very grateful for these kinds of things that happen. I am grateful for the good Lord for giving us some of the strength to be here every day and to fight hard and for some of the responses we get. Sometimes they are not always ones that we want to hear. Sometimes we win some and lose some. Sometimes it is very difficult to lose, but it is also very appreciative when you can get the chance to represent your people in this forum and to thank mothers and fathers who have raised us. I hope we do the same thing for our children. I want to say thank you to my mother and my father.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Yakeleya. Item 4, reports of standing and special committees. Item 5, returns to oral questions. Item 6, recognition of visitors in the gallery. The honourable Member for Yellowknife South, Mr. Bob McLeod.

Recognition of Visitors in the Gallery

HON. BOB MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I am very pleased to recognize the delegation from the Pacific Northwest Economic Region who are currently visiting the Northwest Territories. The Pacific Northwest Economic Region is a public/private partnership composed of legislators, governments and businesses from Alaska, Idaho, Montana, Oregon and Washington, British Columbia and Alberta, Yukon and Saskatchewan. The delegation consists of John van Dongen, Member of the British Columbia Legislative Assembly for Abbotsford-Clayburn and president of PNWER; representative George Eskridge, representative for Idaho State District 1 and United States vice-president of PNWER; Honourable Jim Kenyon, Minister of Economic Development, Government of Yukon and past-president of PNWER; Mr. Matt Morrison, executive director of PNWER; and accompanying them is Mr. Garry Singer, director of trade and investment from the Department of Industry, Tourism and Investment. Welcome.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. McLeod. The honourable Member for Tu Nedhe, Mr. Beaulieu.

MR. BEAULIEU: Mr. Speaker, I would just like to recognize the Pages from Lutselk'e that were with us all week: Morning Star Catholique, Jasmine Desjarlais-McCallum, also Jasmine's mother is the person travelling with the two Pages, chaperone Prairie Desjarlais. I would also like to recognize Chipewyan interpreter Tom Unka and also my CA, Joe Bailey, who has been working with me for two years. His grandmother is from Lutselk'e and his grandfather is from Fort Resolution. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Beaulieu. The honourable Member from Inuvik Twin Lakes, Mr. McLeod.

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: Mr. Speaker, I, too, would like to recognize the work of the Pages. We have two of them here from Inuvik Twin Lakes. We have Mr. Colton Chinna and Mr. Davis Neyando. Mr. Speaker, I would like to recognize this day as my daughter and son-in-law's fourth wedding anniversary. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. McLeod. The honourable Member for Frame Lake, Ms. Bisaro.

MS. BISARO: Mr. Speaker, it gives me great pleasure to recognize some long-time residents of Yellowknife, who happen to be constituents of the Frame Lake riding, Mr. Jim and Mrs. Marion Wylie sitting up there. Accompanying them is their daughter Lea and their nephew Robert Collinson.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Ms. Bisaro. Honourable Member for Weledeh, Mr. Bromley.

MR. BROMLEY: Mr. Speaker, I would like to recognize visitors Don and Fran Ford, who are parents of Debbie Doody, the operator of The Ledge Cafe and our very own caterer. I would also like to recognize Jim and Marion Wylie. They are long-term residents and I am sure they reluctantly and recently moved from the Weledeh riding. We are proud to have them here. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Bromley. The honourable Member for Nahendeh, Mr. Menicoche.

MR. MENICOCHÉ: I, too, would like to commend the Legislative Assembly on their Page Program. I have two young students from the community of Wrigley, Miss Amber Clillie and Raylene Peter. Welcome and I am sure glad you had a good week. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: If we have missed anyone in the gallery today, welcome to the Chamber. I hope you are enjoying the proceedings. It is always nice to have an audience in here. Item 7, acknowledgements. The honourable Member for Frame Lake, Ms. Bisaro.

Acknowledgements

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT 7-16(3):
JIM AND MARION WYLIE
60TH WEDDING ANNIVERSARY

MS. BISARO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As the MLA for Frame Lake, it gives me great pleasure to be able to acknowledge two of my constituents who are long-time residents of Yellowknife. Jim and Marion Wylie will celebrate their 60th wedding anniversary two weeks from today, on June 18th.

---Applause

This couple has demonstrated a wonderful commitment to each other and to their marriage. A 60th anniversary is no small achievement and should be greatly admired. Jim tells me that the reason that they have had a successful marriage is due to the fact that they never argued about money. I would like to recognize the accomplishment of Mr. and Mrs. Wylie and offer my congratulations to them on reaching this significant and enviable milestone. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Ms. Bisaro. The honourable Member for Yellowknife Centre, Mr. Hawkins.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT 8-16(3):
FELICITO AND CRISTINA DOMINGO
50TH WEDDING ANNIVERSARY

MR. HAWKINS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It gives me great pleasure to personally acknowledge a significant milestone of special constituents of mine in the House today. Felicito and Cristina Domingo have had the occasion of celebrating their 50th anniversary on December 27, 2008. For this special occasion, their many loving children and grandchildren organized a deserving second wedding to renew their vows back in their home country of Philippines. They were, of course, surrounded with many loved ones, both family and friends, to share this special milestone.

May I close today by saying that this is a truly amazing thing to see their love continue on as strongly as ever. I would hope that many more wonderful milestones continue to be reached and surpassed with good health, support of their family and friends and along with their personal devotion to God. On behalf of my wife, Susan, and my two children, McKinley and Hudson, may we all wish them a heartfelt blessing for the future. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Hawkins. The honourable Member for Nunakput, Mr. Jacobson.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT 9-16(3):
EDWARD AND MABEL GRUBEN
50TH WEDDING ANNIVERSARY

MR. JACOBSON: On behalf of all Nunakput and Paulatuk residents, it gives me great pleasure to acknowledge the 50th wedding anniversary of Edward and Mabel Gruben. They celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary on May 9th of this year.

Edward was very much involved in the Inuvialuit Final Agreement through the Committee on Original People's Entitlement. Edward travelled frequently to the Nunakput communities, particularly during the ratification of the final agreement. Mr. Speaker, he is a really well-respected community leader, sitting on numerous boards and helped to benefit his people in the community of Paulatuk. Mr. Speaker, I

wish to extend to him and his family best wishes for him and Mabel and their family. All the best on their next 60 years. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Jacobson. Item 8, oral questions. The honourable Member for Mackenzie Delta, Mr. Krutko.

Oral Questions

QUESTION 412-16(3):
OPPORTUNITIES FOR SUBCONTRACTORS
ON LARGE INFRASTRUCTURE PROJECTS

MR. KRUTKO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My questions are directed to the Minister of Public Works and Services in light of being the project management department on the \$100 million school being expended in Inuvik. As part of that, this was a negotiated contract which was pretty well given to the contractor with some understanding that there were going to be some socio-economic benefits flowing to the local community and the local business community to take advantage of this \$100 million investment.

I would like to ask the Minister in regards to the negotiated contract with a conclusive list of the subcontractors for those contracts. What guarantee do those people who are on that list have that they are going to be used for those specific contracts and the work that is taking place on those contracts?

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Krutko. The honourable Minister of Public Works and Services, Mr. Michael McLeod.

HON. MICHAEL MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I listened with interest to the Member's statement regarding this issue, especially the mention that nobody responded even though the two MLAs from Inuvik were notified, Mr. Speaker. I want to clarify that. Both MLAs have raised this issue with me. The Member is correct; there is a list of subcontractors. There are roughly 20-plus subtrades listed on the list in the agreement or the appendix that was provided to us. For the most part, we expect and have seen that these are the subtrades that the general contractor is using.

In this situation, there is a requirement by code for fabrication of the metal to be in a certified steel shop. There is no such place in Inuvik. There is no certified steel shop and the welders have to have a certain designation. That is the reason this contract went to a company in Whitehorse. They have come back to the community and have posted notice that they will hire the services of the welding companies in Inuvik but, at the present time, there is not a company that can do this specified type of work. Thank you.

MR. KRUTKO: Mr. Speaker, I raised in this House before on this particular matter in which the

Gwich'in Development Corporation, which has a trucking company out of Inuvik which got four loads of gravel for the site where we expended some \$6 million. Now we find out we have a welding company out of Inuvik who received some 24 hours of employment on the jobsite and again we are not using those contractors who are listed as subs in regards to this contract. Regardless, we used a company out of Whitehorse and whatnot with all the expertise in the world, the contract is clear. This is a negotiated contract which had a byproduct of the contract which specifically states who the subs were going to be on those sites, not bring somebody in after the fact and say, well, we are sorry. We don't really need you now but we will use you later. That is not the way...

MR. SPEAKER: Do you have a question, Mr. Krutko?

MR. KRUTKO: Is there going to be a report tabled in this Legislative Assembly which will clearly stipulate who is receiving what dollars on the \$100 million contract so we can see exactly what the benefit is to the Northwest Territories?

HON. MICHAEL MCLEOD: Mr. Speaker, I understood that the Member had already seen the list. I certainly can provide him again with the list of subcontractors.

Mr. Speaker, I am not sure what we expect the general contractor to do if there is no certified facility in the community to provide this certain type of fabrication. They were obligated to go where it was available. They did so. They went to the closest resource and that was in Whitehorse. We certainly can go back to the developer and ask them to update their list. The project is still in its early stages. They are doing quite a bit of work. Some of it has not been rolled out yet. The training programs and the number of training initiatives are scheduled to be coming out this July. It is really early. We can have that discussion with the developer as to if they plan to hold true to their word. I expect them to do so. They have listed a number of contractors. In the area of transportation and gravel hauling, they have listed eight. Did they hire the one that the Member is raising or did they hire another one on the list? I have to go back and confirm that. Thank you.

MR. KRUTKO: Mr. Speaker, I am glad the Minister brought up the question about the list, because the list that you provided to us, I talked to the majority of those people on that list and they are not getting any work from this contract. I think it is important to realize that you have contracts there where, basically, camps were supposed to be supplied. They are not being used. You have people that basically are coming in from other parts of Canada which are being housed in the principal residence of the contractor, but yet they are not using what is listed in the contract. That is the point here. I think

that we have to do a better job of assessing this contract. It is \$100 million. There should be some scrutiny in regards to how this contract is being managed and handled but, more importantly, ensure that the benefits flow to the residents of the Northwest Territories and local contractors.

I would like to ask the Minister again: Are you going to file a report and update us on the first phase of this project for \$6 million? How many of those dollars were basically flown into the Northwest Territories and how many exited the Northwest Territories for southern contractors?

HON. MICHAEL MCLEOD: Mr. Speaker, so far all the contractor has done is put in the pilings and started some of the early construction work. This is the first construction season. We are barely off the ground. It would be difficult to file a report. I would be glad to come back at the end of this construction season and provide an update to all the members through committee or specifically to this Member, if that is required. I think it is very early to start filing a report of what the contractor has used. It has only been maybe two or three significant contracts let so far. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. McLeod. Final, short supplementary, Mr. Krutko.

MR. KRUTKO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Again, when we start getting phone calls from people that basically are trying to acquire work on these jobsites and being told, sorry, you have to phone up a company out of Whitehorse to acquire work in the Northwest Territories, I believe there is something wrong with the system where a Yukon company can manage a project in the Northwest Territories and this government doesn't seem to do anything about it. I would like to ask the Minister again: Will you ensure that those companies which are listed in regards to the subcontractors on this project, this site, and see exactly how much benefit are they receiving regardless if it is the first phase of the project or the last phase? I think we learned from the Deh Cho Bridge. We will put the pillars in and then we will design it later. It does not work in regards to a \$100 million scope.

HON. MICHAEL MCLEOD: Mr. Speaker, I am not sure it is a fair comment to make. There is only one fabricator that...or the closest one that could do it was in Whitehorse. They, in turn, are going to subcontract to the welding companies in Inuvik. They have a poster. It hasn't even closed yet and the Member is stating that there is nobody hired. Well, give it time. It has to come to conclusion here. They are offering to hire the welding companies. They are offering to hire welders that are in the community. I don't know. The project is scheduled to start down the road in a couple of weeks. We can certainly provide and talk to the developer and get what will end up happening. I can't give him that

information until we see this come to a point where they have actually hired everybody. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. McLeod. The honourable Member for Hay River South, Mrs. Groenewegen.

QUESTION 413-16(3):
OPPORTUNITIES FOR SUBCONTRACTORS
ON LARGE INFRASTRUCTURE PROJECTS

MRS. GROENEWEGEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As I said in my Member's statement, of course I don't know every detail of what this constituent's concern was who felt it necessary to call MLAs and talk about the situation, but I do know that we require fairness and transparency in the way that our government spends public money. When the Inuvik school project came before this House for approval, we were told that to negotiate a contract of this magnitude was a good thing to sole source it, because it would ensure NWT northern content in this project. On that premise, we bought into this. I would like to ask the Minister of Public Works and Services, after a contract like this is awarded, what process or mechanism is there in place to ensure the continuation of monitoring of the work as it progresses to ensure that the spirit and the intent of the negotiated contract is lived up to? What recourse do people have if they feel that they were going to have an opportunity to participate through a tender or through being named on that original list, and if that is not lived up to, what recourse do those folks have? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mrs. Groenewegen. The honourable Minister of Public Works and Services, Mr. Michael McLeod.

HON. MICHAEL MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I am glad the Member raises this question, because there has been a number of meetings, public and some private discussions with our people and with contractors in the community on this initiative. There is a list of companies that have been selected by the developer from the community. There is more than 20 listed on this list. They are also working with Arctic College to do training. They have a market development list. They are trying really hard to ensure all the work stays local.

I would expect that, as we go along, we are going to hear issues come forward. We will raise them with them. We have already done so on a number of other issues and claims that have been filed. As we move forward, we want them to stick to the agreement that they have. We believe they are. It is quite interesting that the person complaining is a regular contractor to this developer. If he is not getting work, I would certainly be interested to see why they didn't hire him. We will follow up on that. At this point I don't know why that specific individual

is not hired as he is a regular subcontractor to the developer.

We certainly stay, on a continual basis, in contact with this project. We have people on the ground. We are quite familiar with what is happening on a day-to-day basis. Again, I have to mention that it is very early in this project. It is difficult to start saying, well, this company didn't get a contract. Some of these are just coming out. Thank you.

MRS. GROENEWEGEN: Just so that we understand then, once the contract is awarded to the developer, as the Minister calls him -- and there was a list provided, say, with 20 companies on there who are going to be participating with that developer to deliver this project for the Government of the Northwest Territories -- is there any tendering that goes on within that process or is that, once the main contract is negotiated, is everything that is subcontracted beneath that all negotiated as well or is there actually a requirement for any tendering for the initial award? Thank you.

HON. MICHAEL MCLEOD: As we move through the negotiated process, most of the costs have been provided by...would be specified companies on the subtrades. I don't believe very many areas would go to a tender. It is my understanding that these are already fairly well set, and in this instance it was recognized that this is a service they can't get for fabrication as there is no certified shop in Inuvik. So it's kind of an understanding that they would go to the closest provider and that's what they've done. Thank you.

MRS. GROENEWEGEN: Mr. Speaker, I understand the need for some of this work to be done in a shop that is certified in fabrication. However, it sounds to me like there is onsite welding that is taking place too. So if there is one welder in Inuvik that is not working and people are bringing...And I've heard it's in the neighbourhood of 25 welders have been brought in from Whitehorse to actually work onsite. Just because the fabrication takes place in Whitehorse does that mean that it follows that the people welding onsite would also have to come from the same company where the fabrication takes place? Because it would be disappointing to me if there are welders out of work in Inuvik and people are being brought in from Whitehorse to work onsite, and I understand that is the case. Thank you.

HON. MICHAEL MCLEOD: Mr. Speaker, the subcontract for the welding services and the structural fabrication for this school has gone to a Whitehorse company and they fully intend to hire...I have a copy that was provided to me on the ad that they are using for trying to attract welders and/or welding companies from Inuvik. They are going through that exercise right now and I can't say, because it hasn't been wrapped up yet, how many people from Inuvik are being hired. It's my

expectation, and I believe that the company from Whitehorse is intending to provide the work to the Inuvik welders, but they have to remain the main contractor as they're the only one's certified and they're the only ones with a certified shop to do it. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. McLeod. Final supplementary, Mrs. Groenewegen.

MRS. GROENEWEGEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, as a government we're in the fortunate position right now of having a lot of capital projects to deliver and I don't expect the Minister to manage and be the general on every contract we've let in the Northwest Territories. However, somewhere in his system, in the Department of Public Works and Services, there must be someone -- and I had asked this question earlier -- who is in charge of monitoring, to ensure that if people getting negotiated contracts and say I will do this that, in fact, that is what happens. I would like a more clear explanation so people don't have to come to the Minister with their concerns. To whom may people appeal? What is the recourse if you feel like the general contractor is not living up to the terms of the contract they received? Thank you.

HON. MICHAEL MCLEOD: Mr. Speaker, I'm glad the Member recognizes that as a Minister I can't be involved in every aspect of all the contracts we have, but we do have people on the ground, we do have people in the communities. Each project that is under our responsibility has a project manager. We also have engineers and they should be the first point of contact. They all have supervisors as we progress up the ladder, and at any point any one of those people can be contacted with concerns. If it...(inaudible)...or hear a satisfied response, of course, you could go to their managers and my office is usually where it ends up anyway. A lot of times people come directly to us. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. McLeod. The honourable Member for Great Slave, Mr. Abernethy.

QUESTION 414-16(3):
YELLOWKNIFE ASSOCIATION FOR
COMMUNITY LIVING FAMILY PROJECT

MR. ABERNETHY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my questions today are for the Minister responsible for Health and Social Services and they are in follow-up to my Member's statement of earlier today. I was wondering if the Minister of Health and Social Services can tell me whether the Department of Health and Social Services has plans to provide ongoing support to the Family Project as delivered by the Yellowknife Association of Community Living to help them meet the needs of families supporting a member with a disability.

And, if so, can the Minister please tell me what those plans are? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Abernethy. The honourable Minister of Health and Social Services, Ms. Lee.

HON. SANDY LEE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the government and the Department of Health and Social Services has a very strong and long relationship with the Yellowknife Association of Community Living and we currently fund about \$1.74 million for them to deliver four different programs: Supported Independent Living, Respite Program, Community Skills and Supported Living. So we expect that we will continue to have a very strong and healthy working relationship with the association. Thank you.

MR. ABERNETHY: I'd like to thank the Minister for that response. I'm happy to hear that they're going to have a continued relationship with the association, especially with respect to this Family Project. The Yellowknife Association of Community Living receives about \$80,000 a year in federal funding to support its Family Project. Much of this money goes to service provider salaries -- the people who work for the association -- limiting the project's capacity to improve and expand this important service. Will the Department of Health and Social Services consider matching these funds in order to increase the Family Project services throughout the Northwest Territories? Thank you.

HON. SANDY LEE: Mr. Speaker, I'm not familiar with what the Family Project is. I understand it's federal funding. It would be ideal for the federal government to step up to the plate and continue to fund that. We will do our part to support the Yellowknife Association of Community Living.

I happened to be talking to the executive director a couple of weeks ago and she did not indicate that there was any issue with the funding situation. I am also aware that my acting deputy minister had a chance to discuss just general issues of the organization with her last week. We were not told that there was any issue with the funding issues. I'm always ready and willing to meet with any NGOs and I do on a regular basis. If they want to make a proposal to us, we would always be willing to look at those. Thank you.

MR. ABERNETHY: I thank the Minister for that. The Family Project is an important project and right now it's funded primarily through the feds. They're looking for some matching funds on that. I would encourage the Minister, rather, can I get the Minister to commit to meeting with the executive director and some staff from the Yellowknife Association of Community Living and maybe her department staff, as well, to talk specifically about this Family Project and the possibility, well, first off, learning what the project does, the advantages it has to the Northwest Territories as a whole and

possibly working out some funding arrangements, if appropriate? Thank you.

HON. SANDY LEE: Mr. Speaker, as I indicated, we fund the Yellowknife Association of Community Living and many other organizations such as the NWT Council for Persons with Disabilities and many others. I think we are doing our part to provide them with the funding that they need. As far as I'm aware, they have not expressed issues with their funding. If they are, I would encourage them to contact the Yellowknife Health and Social Services Authority, who is the funding-through organization, and we will, through that way, be willing to look at any issues they may have. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Ms. Lee. Final supplementary, Mr. Abernethy.

MR. ABERNETHY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and thanks to the Minister for that. The executive director from the association has talked to me and she has outlined their Family Project and has indicated that they would be interested in talking to the department about some matching funding. So rather than waiting, can I encourage or seek the Minister's commitment to be proactive and have her departmental staff contact the Yellowknife Association of Community Living to discuss the Family Project and its future in the Northwest Territories? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

HON. SANDY LEE: Mr. Speaker, I'm hesitant to make a commitment to say that we will match a federal funding project because I would like to encourage the federal government to continue to fund the projects that they are in many of our organizations. As I have indicated to the Member already, I did...Actually, I was quite proactive in talking to the specific executive director. I asked the deputy minister to call her last week. We asked her if there were any issues and she indicated to us that there were not. The executive director of the association knows that we are always there to listen to any of the concerns they may have, as we appreciate the partnership we have with that organization.

Mr. Speaker, I just want to add that this is Disabilities Awareness Week and I will be hosting a tea in honour of the work that the Persons with Disabilities community do in Yellowknife and the Territories, and I would invite all Members to join us for tea tomorrow at noon at the Great Hall, if they are in town. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Ms. Lee. The honourable Member for Frame Lake, Ms. Bisaro.

QUESTION 415-16(3):
INCREASE TO MINIMUM WAGE

MS. BISARO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My questions today are addressed to the Minister for Education, Culture and Employment. The Minister

has heard me a number of times in the last 18 months or so encourage him to consider an increase to the minimum wage and that this government needs to look at the minimum wage and do something about the level. I understand that there has been some work by the department and I'd like to ask the Minister as to the status of the consideration by the department of an increase to minimum wage. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Ms. Bisaro. The honourable Minister of Education, Culture and Employment, Mr. Lafferty.

HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY: Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, yes, I appreciate the Member's questioning in this area. Since our last session that we had, she did raise this issue and I did commit to her that my department is going to look into the area and work on what needs to be done. Certainly, my department has been working diligently on this specific area, a wage increment. Certainly, we've been in the process of having consultation with small businesses, because we have heard from small communities and also from a couple Members that we should consult with the small businesses in the communities because they will be impacted. We're hearing correspondence from those businesses, saying that if we do increase the minimum wage that we may not be able to hire students. So those are taken into consideration and we still have a lot of work ahead of us. But, certainly, we are making progress in that area. Mahsi, Mr. Speaker.

MS. BISARO: Thank you to the Minister. I appreciate the work that the department has been doing, but it begs the next question: When will there be some report of the investigations that have been ongoing and when can we expect a decision relative to an increase in the minimum wage? Thank you.

HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY: Mr. Speaker, as I stated, the discussion is ongoing and we're hoping to finalize our final discussion with the various parties within a month or two. Then we are hoping to have a final decision by the fall. That was the plan before we were approached to say do your consultation with the small businesses. That's the initial plan that we're working with and if there are any changes, we'll certainly let the standing committee and the Member know that there are going to be changes coming. Mahsi.

MS. BISARO: That's good news. I think that's a little behind the timeline that I was advised of earlier, but things are still moving forward, so that's a good thing and I'm appreciative to the department and the Minister for that. I guess I would just like to note, though, that in the considerations that are being done by the department, are they looking at an ongoing mechanism to adjust minimum wage so that we don't have to have Members stand up in the

House for 18 months running and demand an increase. Will there be some mechanism set in place where the wage will be reviewed on a regular ongoing basis? Thank you.

HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY: Certainly those are the types of discussions that we're having currently and creating some options on if we're going to increase minimum wage, how much increase. It was mentioned here in the House possibly \$10 an hour compared to other jurisdictions. Or could we give them \$9.25 and then the following year \$10? So those are the options we're working with. But certainly we'll come back to the standing committee to give them an update as soon as we finalize our consultation. We'll certainly be prepared to do that. Mahsi.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Lafferty. Final supplementary, Ms. Bisaro.

MS. BISARO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thanks to the Minister again. I guess I would just like to push a little further and be a little more specific in my question. I appreciate that the minimum wage may be incrementally increased -- a certain amount one year, a certain amount the next year -- but as the years go by, five, 10 years down the road, will there be a mechanism in place to constantly review the minimum wage? Thank you.

HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY: Mr. Speaker, those are the mechanisms that we'll certainly be discussing and that will be part of the package that we will bring forward to the standing committee. Mahsi, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Lafferty. The honourable Member for Tu Nedhe, Mr. Beaulieu.

QUESTION 416-16(3):
COMMUNITY FUNDING FOR
DOWNRIVER MONITORING

MR. BEAULIEU: Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, with the development of the Slave River Athabasca tar sands development, the Fort Resolution people are becoming very concerned with the degradation of the environment. I'd like to ask the Minister of ENR if there is any money available for the people of Fort Resolution to monitor the waters of the Slave River. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Beaulieu. The honourable Minister of Environment and Natural Resources, Mr. Miltenberger.

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Yes, there are some funds available for those in unsettled claims areas. It's there on an application base and Lutselk'e and Resolution have applied for it in the past. Thank you.

MR. BEAULIEU: Mr. Speaker, my understanding from the community was that the environment money that was received for monitoring the water in

Fort Resolution gave them enough money to monitor with one boat with two people for two weeks during the summer. That's insufficient. I was wondering if the government is looking at increasing that amount of money that would be given to the community for that type of work. Thank you.

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Yes. In fact, there's a meeting on June 24th between ENR officials and INAC officials to talk about these types of situations and there is going to be a discussion with them about the need and interest on the part of the federal government to see if, on this cost-shared program, there's an interest and willingness on their part to see if there's any additional funding so that, in fact, we could expand the type of monitoring that the Member has been referencing. Thank you.

MR. BEAULIEU: Mr. Speaker, if there's a meeting on June 24th, then I'd like to ask the Minister how soon after that can the community of Fort Resolution expect to see some more money flowing into that budget in order for them to increase their monitoring? Thank you.

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: That would depend on the outcome of the meetings with the federal government. If there is willingness, then there has to be the identification of the resources on their part and ours and we'd have to see how soon that money could flow. But the first step would be to have that particular meeting. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Miltenberger. The honourable Member for Yellowknife Centre, Mr. Hawkins.

QUESTION 417-16(3):
RARE EARTH MINERAL DEVELOPMENTS

MR. HAWKINS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, in my Member's statement today I talked about the issue of rare earth and the wall they're hitting, but it also speaks to the underlying issue of how industry wants to invest in the North and sometimes hits that wall and doesn't necessarily see it as a friendly environment to operate in. Mr. Speaker, I could ask the questions to the ITI Minister for mining reasons, the Finance Minister for tax reasons, MACA for land reasons or even the Power Corp Minister, but ultimately I think it really focuses in on the Premier as to the methodology and the whole thinking of this government and how we are treating opportunities. As my last words in the Member's statement talked about, we could either tax cut or foster development of broadening economic industries.

Mr. Speaker, I'd like to know what the Premier's vision is through Cabinet discussion in trying to attract industries to further develop here in the North, recognizing that rare earth is here, they want

to do some work, there's definite demand in the world and I'd hate to see this opportunity slip by. So what is the Premier doing to help lead a positive attitude on this file? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Hawkins. The honourable Premier, Mr. Roland.

HON. FLOYD ROLAND: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, in the area of creating the environment for development to happen in our Territory, we've made our statements quite a number of times in quite a number of different forums about trying to create the atmosphere and just the ability to get the job done. As a matter of fact, for example, in our response to the federal government's report on the regulatory system in the North, we pulled a comprehensive report back in our response and worked with a number of departments who have been involved in this area, looking at what we can do and made recommendations back to the federal government, from, for example, having adequate support for the existing boards that are established through land claims and funding them to the proper level so they can get their job done in an adequate amount of time.

As well, we've looked at our own practices and continue to do so. In one of those areas we've met with this company from a number of fronts, one about potential opportunities when it comes to supplying energy or, as well, just looking at the regulatory framework that they may be involved with. So there are a number of fronts we're involved with. We're sitting down, through one of our strategic initiative committees, to come up with a process that would trigger certain events happening when it comes to applications being made or what a stance should be taken on by one or more of our departments. We're starting to work more collaboratively around these areas. Thank you.

MR. HAWKINS: Mr. Speaker, in no way would I ever be advocating that checks and balances need to be wiped away and streamlined by just dropping them by the wayside, but ultimately, Mr. Speaker, when we have things like new mines -- they take 10 years to develop here in the North -- we need to develop a broad economic base, because, as I said, if you don't have money coming in, we'd have to make cuts. This year is yet another fine example where corporate taxes keep getting a beating and we can only keep looking so far when we don't have anyone else to draw it from.

But, Mr. Speaker, when we have a situation where Avalon wants to develop a 100-year mine, what is really slowing this government down from supporting this? They ask for power. They can't get power. They want to develop a 100-year mine. We could use that type of base. What is the Premier doing to make sure that we don't lose this opportunity? Thank you.

HON. FLOYD ROLAND: Mr. Speaker, when it comes down to not getting things done, I guess that's when they call on the Premier to make it happen. Then if we stand up and try to make it happen, then we're accused of not following due process that is established. Clearly, the example given is one where we're supportive of creating a diversified economy, building our economic base. But clearly, as well, this highlights one of the challenges we continue to recognize and state about others making decisions that happen here in the Northwest Territories.

We have some roles and responsibilities in a number of areas and can work with those areas. The federal government has a significant role to play in the area, as well as our land claim groups or through interim measures agreements through those groups that are in negotiations. There are systems in place that we need to work with to ensure these processes flow smoothly and that's one of the reasons why we're getting a number of departments together to look at our processes that are in place and how they're functioning and how we can ensure we're doing the adequate amount of work, both on the regulatory side as well as supporting the industry side. Thank you.

MR. HAWKINS: As I referred to in my Member's statement today, I talked about the three-year demand crash that the world will be faced with, that rare earth supplies will be tightened up and, of course, Canada and the North, for that matter, offers one of the best supplies going forward in the future. Mr. Speaker, in the context of fearing that this opportunity may slip through our fingers, what is the Premier willing to do to make sure that this opportunity isn't lost to the North? Thank you.

HON. FLOYD ROLAND: Mr. Speaker, again, what we're willing to do is look at the situation, as we already are. We have the Minister of ITI who has had contact, there have been presentations made. We have our other department who would do their job. We have to make sure we have the right approach, the right balance when it comes to the environment as well as the supporting of industry. So we'll continue to do that. Meanwhile, we will work with our partners in the North, and that would be the regional aboriginal leadership, for example, in areas where there are co-management issues that need to be dealt with. We'll work with the federal government and send our message there when the time is appropriate and we need to do the push. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Roland. Your final, short supplementary, Mr. Hawkins.

MR. HAWKINS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the Premier referenced, you know, sort of, the buck stops there in his own sort of language about "getting" her done." Mr. Speaker, I want to know what the Premier will do to make sure this job

gets done, because if Avalon comes and develops this mine, they'll create jobs. They want to process this material here and they certainly want to support our local industries and businesses to help build that mine to help do this work. So what is the Premier going to commit today to make sure that this won't slip through and we lose this chance to help be a leader in the industry?

HON. FLOYD ROLAND: Mr. Speaker, on one occasion the Member says we have to have the right balance, the roles, responsibilities, don't want to take any shortcuts, but then he asks me to step in and make sure this happens. To what cost are we going to look at making sure something happens? The application processes, the roles, the bodies involved are laid out. They've had meetings with the appropriate departments. They've been informed of the processes. Where it's adequate and where it makes sense, we're working together to see what else we can do and getting information to them. But we're not the only player on the field here and that goes to the bigger picture of trying to bring the control to the North where Northerners make those decisions and not go through a number of hoops and hurdles when it comes to what government has responsibility and who signs off on final deals. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Roland. The honourable Member for Weledeh, Mr. Bromley.

QUESTION 418-16(3):
NWT ASSOCIATION OF COMMUNITIES
ENERGY EFFICIENCY IN PUBLIC HOUSING

MR. BROMLEY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the other day my colleague Ms. Bisaro raised the NWT Association of Communities' resolutions, the great bunch of work done last week and earlier at their annual general meeting, and I'd like to ask a couple of questions about their suggestions. It involves the Minister of the Housing Corporation and Public Works and Services, the Minister of ENR and MACA. I'm not sure how to divide that up, but the first question is: The association recognized the significant subsidy of all utility costs in the housing programs as a problem that caused a lack of motivation for housing tenants to practice conservation of any sort. They recommended that the housing authorities should have representation on community energy plans and they called on us to mandate the Housing Corporation and associations to develop plans to ensure all appropriate methods are being used to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. Are the Ministers, or is the Minister working to provide a timely and positive response to this albeit recent resolution and get things going? This shows the sort of comprehensive and preventative thinking that we're looking for on the issue of mitigation of climate change. What's being done? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Bromley. The honourable Minister responsible for the Northwest Territories Housing Corporation, Mr. Michael McLeod.

HON. MICHAEL MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm pleased to be able to speak on behalf of all these different departments. Mr. Speaker, we have done a lot of work in the area of energy efficiency and setting standards and plans that we will be incorporating in our public housing stock. We have, as I indicated earlier today in my Minister's statement, some significant dollars to invest in that area and that will be focused on energy efficiency. We also plan to invest a good part of our dollars or investment into private homes, with the intention of looking at increasing efficiency and being able to provide some opportunity for savings to the homeowner.

Mr. Speaker, the Member is raising motions from the NWT Association of Communities. Those motions have not come to my department yet. I've just consulted with the Premier and he's just received them and he's in the process of sending the motions to the appropriate department to respond. If the Member is interested, we certainly can compile the information that we have and provide it to him on the specific issues in this document. Thank you.

MR. BROMLEY: I appreciate those remarks, indeed. I mentioned that this was recent and I do acknowledge that the Housing Corporation has begun some of these issues; their subscription to the EnerGuide 80 and so on. The association is looking for help and guidance and best practices and so on. A fairly reasonable request and the sort of thing that I think we're making good progress on. It's an opportunity to share with these folks as they're asking for help. I won't press this right now, Mr. Speaker. I will ask, perhaps, do our Ministers stand ready to respond in a positive fashion to these quite reasonable and progressive requests from the Association of Communities? Thank you.

HON. MICHAEL MCLEOD: Mr. Speaker, of course, we will give all consideration to the motions that come forward from the NWT Association of Communities. They have been a very good partnership arrangement with many of the departments over the years to provide advice, to raise issues, and we certainly will take the time and provide the resources where we can to assist them in meeting some of the challenges that they're facing. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. McLeod. The honourable Member from Kam Lake, Mr. Ramsay.

QUESTION 419-16(3):
FLUORIDATION OF COMMUNITY
DRINKING WATER

MR. RAMSAY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I've got a few questions today for the Minister of Health and Social Services, and it gets to an issue about fluoride in our drinking water. I'd like to ask the Minister, given some of the recent research that's been done on fluoride being added to the water, it doesn't necessarily prevent cavities anymore and there's been some research that shows a growing list of harmful effects of the use of fluoride. I'd like to ask the Minister if she's aware of which communities in the Northwest Territories presently put fluoride in their drinking water, Mr. Speaker. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Ramsay. Honourable Minister of Health and Social Services, Ms. Lee.

HON. SANDY LEE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to thank the Member for the question. Mr. Speaker, the Department of Health and Social Services and its chief medical health officer support the addition of fluoride in drinking water as a measure to prevent tooth decay. The decision to add fluoride is made by municipal governments. The role of the department is to set maximum limits, through the drinking water regulations, and monitor the implementation. Communities that fluoridate their drinking water must monitor fluoride levels regularly to ensure that they remain within the guidelines established by the Federal/Provincial/Territorial Committee on Drinking Water.

Mr. Speaker, in January of 2007 Health Canada commissioned an expert panel to review the scientific studies available on fluoride and its possible effects on health. The panel recommended that the maximum acceptable concentration of 1.5 micrograms, established by the Committee on Drinking Water, be maintained. This report is on the Health Canada website.

Mr. Speaker, at this time, three NWT communities fluoridate their drinking water: Inuvik, Fort Smith and Yellowknife. Wrigley is the only NWT community that has natural fluoride levels in its drinking water supply that already meets the requirement. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. RAMSAY: Mr. Speaker, as a government, I'm wondering...I know Health Canada has done some research in the past, but as a government, have we reviewed the appropriateness of the use of fluoride in the drinking water in the Northwest Territories for our residents and have we got a plan to do that in the near future? Thank you.

HON. SANDY LEE: Yes, as government, the appropriate officials review this process and we are part of the international team.

Mr. Speaker, water fluoridation is the process of adjusting the level of fluoride in drinking water to provide dental health benefits. Many governments and health organizations, including Health Canada, the Canadian Public Health Association, the Canadian Dental Association, the Canadian Medical Association and the World Health Organization, endorse the fluoridation of drinking water as a safe and effective way to prevent tooth decay. In fact, Mr. Speaker, community water fluoridation has been identified by the U.S. Centre for Disease Control as one of the 10 great public health achievements of the 20th Century. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. RAMSAY: I'm wondering if the Minister is aware that 98 percent of Europe currently doesn't fluoridate their water. Many countries around the world have banned it outright. Quebec City has actually discontinued the use of fluoridation on April 1st of last year. Niagara region passed a bylaw in February 2008 prohibiting water fluoridation. Thunder Bay recently said no thanks to water fluoridation. The number of citizens drinking fluoridated water in British Columbia and the province of Quebec has dropped to about 4 percent. Mr. Speaker, I think it's time that the Government of the Northwest Territories revisit the fluoridation of our water here in the Northwest Territories.

Like I said earlier, drinking fluoridated water does not prevent cavities. The research proves that. So why are we continuing to add this toxic substance to our drinking water, Mr. Speaker? Thank you.

HON. SANDY LEE: Obviously there are those who disagree with fluoridation of water. Mr. Speaker, I have invited anyone who had concern about this to sit down with the chief medical officer so that they could get more information, and I will continue to offer that. But as far as the Government of the Northwest Territories is concerned, we will accept and maintain the advice that we have from the CHMO's office. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Ms. Lee. The honourable Member from the Sahtu, Mr. Yakeleya.

QUESTION 420-16(3):
BENEFITS ACCRUED FROM
FORT GOOD HOPE SCHOOL CONSTRUCTION

MR. YAKELEYA: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to ask questions to the Minister of ITI in terms of the businesses in the small communities. I wanted to ask about the tracking of the recently built school in Tulita, the new Chief Albert Wright School. I know the company that was in there. They did some good work there. I want to ask if the Minister has a report as to the socio-economic benefits that that project had in that community and also the region.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Yakeleya. Honourable Minister responsible for Industry, Tourism and Investment, Mr. Bob McLeod.

HON. BOB MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to point out to the Member that the responsibility for administering the Business Incentive Policy is a shared responsibility between all the departments, and the ITI administers the Business Incentive Policy and provides the statistics and so on. But certainly I can commit to making that information requested available. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. YAKELEYA: Mr. Speaker, I do thank the Minister for that commitment to make the report available, or some type of indication of a report to show me in terms of the benefits that went into the community and into the Sahtu region. Can the Minister also make me aware in terms of how this type of future reporting will happen also in the community of Fort Good Hope, where it's also very appreciative of getting a new school, and how that type of a report will be done to myself? Thank you.

HON. BOB MCLEOD: We'd be very pleased to provide information on whatever projects that the Minister wants in his riding. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Ohhh.

MR. YAKELEYA: Thank you, Minister. I would ask the Minister in terms of the tracking of the reporting, especially into the -- and I appreciate all the projects into the Sahtu region -- community of Fort Good Hope in terms of the building of the new school. I know the people are looking forward to it. I know they'll be interested in seeing how the process will work, as Mr. Michael McLeod outlined a process for helping with the project here. Can the Minister commit to providing some interim or core reports on the building of the school in terms of how the businesses are being used in Fort Good Hope?

HON. BOB MCLEOD: I already committed to providing information with regard to the school that has been completed in Tulita. When and if the Fort Good Hope school goes ahead, if it's a negotiated contract, we do have a format and a requirement for reporting of all of the benefits. If it's a tendered contract, we can also provide that information to the Member. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. McLeod. Final, short supplementary, Mr. Yakeleya.

MR. YAKELEYA: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I say this again because even though it does look logical on paper, in practicality sometimes it just doesn't work out that way. So I'd ask the Minister in terms of some of the benefits that could be worked out in Fort Good Hope with the negotiated contract of whose going to build the school, that there is some close monitoring of these sections of the construction.

I do appreciate the Minister's strong commitment to provide reports, and I'm looking forward to a more closely monitored report of the construction of the school, to see what type of benefits are going into the community.

HON. BOB MCLEOD: I don't know whether there's been any determination of when or how the school would go forward or how it would be provided for. Our government has a Negotiated Contract Policy and as part of that policy there is a certain requirement to keep track of all of the benefits and jobs created and to report in a certain format. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. McLeod. The honourable Member from Tu Nedhe, Mr. Beaulieu.

QUESTION 421-16(3):
DUST SUPPRESSION EFFORTS
IN SMALL COMMUNITIES

MR. BEAULIEU: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I have questions for the Minister of MACA. I'd like to ask the Minister what the status of any dust suppression work between MACA and the communities in Tu Nedhe are. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Beaulieu. Honourable Minister responsible for Municipal and Community Affairs, Mr. Robert McLeod.

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I had a feeling that once the snow melted on the Dempster Highway we'd be hearing about dust control problems across the Northwest Territories, because it's that bad.

---Interjection

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: Oh yeah, it spreads out over the whole place.

Anyway, Mr. Speaker, there has been some work done as far as identifying. MACA is trying to work with the communities to identify best alternatives that they can use for dust control. They will work with the communities to come up with a plan. I've made that commitment before and I'll reaffirm that to the Member, that MACA continues to work with the communities that want them to come in and help them to come up with some options for dust control. Thank you.

MR. BEAULIEU: Mr. Speaker, aside from money in the New Deal, the gas tax, and community capacity and all of that, inside the regular capital planning process, infrastructure planning process of the GNWT, is there money in there as opposed to in the New Deal for dust suppression? Thank you.

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: Mr. Speaker, the answer to that would be no, as far as MACA's capital plan is concerned. MACA doesn't really have a capital plan anymore. We're finishing off what projects were on the books before the New

Deal, and now all the responsibility for capital lies with the community. Thank you.

MR. BEAULIEU: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to ask the Minister if in the New Deal the capital spending that's going on in the communities, is the capital spending in the communities under the same rules as the infrastructure spending in the GNWT? For example, the number one priority being safety of people. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: Mr. Speaker, that is determined by the municipality again, and MACA will guide them with anything they need to do to come up with that. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. McLeod. Final supplementary, Mr. Beaulieu.

MR. BEAULIEU: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Can the Minister have MACA staff contact the community at this time? I'm not 100 percent sure if this would be the number one priority for MACA staff. So I was wondering if they could contact the communities of Tu Nedhe, just to ensure that some sort of work is happening in dust suppression in both communities of Tu Nedhe. Thank you.

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: MACA continues to work with all the communities to assist them with the infrastructure plans and coming up with an infrastructure budget. They do come there at the request of the community. Some communities are doing a good job working on their own with this, but there are some that need a bit of help and that's where MACA comes in now. We usually wait until we have a request from the community to come in and assist them, because MACA's primary role right now is to assist the communities in coming up with infrastructure plans and assist in any way they can. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. McLeod. The honourable Member from Mackenzie Delta, Mr. Krutko.

QUESTION 422-16(3):
SUBCONTRACTORS ON
INUVIK SCHOOL PROJECT

MR. KRUTKO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister of Public Works in regards to the school project in Inuvik. I'd just like to ask the Minister, does he have a list of the subcontractors in regard to this project and what is the social benefit to the community of Inuvik and the surrounding communities.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Krutko. Honourable Minister responsible for Public Works and Services, Mr. Michael McLeod.

HON. MICHAEL MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Yes, I do have a list of the subcontractors that were identified by the developer. Thank you.

MR. KRUTKO: Mr. Speaker, can the Minister tell me if that's an original list or has that list been amended since the original contract was let in regards to the \$100 million contract?

HON. MICHAEL MCLEOD: Mr. Speaker, I can't tell him if that's an original list or an amended list, at this point. I would have to talk to our officials to confirm that and I'd be glad to share that list with the Member, if he doesn't have it. It was provided previously. Thank you.

MR. KRUTKO: Mr. Speaker, if we can, from the Minister -- not only for myself but the rest of the Members of the House -- acquire that list and also the information. But, more importantly, if he can, along with the Minister of ITI, show exactly what the benefit of the \$6 million that was expended on the foundation of this project and also who the subs were, who were the benefactors in regards to these contracts, and how many of those contractors were real northern companies.

HON. MICHAEL MCLEOD: Mr. Speaker, that project summary will be provided. Once we get it and have it evaluated and see if it is correct, we'd be pleased to share that with the Member. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. McLeod. Final supplementary, Mr. Krutko.

MR. KRUTKO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. This government signed a memorandum of understanding with the Gwich'in Tribal Council regarding socio-economic benefits in the Gwich'in Settlement Region. This school is in the Gwich'in Settlement Region, so I'd like to ask the Minister, could you provide which Gwich'in companies have benefitted from the first phase of this project in regards to the site development work that has taken place, and what was the benefit to the Gwich'in Tribal Council?

HON. MICHAEL MCLEOD: Mr. Speaker, the Member is asking me to contact the developer and request specific information and that requires the general contractor to be in a position where they need some time to compile that. We have some early indicators that show that almost half of the workers onsite for the construction of the piles were Gwich'in, and I have some of the information. I can certainly commit to putting it together. I'm not sure if I could commit to have it readily available. It will take some time, but we'll be happy to provide that. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. McLeod. Time for question period has expired. Item 9, written questions. Item 10, returns to written questions. Item 11, petitions. Honourable Member from Weledeh, Mr. Bromley.

Petitions

PETITION 9-16(3):
STUDENT FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE
SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM

MR. BROMLEY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to present a petition dealing with the matter of the Student Financial Assistance Scholarship Program. Mr. Speaker, the petition contains 370 signatures of Yellowknife constituents and, Mr. Speaker, the petitioners request that the Legislative Assembly reinstate the Student Financial Assistance Scholarship Program. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Bromley. Item 12, reports of standing and special committees. Item 13, tabling of documents. The honourable Minister of the NWT Housing Corporation, Mr. Michael McLeod.

Tabling of Documents

TABLED DOCUMENT 62-16(3):
NWT HOUSING CORPORATION
ANNUAL REPORT 2006-2007:
BLUEPRINT FOR CHANGE

HON. MICHAEL MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I wish to table the following document titled Northwest Territories Housing Corporation Annual Report 2006-2007: Blueprint for Change. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. McLeod. The honourable Minister of HR, Mr. Bob McLeod.

TABLED DOCUMENT 63-16(3):
2020: A BRILLIANT NORTH, NWT PUBLIC
SERVICE STRATEGIC PLAN

TABLED DOCUMENT 64-16(3):
ACTION PLAN - 2020: A BRILLIANT NORTH,
NWT PUBLIC SERVICE
STRATEGIC PLAN

HON. BOB MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I wish to table the following two documents titled 2020: A Brilliant North, NWT Public Service Strategic Plan; and, Action Plan - 2020: A Brilliant North, NWT Public Service Strategic Plan.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. McLeod. The honourable Member for Weledeh, Mr. Bromley.

TABLED DOCUMENT 65-16(3):
MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING ON
DEVELOPMENT OF RESIDUAL HEAT
DISTRIBUTION SYSTEM BETWEEN THE GNWT
AND THE NWT POWER CORPORATION

MR. BROMLEY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to table a Memorandum of Understanding on Development of Residual Heat Distribution System

between the Government of the Northwest Territories and the Northwest Territories Power Corporation. Thank you.

TABLED DOCUMENT 66-16(3):
SUMMARY OF MEMBERS' ABSENCES FOR THE
PERIOD OCTOBER 18, 2007 TO MAY 26, 2009

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Bromley. Pursuant to section 5 of the Legislative Assembly and Executive Council Act, I wish to table the Summary of Members' Absences for the period October 18, 2007 to May 26, 2009.

Item 14, notices of motion. The honourable Member for Sahtu, Mr. Yakeleya.

Notices of Motion

MOTION 25-16(3):
REDUCING TRANSPORTATION COSTS AND
INCREASING SAFETY IN SMALL COMMUNITIES

MR. YAKELEYA: Mr. Speaker, I will give notice that on Monday, June 8, 2009, I will move the following motion: Now therefore I move, seconded by the honourable Member for Nahendeh, that this Legislative Assembly strongly recommends that the Department of Transportation take immediate action to identify the funds and resources necessary to complete the runway extensions in Fort Good Hope and Deline; and further, recommends that the Department of Transportation take immediate action to identify the funds and resources necessary to undertake runway improvements, including runway lights, in the communities of Nahanni Butte and Jean Marie River.

Mr. Speaker, at the appropriate time I will be seeking unanimous consent to deal with this motion today.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Yakeleya. Item 15, notices of motions for the first reading of bills. Item 16, motions. The honourable Member for Weledeh, Mr. Bromley.

Motions

MOTION 22-16(3):
STUDENT FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE
SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM,
CARRIED

MR. BROMLEY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I would like to move a motion on the Student Financial Assistance Scholarship Program.

WHEREAS the 2009-2010 Main Estimates eliminated the Student Financial Assistance Scholarship Program;

AND WHEREAS the awards were relied upon by students in managing their finances while at college or university;

AND WHEREAS the purpose of the Student Financial Assistance Program is to assist in meeting the costs of education and the purpose of scholarships is separate and distinct in that they recognize scholastic achievement;

AND WHEREAS these merit-based awards were also of value as an indication of achievement in competition for other scholarships and bursary opportunities;

AND WHEREAS students anticipating scholarships were given little notice of the termination of the Scholarship Program, upsetting crucial financial planning;

AND WHEREAS there is a clear need and responsibility to provide students with transitional scholarship funding during a period of dramatic change;

AND WHEREAS there may be some real need to reduce these costs in the immediate future;

NOW THEREFORE I MOVE, seconded by the honourable Member for Yellowknife Centre, that the Student Financial Assistance scholarships awarded by the Department of Education, Culture and Employment be reinstated for the 2009-2010 fiscal year;

AND FURTHER, that the value of the awards should be equal to half of the value of the scholarship amounts issued under each category in fiscal year 2008-2009, with further reductions to be introduced in each category in the 2010-2011 fiscal year.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Bromley. The motion is on the floor. The motion is in order. To the motion. The honourable Member for Weledeh, Mr. Bromley.

Mr. Bromley, I understand that you did not read the entire motion. So I will give you an opportunity to finish off the motion. Mr. Bromley.

MR. BROMLEY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to begin by noting the document in our blue binder somehow left out that last paragraph. In our double-sidedness, we somehow missed that. So the last line is:

AND FURTHERMORE, that a redesign of the program be undertaken with the primary intent of providing, on a continuing basis, recognition of academic excellence.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: The motion is on the floor. The motion is in order. To the motion. The honourable Member for Weledeh, Mr. Bromley.

MR. BROMLEY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. First, Mr. Speaker, as the motion clearly says, I believe the Student Financial Assistance Program has a good

record of supporting our students with wide and generous allowances as good or better than any in Canada.

We were told the Scholarship Fund was unsubscribed at about \$100,000, but find over \$380,000 was allocated this past year. Under this misunderstanding and without any consultation with the public, we let the program be terminated. However, we now understand this sudden and complete action has left many students in the lurch financially and they have lost a tool for competing for additional financial support. Even though the budget is passed, it is not too late to improve the handling of this matter.

There is action we can take that is actually responsible, recognizes merit and greatly reduces cost. Mr. Speaker, given that the current level of Student Financial Assistance Program support is healthy and appropriate, given my belief that more focus is required in early childhood education where big returns are to be had and, finally, that we do have limited resources, I can accept the need for a considerably scaled back Scholarship Program.

However, the program should have been scaled back in a transitional way so that those counting on it were not left hanging. Also, there is important value and merit-based recognition, both psychologically for motivating and encouraging students and for their use in competing for further financial support. We can correct this by reinstating transitional dollars for the program to an increasingly reduced level this year and next and by redesigning the program to indeed recognize academic achievement accompanied by a more modest financial reward.

Mr. Speaker, this matter is urgent. Students have long since begun preparations for the next school year. With a sudden and complete elimination of our only merit-based program, we have left scholarship recipients high and dry and financially struggling. Let's not throw the baby out with the bathwater by eliminating the good of the more modest recognition program.

We need to fund a transitional program and institute a modified merit-based recognition program at low cost, and we need to take a closer look at how well student financial assistance is working and how it fits into the lifelong experience of education.

As I have often stated in the House, my belief is the area of early childhood education is now recognized as laying the foundation to maximize the potential for later learning and needs additional emphasis in our allocation of education dollars. I am willing to accept, in balancing our priorities and recognizing the rapid growth of the scholarship beyond its original intent, that we need to scale the scholarship dollars back, but let's do this responsibly, acknowledge the value of recognizing academic merit, and do it in a transitional way that

both respect some of our hardest working students and demonstrates our awareness of people's needs and the need for government to act responsibly.

I look forward to any further discussion from my colleagues and immediate action from the Minister of Education, Culture and Employment. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Bromley. The honourable Member for Yellowknife Centre, Mr. Hawkins.

MR. HAWKINS: It gives me great pleasure to second this motion and I truly believe and we have to continue to lay down a solid foundation for our youth who wish to pursue post-secondary education.

Mr. Speaker, over the lunch hour, I had a chance to go out and meet several students who had shown a fond example of demonstrating their concerns through a democratic approach. They were out there with signs and placards. It was really nice to meet the students and the parents, as well as some of the supporters, who were some high school students looking forward enough to say wait a minute, these are opportunities that could take away from us. We want to make sure they are there so it can help empower their education goals.

Mr. Speaker, I am a full supporter of merit-based education. These grants can help focus in on that and cause like a carrot to remind students to work just a little bit harder and perhaps they would be rewarded. Mr. Speaker, taking that chance away sort of takes away some of that motivation and I think that's shameful.

Mr. Speaker, I am wholeheartedly in agreement that if we keep the Scholarship Program high, as one of the things that gets reviewed and discussed further, we have to build in a component and return a service. Mr. Speaker, if we take the approach of setting them just as grants and based on merit-based only, well then, Mr. Speaker, the numbers being subscribed today need to be re-evaluated.

Mr. Speaker, in closing, I want to stress that investing in education is one of the best choices our government and future governments can make and it does little for investing into the future of our youth by taking it away from them.

Mr. Speaker, this supports and recognizes their hard work and I am certainly behind the students and I stand with them. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Hawkins. The honourable Member for Frame Lake, Ms. Bisaro.

MS. BISARO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I would like to say that, at the outset, I am fully in support of this motion and I am very pleased that my colleagues have brought this motion forward. I feel that there was an error when this particular program was removed from the budget

and I think we need to correct that error, and this motion will do that.

One of the things that I think that needs to be noted is that the purpose of the scholarships is very different from the purpose of the grants and loans which are available through the department of student financial assistance, through ECE. The purpose of these scholarships is they are awarded on merit. These are not scholarships which are available to every student. They are only available to those students who attain the marks and actually earn them.

I think it's important to also note that merit-based scholarships are not readily available throughout for all kinds of students. I think most students would agree that merit-based scholarships for somebody pursuing an arts or a science degree is unlikely...There aren't very many. Students are unlikely to find them, whereas here are specifically targeted scholarships which are quite readily available. I think that it needs to be noticed that the student financial assistance scholarships are the only part of student financial assistance which is based on merit.

I think also that there was an error when we erred in taking this item out of the budget, we erred in terms of not providing notice to students. Yes, they were given notice but they were given notice at the end of the fiscal year, in March. They were preparing for exams in April and they had very little opportunity to readjust their financing to consider what they were going to do come school year to start again in the fall.

I think there is an opportunity for us to reinstate at somewhat of a reduced level for this fiscal year, 2009-10, and then a gradual reduction over following years, as has been suggested by the motion so that eventually we return to probably the levels of scholarships that were awarded in and around 2001. Those were amounts that were much less than what the current amounts are. I think there is value, as the motion says, in having scholarships, which basically is a recognition of the achievement of the students but they're not a large cash award. I think that goes to Mr. Hawkins' comment about a return of service. A small cash award doesn't really require a return of service. Some of the large awards that we currently did give probably did require a return of service.

So I think we certainly need to look at a redesign of the Scholarship Program and that is also something that is called for in the motion. I think there needs to be a look at the amounts that are awarded, look at how the amounts are awarded, what level of marks are required for various levels and I think bottom line, we need to reinstate at least 50 percent of the scholarship funding that was eliminated from last year's or this current year's budget. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Ms. Bisaro. The honourable Member for Mackenzie Delta, Mr. Krutko.

MR. KRUTKO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I will not be supporting this motion because I believe this program is not fair or fairly distributed to the Northwest Territories. A lot of our schools in the smaller communities, from kindergarten to Grade 12, are only a general program. A lot of students don't have access to science labs or even biology classes, in most cases, where you can achieve these bursaries. In our case, we don't have the success because of the programs and services being delivered by the Department of Education throughout the Northwest Territories. It does not give the students the same allocation or same ability to achieve these results and take advantage of these types of programs.

It's a \$400,000 program, Mr. Speaker. If anything, this government should take a look at all bursary programs with regard to the Student Financial Assistance Program and make sure those programs are accessible for all students in the Northwest Territories and not those ones who are receiving a higher level of education because of where they live. I, for one, feel that this is something that has to be considered and something this government has to seriously look at. I am glad the Department of Education is considering looking at these other options so that we can have shop programs in high schools in our communities; have biology labs in our schools and be able to receive the higher level of education throughout the Northwest Territories in all our schools. I think this definitely shows there is a distinct difference between the quality of education and the quantity of education of where it is being provided and the ability of people to take advantage of these types of programs. This Bursary Program, just about all of them, are received in the larger centres, specially in Yellowknife.

Again, I won't be supporting this motion.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Krutko. The honourable Minister of Education, Culture and Employment, Mr...I am first going to go to the Minister from Nahendeh, Mr. Menicoche.

---Laughter

MR. MENICOCHÉ: Thank you very much for your indulgence, Mr. Speaker, for me to speak on this motion. I, too, have not seen or am convinced that there are many benefits to people in my riding, but these higher end scholarships, as people have been telling me it's called, and we are just barely graduating from our schools in the regions and this is something that is not really benefitting.

I do see a bit of a need for some merit-based system and as we deliberated this issue in our committee rooms, we found out through some

research from a colleague of mine, Mr. Glen Abernethy, that the original intent was a merit-based system to acknowledge hardworking students in our schools, in our graduate classes, in universities and to achieve the high, top marks. At that time, I think it was about 2001, it wasn't an award that had a lot of money there, Mr. Speaker. It was a small award. I think it was \$500 for high school, up to \$1,500 for graduate programs, but now we've got this very bloated program. We've got like \$10,000 for doctors, \$5,000 for graduate programs and that's something that the Ministry of Education, Culture and Employment is correct, it can't sustain something like that. It will balloon up to like a \$400,000 program and that kind of money can certainly be used in the smaller communities to support and sustain other programs that can assist our smaller communities as they move through our education system.

The motion speaks about...Maybe the Member can correct me if I'm wrong about some kind of prorated system where if you knock it down to 50 percent this year...That's not something I can support either, Mr. Speaker.

I would support a return to the original programming at not a very significant cost, but to have a sense of entitlement, these people should continue with the graduated reduction in their scholarship is not something I can support at this time, Mr. Speaker. So I will be voting against the motion. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Menicoche. The honourable Member for Sahtu, Mr. Yakeleya.

MR. YAKELEYA: Mr. Speaker, I would just like to say a few things on the motion. I would like to thank Mr. Bromley for bringing forward this motion. Anything that we have to have some discussions with students and education, it's always an important issue in the Northwest Territories.

Mr. Speaker, over the last couple of years, we've had to buckle down in terms of having debates on some very tough issues on very important programs that are out there. Because of the financial situation we are in, there are programs that need to be looked at and we have to make some decisions as to the priorities.

From the Sahtu region, we are fighting and we are wanting to...(inaudible)...educational programs in our smaller schools and smaller educational systems. We are still of the opinion that the level of quality of education is not quite fair right across the board. I talked to the educational superintendent from the Sahtu region. He certainly would love more high school students in our region, more programs in our regions and we seem to be reminded by the department that there is a limited amount of funding and certainly with the release of the language report, you know how strong that report is in terms of some major shifts and

discussion to preserve the aboriginal languages in the Northwest Territories.

I am not convinced that the elimination of this program here, it needs to be put back. I think we need to look at the small communities, so I will also not be supporting this motion. I think more emphasis needs to be on discussions on our schools in our smaller communities where education has really been needed to support the community level at all costs and maintain those types of services or even enhance it to a level that we will feel comfortable that we are on the same level playing field with other regions and centres. Some of our communities would like to have chemistry classes or biology classes or extra teachers in the schools to help with the teaching of the programs that they are doing right now.

I do want to thank Mr. Bromley for bringing this motion forward. However, I will not be supporting it at this time.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Yakeleya. The honourable Member for Hay River South, Mrs. Groenewegen.

MRS. GROENEWEGEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank Mr. Bromley for the thought he put into this motion and for bringing this motion forward. I disagree with the rapidness -- is that a word -- rapidness with which this program was pulled out from under these students. I think at the very least it should have been phased out and those already anticipating support through this program should have been grandfathered into it. We all know that the cost of post-secondary education, even with student financial assistance, is very expensive, and very many of our northern students, as any other student who graduates from university, usually starts off with a serious and significant debt that they need to repay and I think that anything that encourages our students to strive for excellence in their education at any level is worthwhile.

Certainly I can understand from some of the other Members that they think this is not a priority and its level of spending is not sustainable; however, I think that the unanticipated removal of this support, the way that it was done, is unacceptable and I will be supporting the motion. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mrs. Groenewegen. The honourable Minister of Education, Culture and Employment, Mr. Lafferty.

HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY: Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, first of all, I would like to thank all of the students who were in front of the Legislative Assembly building. I would like to thank them for coming and supporting the students who are out there. I would also like to thank the Members for their comments on this specific motion that is before us.

Mr. Speaker, first of all, I would just like to point out that there is one thing that all Northerners can agree upon, and that is the importance of making sure all northern children and youth have a strong education for the future.

We are working to strengthen the continuum of lifelong education beginning in early childhood, as Members have alluded to, and continue for life. We need to ensure Northerners are trained and raised to take advantage of opportunities that are before us and that will exist in this Territory for decades to come.

The Government of the Northwest Territories is committed to education of NWT residents. This year our GNWT will invest close to \$270 million in educating our people. This money pays for schools and teachers in the communities across the North, provides support for apprenticeship and career training, support for operation of Aurora College, and helps NWT students access post-secondary education through the SFA Program.

Mr. Speaker, this government offers one of the most generous Student Financial Assistance Programs in the country. Over 1,400 NWT students are currently pursuing their education goals annually with the assistance of the GNWT program. We are providing over \$14 million in grants and loans to our students to help offset their costs associated with education, including tuition, books, travel costs and living expenses.

We don't pay for everything, Mr. Speaker, but we do provide a substantial level of assistance to help keep the cost of education from becoming a barrier to most of the students.

Unlike most of the other Canadian jurisdictions, the GNWT does not require most of the NWT students with their families to undergo income testing. NWT students who enroll in an approved post-secondary program or course are eligible to receive student financial assistance from the GNWT regardless of their family income.

Unlike most other Canadian jurisdictions, many NWT students do not, I repeat, do not have to pay back their loans, which can be forgiven if they return to the Northwest Territories, which we all hope that they will eventually come back to the North and work for us upon the completion of their studies.

Our policy of hiring students during the summer months gives northern students a chance to gain job experience while making competitive wages.

Mr. Speaker, our government practice of hiring extends its commitment even further. Over the past year and a half, this government has taken a careful look at its budget. Even before the current global economic slowdown, we needed to reduce our spending to bring it into line with our revenues, to ensure that we can sustain a level of

programming and services that the people of the Northwest Territories need from their government. We've had to make some decisions about where to spend our money and where to make some reductions.

Where we've had to make difficult choices, difficult decisions, we have acted to protect those programs and investment to help a greater number of students, the people of the North. Until this year, Mr. Speaker, the GNWT has been able to offer academic scholarships. Based on academic success, these scholarships provide an average of 100 students a year with financial awards over and above amounts already available under the SFA Program.

I am proud of these students who are achieving at the highest academic level. However, their needs cannot be considered greater than those of other students and it is important to maintain the grant and loan benefits afforded to all northern post-secondary students.

Mr. Speaker, we regret the impact these reductions will have on the scholarship recipients. We will continue, however, to support these students with grants and loans, which continue to be available to all SFA recipients, and by promoting a variety of scholarship programs provided by the private sector.

I appreciate the meaningful commentary that's been offered by the students and MLAs here, and also the family members. But please understand that we value education. That's why we're here. We are pleased to see young Northerners with strong voices and a will to succeed. That is why we are asking in the long term to protect one of the best SFA programs in Canada.

Just for the record, the Cabinet will be abstaining from voting on this matter, on the motion, since it's a direction to the government.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Lafferty. I'll allow the mover of the motion some closing remarks. Mr. Bromley.

MR. BROMLEY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thank you, colleagues, for the discussion. I think there's been a lot of good and interesting points laid out here. I'd like to summarize by saying really this is the only merit-based program that we sponsor. I think it's definitely appropriate that we have a merit-based program.

This motion acknowledges that we have an excellent Student Financial Assistance Program, possibly the best in the country, acknowledged right in the motion.

The motion seeks greatly reduced expenditures from our current level, essentially to the 2001 levels.

The motion seeks a transition to allow students to adjust rather than the sudden and without-consultation action that we have taken.

The motion seeks merit-based recognition to encourage students to work hard.

The motion seeks to provide a tool for students to be able to compete successfully for additional financial support to help their education.

The complaints I've heard: Should we reduce it to 2001, it should reduce our expenditures to 2001 levels, from Mr. Menicoche. In fact it does. I assume we'll have his support.

Another complaint: We must achieve high marks in math and science. No, that's not true. This is for recognition and merit for high marks in whatever courses you choose to take.

And finally: The regions do not benefit. In fact, we have called for a redesign for this program and there is no reason why it cannot be redesigned to make sure that the awards are on a regional basis. It's merit-based, whoever it is and whatever program you're looking at.

Finally, I appreciate this opportunity. Grand Chief of the Dene Nation Bill Erasmus showed up in support of the students at the demonstration today and said to me personally, this merit-based recognition is important. He acknowledged only 14 percent of the current recipients are aboriginal, but he said this is a responsibility of this government and even nationally. Do not worry about students not returning, he said. Recognizing merit and hard work is a value that we support.

I call on everybody to support this motion and I call again on the Minister to support it and get this done in a modest way that recognizes our financial situation.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Bromley. Mr. Bromley.

MR. BROMLEY: Mr. Speaker, may I call for a recorded vote?

MR. SPEAKER: The Member is asking for a recorded vote. Mr. Clerk. All those in favour of the motion, please stand.

RECORDED VOTE

CLERK OF THE HOUSE (Mr. Mercer): Mr. Bromley, Mr. Abernethy, Mrs. Groenewegen, Mr. Beaulieu, Mr. Hawkins, Mr. Jacobson, Ms. Bisaro.

MR. SPEAKER: All those opposed to the motion please stand.

CLERK OF THE HOUSE (Mr. Mercer): Mr. Krutko, Mr. Menicoche, Mr. Yakeleya.

MR. SPEAKER: All those abstaining from the motion please stand.

CLERK OF THE HOUSE (Mr. Mercer): Mr. Lafferty; Ms. Lee; Mr. Miltenberger; Mr. Roland; Mr. McLeod, Deh Cho; Mr. McLeod, Inuvik Twin Lakes; Mr. McLeod, Yellowknife South.

MR. SPEAKER: The results of the recorded vote: seven for, three opposed, seven abstentions.

---Carried

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Member for Yellowknife Centre, Mr. Hawkins.

MOTION 23-16(3):
REFERRAL OF ON-LINE PETITIONS ISSUED TO
THE STANDING COMMITTEE ON
RULES AND PROCEDURES,
CARRIED AS AMENDED

MR. HAWKINS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I am going to read in a motion that refers to on-line petition issues to the Standing Committee on Rules and Procedures.

WHEREAS the rules and practices of the Legislative Assembly do not allow the presentation of on-line petitions;

AND WHEREAS the population of the Northwest Territories is spread over a vast geographic area;

AND WHEREAS in this day and age many people are using on-line and electronic means for communications;

NOW THEREFORE I MOVE, seconded by the honourable Member for Great Slave, that this Assembly directs the Standing Committee on Rules and Procedures to undertake research in order to determine the consequences of allowing on-line petitions to be used in its parliamentary process;

AND FURTHER, that the research and analysis pay particular attention to the concerns regarding security issues and identification challenges;

AND FURTHERMORE, that the research and analysis also look at the potential for increased participation in the democratic process and modernization of our parliamentary processes.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Hawkins. A motion is on the floor. The motion is in order. To the motion. The honourable Member for Yellowknife Centre, Mr. Hawkins.

MR. HAWKINS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. This motion doesn't necessarily say we have to change our rules, but what it is is a chance to look at the fact of whether our rules need to be modernized through this method. It does not force the change, but it asks the question are we silencing democracy in our own way by not accepting that on-line petition.

Earlier today Member Bromley laid down a petition of 370 names, but they were all from Yellowknife, in regards to the concerns of the student cuts for their grants. But an on-line petition could have a broader

base of northern participants that could reflect the concerns of all Northerners in its own way.

This issue is about networking and it's about raising concerns for issues. Do Members of this House want to silence that type of voice, that democracy? I'm not necessarily believing in one way or the other, but I will tell you that it's a consideration we may want to ask ourselves.

This is about recognizing that the youth of our tomorrow need different ways to communicate. Often they're criticized about not participating in politics, not engaging because they just don't care. I often wonder, do we even ask them and do we even find ways to reach out in the ways they like to communicate best?

I'll leave the motion open to hear comments from Members, but it is not forcing a change in rules. This motion is only about asking the question, could we consider this type of modernization in our process and what impact will it have.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Hawkins. To the motion. The honourable Member for Great Slave, Mr. Abernethy.

MR. ABERNETHY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm the seconder of this motion and I'm going to support it. It doesn't mean actually that I agree that on-line petitions are a good idea. The reason I support this motion is because, frankly, I don't know. Not enough research has been done into the fact and this motion talks about doing the research to determine whether or not this is appropriate.

As the way we communicate in society changes, as technology changes, we have to be aware of them and we have to move with the times. Ultimately without that information as to whether or not we could do these petitions without jeopardizing the value and the importance of petitions, I am unable to make a decision as to whether I think accepting them is appropriate. That's why I support this motion; because I want them to do the research.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Abernethy. To the motion. The honourable Member for Frame Lake, Ms. Bisaro.

MS. BISARO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to move an amendment to Motion 23-16(3).

MOTION TO AMEND MOTION 23-16(3):
REFERRAL OF ON-LINE PETITIONS ISSUED TO
THE STANDING COMMITTEE ON RULES AND
PROCEDURES,
CARRIED

I MOVE, seconded by the honourable Member for Weledeh, that Motion 23-16(3), Referral of On-line Petitions Issued to the Standing Committee on Rules and Procedures, be amended by deleting the sixth paragraph.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Ms. Bisaro. A motion is on the floor. The motion is in order. The motion is being circulated. To the motion to amend. The honourable Member for Frame Lake, Ms. Bisaro.

MS. BISARO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I wanted to make just a couple of remarks in regards to why I'm moving this motion. I do support the intent of the original motion, but in terms of the amendment, I feel that this paragraph, this furthermore, is far too broad.

I support the reduction of paper within the Assembly. I support an increase of electronic communication and practices within these walls. But what is being asked for here, the research that is being asked for is simply beyond the scope of anything that I think this Assembly can do or has the resources for. It's asking to research into the potential for increased participation in the democratic process and the modernization of the parliamentary process. It sounds like we could probably have junkets to every Parliament in the world in order to look at what's going on.

I think that without further definition to this particular aspect of the motion, it's way too broad. It needs to be defined further and I cannot support the motion with that clause in there. That's why I've asked for it to be deleted.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Ms. Bisaro. To the amendment. The honourable Member for Yellowknife Centre, Mr. Hawkins.

MR. HAWKINS: Mr. Speaker, I understand the spirit and the intent of the amendment, although I think the Member has it completely wrong. It's about the reflection of the impacts it has on this change and as well as the reflection of how it will change going forward.

The issue is on-line petitions. Will it increase democratic process? Will it modernize our process? That's what it's all focused in on. I'm not sure where the Member for Frame Lake gets some idea that this is a blank cheque for travel. But I've heard more creative things since I've been here in the last six years. I can certainly try to imagine how she sees that, although I find it very difficult. But I will accept that if this is the will of the House, it still speaks to the fact that this motion, in my view, is only about research and consideration of this. And of course, ultimately, if it was to be supported by the Rules committee, it would still require the adoption of this House anyway.

So in my humble opinion, I don't think this deafens the motion, but it certainly takes away from it in a small way.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Hawkins. To the motion to amend.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Question.

MR. SPEAKER: Question has been called. To the amendment.

---Carried

MR. SPEAKER: To the motion as amended.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Question.

MR. SPEAKER: Question has been called.

---Carried as Amended

MR. SPEAKER: Motions. The honourable Member for Sahtu, Mr. Yakeleya.

MOTION 24-16(3):
INCOME EXEMPTION FOR NEWLY EMPLOYED
HOUSING TENANTS,
CARRIED

MR. YAKELEYA: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Income exemption for newly employed public housing tenants.

WHEREAS the Government of the Northwest Territories recognizes that homeownership is more viable and sustainable than public housing for both families and the government;

AND WHEREAS the delivery of public housing is very costly;

AND WHEREAS the tenants in public housing find it difficult to remain working due to the high cost of rents that are charged when the tenants are employed;

AND WHEREAS the communities with a higher percentage of homeownership are more viable than communities with a high percentage of public housing;

NOW THEREFORE I MOVE, seconded by the honourable Member for Tu Nedhe, that the Government of the Northwest Territories and the NWT Housing Corporation take immediate action to incorporate changes to their programs and public housing rental policies that would allow for an income exemption for public housing tenants for a period six months from the start of the tenant's employment;

AND FURTHER, that the Government of the Northwest Territories and the Housing Corporation undertake immediate efforts to work with these public housing tenants to encourage and empower these tenants to pursue the longer-term benefits gained through homeownership.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Yakeleya. A motion is on the floor. The motion is in order. To the motion.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Question.

MR. SPEAKER: Question has been called.

---Carried

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Member for Sahtu, Mr. Yakeleya.

MR. YAKELEYA: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I seek unanimous consent to deal with the motion I gave earlier today.

---Unanimous consent granted.

MOTION 25-16(3):

REDUCING TRANSPORTATION COSTS AND
INCREASING SAFETY IN SMALL COMMUNITIES,
CARRIED

MR. YAKELEYA: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Reducing transportation costs and increasing safety in small communities.

WHEREAS the high cost of transportation in the North is one of the main factors that contributes to the high cost of living in the Northwest Territories;

AND WHEREAS the Department of Transportation released "A Study of Runway Issues in the Northwest Territories" that examined the current and future requirements of community airports and runways;

AND WHEREAS the communities of Nahanni Butte and Jean Marie River have been seeking upgrades to their airports, including runway lighting, that would increase the safety and accessibility of these Nahendeh communities;

AND WHEREAS the communities of Fort Good Hope and Tulita will greatly benefit from an additional 1,000 feet being added to their existing runways that would bring their runway lengths up to nearly 4,000 feet apiece;

AND WHEREAS the Department of Transportation recognizes that Transport Canada's rules and regulations that will come into effect in 2010 will have a negative impact on northern air carriers and their operations, which will result in higher transportation costs for northern passengers and freight services;

AND WHEREAS the Department of Transportation has been working with stakeholders in the Sahtu region and currently have equipment on the ground in Fort Good Hope to complete the extension of the Fort Good Hope runway;

AND WHEREAS the communities of Fort Good Hope and Deline have a business partnership with North-Wright Airways Ltd. and the community of Deline has invested in facilities at the Yellowknife Airport as part of those business activities;

AND WHEREAS the Sahtu communities are not situated on the all-weather road system and are, in fact, 350 miles from the nearest centres;

AND WHEREAS the additional 500 feet being added to the Fort Good Hope and Deline runways will mean a reduction in transportation costs and the cost of living overall;

AND WHEREAS the current budget of \$2 million for the Fort Good Hope runway upgrade may not be

completely expended this year which would lead to a surplus that could be applied to one of the other runway extension projects;

NOW THEREFORE I MOVE, seconded by the honourable Member for Nahendeh, that this Legislative Assembly strongly recommends that the Department of Transportation take immediate action to identify the funds and resources necessary to complete the runway extensions in Fort Good Hope and Deline;

AND FURTHER, recommends that the Department of Transportation take immediate actions to identify the funds and resources necessary to undertake runway improvements, including runway lights, in the communities of Nahanni Butte and Jean Marie River.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Yakeleya. A motion is on the floor. The motion is in order. To the motion. The honourable Minister responsible for Transportation, Mr. Michael McLeod.

HON. MICHAEL MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

---Laughter

Oh, sorry. Sorry, Mr. Speaker. This is an issue that has been on the drawing board for some time. It has been raised by many of the representatives from the Sahtu and the Sahtu has really been focusing on improving the infrastructure in their riding, in their region in the area of air transportation. It is probably the most used form of transportation for that region.

We've responded in the last while by including in our budgets the runway for Tulita, extending that runway. It's a \$2.5 million project. We are also dealing with Fort Good Hope, the extension in that community. And we are moving the airport completely in Colville Lake so that they'll have a new location.

The discussion on the 2010 rule came about several years ago as a result of a concern that there was two types of aircraft currently flying in the Sahtu: the Beech 99 and the Twin Otter. The federal government's new guidelines would require that testing be done to show that these aircraft can land and take off within the size of our airports. Given the age of when these airplanes were built, there was no history, there was no documentation to show that these tests were done. We had incurred the air carriers to follow up on that and have the actual testing done. That was never, ever done by any of the companies that were concerned around this issue, so we took it upon ourselves as a department to contact some of the companies that were manufacturing these planes and upgrading these plans and that we knew could do the testing.

As a result, the information will be coming forward on the Beech 99 aircraft. We expect that to be

favourable to meet what we have in terms of runway lengths. We also had been dealing with Viking Air out of B.C. that has also indicated they are finalizing their testing. In that light, once we have all the information in place and provided to the federal government, there will be really no negative impact by this new 2010 rule.

The people in the Sahtu have indicated that they still have a strong desire to fly some of these other planes that have come on the market, the Beech 1900. Mr. Speaker, this plane is in high demand in the Sahtu and some other communities as a result that they are now becoming very cheap as other jurisdictions won't allow them and are restricting them from their runways because they're in the same situation as what our Twin Otters were. There are some changes in the very recent months and it's really taken away some of the urgency of looking to extend the runways.

Mr. Speaker, we are, as a Cabinet we might be voting on this. This is a recommendation to the government, but I think the circumstances have changed as to the requirement to extend runway lengths. I would mention that to have to extend runway lengths at both these airports would probably cost us close to \$2 million. It's about \$800,000, \$900,000 for each runway and we'd have to do it, in all fairness, to all the communities where we have airports. We're probably looking at more to the tune of \$60 million to do them all so that we're fair to all the different ridings. At this point we don't agree that it's required. We have far more urgent investments that are needed. We need to do the airport in Fort McPherson. We need to move the airport in Trout Lake. Mr. Speaker, we would be required to find these dollars from somewhere within our own budget and right now it's going to be very difficult. Those are my comments, Mr. Speaker. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. McLeod. To the motion. I'll allow the mover of the motion some closing remarks. Mr. Yakeleya. Mr. Yakeleya, before you make your closing remarks, I'll allow the Member from Weledeh to make some remarks.

MR. BROMLEY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Very briefly, I was able to participate in a briefing on this in the Standing Committee on Economic Development and Infrastructure and I agree that there are good reasons not to be spending money on these additional extensions. I think there are a lot of extensions happening already. But I do agree with the Minister that there are aircraft available that can service the needs right now and take the same loads as the Beech 1900, I think it is, and so on. The reason they are so cheap is because in the rest of the country are having to meet these standards. I think in this day and age of restricted resources, I don't think we can be spending money where just because a company is not willing to get

the proper aircraft and so on. I don't think it's a huge problem there. So I will be voting against this motion. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Bromley. To the motion. The honourable Member for Mackenzie Delta, Mr. Krutko.

MR. KRUTKO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the airports in the Sahtu have gotten the majority of the attention the last number of years, where we've relocated the airport in Deline in which they got a brand new airport which is upgraded and been extended from its original length. The same thing applies to Fort Good Hope. Then this last summer work was completed in Tulita in regard to the extension there. I believe, Mr. Speaker, there was work done looking at the other airports in the Northwest Territories. I know the issue in regard to Colville has been raised in this House where the department has committed to relocating that airport. The issue in regard to Trout Lake, that has been addressed before committee and also in this House.

I believe the department is clear in regard to where their commitments are and as the standing committee that oversees this, they are taking those issues seriously. There are other communities that are out there that are in the same boat. I think, as government, we have to realize that we have a federal regulation that we have to apply for and it's not just the three or four airports; it's all airports in the Northwest Territories that we have to bring up to a certain standard within a short timeframe.

So I think if we're going to continue to focus on those airports that have already received the majority of the attention, a lot of the capital dollars have been expended already on new airports for those particular communities. I do not support this motion on the basis that there are other urgent needs out there, other communities, and I think we have to realize that we only have so many dollars to go around. I think from the communities, you know, I do support the efforts in Jean Marie and in regard to Nahanni Butte and Trout Lake where we realize that those communities depend on relocating their airports and upgrading their airports because it's their only means in and out.

I think, Mr. Speaker, again, I would just like to reiterate that a lot of capital investment has been made by this government for these particular airports that have been mentioned in this motion and I think the government has already done its part, but there are other airports we have to put our attention to, so I will not be supporting this motion.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Krutko. To the motion. The honourable Member for Hay River South, Mrs. Groenewegen.

MRS. GROENEWEGEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm going to support my colleague from the Sahtu in

his efforts here to bring forward this motion. I think that this speaks to the issue of the cost of living in the small communities and, yes, different aircraft can get into these communities on the existing runways; however, when you look at the unit price per weight, it can be much more cost effective to be brought into these communities in DC-3s and DC-4s and planes that have a bigger payload. The ultimate price for the people who are receiving the goods is then lower. We talk a lot about trying to offset the cost of living in the small communities and I think this is one way that we could do it.

The federal legislation changed. That's not our fault. We can't help that; however, in order for goods to be delivered into these communities on an economic basis, I believe that this is infrastructure which is badly needed and would be good. Although there's a lot of competition for capital dollars, I think this would be a real show on the part of this government in their true concern for the cost of living in our small communities. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mrs. Groenewegen. To the motion. I'll allow the mover of the motion closing remarks. Mr. Yakeleya.

MR. YAKELEYA: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, this issue has been on the minds of the partners in Deline and Fort Good Hope and the whole Sahtu region, especially with North-Wright. It's been on the books as an issue for about nine years. Mr. Speaker, actually it's been an issue with the Northern Air Transportation Association also, which represents all carriers North of 60. Actually, they passed two motions at their annual assembly to support North-Wright and their partners to build longer runways in the Sahtu. It was brought up in the North American Northern Air Transportation board meetings and it's been supported by all the members in those association meetings.

Mr. Speaker, we are very appreciative of the Department of Transportation to put the additional runway length to bring it up close to 4,000. I think it's 3,933 feet in the communities of Fort Good Hope, Tulita and Deline. Actually, Deline itself added a huge amount of their own money to bring the extension up. You talk to the people in Deline, they put a lot of money into it. It wasn't all of our government's money. So these are things that they are looking forward to.

Mr. Speaker, the issue here is with the airline companies in the Sahtu. They have been in business in our region for over 23 years, longer than any carrier in the Northwest Territories. North-Wright is owned 51 percent by the Dene in the Sahtu and in the Territories. Their ownership is with Deline, the Yamoga and the Aklavik Indian bands

As I said, this issue has been on the books since the year 2000 in trying to get an additional required runway. North-Wright with its partners want to expand their business. We do not and I don't quite

understand where the Minister is coming from, but my understanding is the rule 2010 from Transport Canada. They have been doing some logging. We are saying that we want to expand our business. We don't want to fly around in Twin Otters and Beech 99s. We want to expand our business. The Beech 1900 or the King Air 1900 is the most popular available commuter in North America. These guys at North-Wright have done their homework. They looked around. They did their shopping. The best airline is the Beech 1900.

Mr. Speaker, it frustrates the residents in the Sahtu that if we are going to go with the 2010 rule, we will be paying higher costs in our isolated communities. We want to introduce a pressurized aircraft into our region. Our nearest flight to a larger centre when we leave the Sahtu is about an hour and a half, almost a two hour flight. No washroom, small aircraft. We want no less than what other people fly around in the Northwest Territories on these long flights. We have elders, 60 people that travel on these flights.

North-Wright and its partners have more terminals and land from all the airports than any other carriers in the Northwest Territories. They take up most of the spaces at the airport. North-Wright and its partners have improved infrastructure throughout the system. They have put \$150,000 in the Norman Wells Airport lease for the last two years. This summer, North-Wright will spend \$320,000 at the Norman Wells float base and cater to tourists, flight service to enhance infrastructure in the Norman Wells. Deline and the Yamoga has invested \$1.6 million at its infrastructure here in Yellowknife to enhance services in the Sahtu region. It's going to be called the Sahtu Terminal.

GNWT says that we have to improve our runway, improvements or length in all the communities, then we ask them, where are roads and bridges like any other community that has them? As I said, in the Sahtu communities, we are 350 miles from the nearest road system and I have flown many, many trips. It takes an hour to two hour flight from here back to the Sahtu. I wonder if any Members here would want to continue flying in an aircraft that we fly, and sit and wonder why we can't have a bigger and better aircraft with a washroom. There are elders. I know that people told me that they went to the washroom on those aircraft. That is the most shameful and embarrassing thing for an elder when someone is sick. For us here in the Sahtu, in order to get help and improve, the Sahtu has been very busy in oil and gas industry in the Beaufort-Delta and in other regions down here with oil and gas. We have been busy. We have invested lots into the Northwest Territories.

In the community of Fort Good Hope, I had a call from Chief Frank T'Seleie and some calls from the Yamoga board in Deline. They are willing to see if

they could be a partner in this extension. I'm not asking the government to fund everything. They are willing to put some dollars to it and get a partner. Isn't that one of your future goals in this government here, to build partnerships?

We are asking them to be open. The Minister knows about that. We had some discussions with them. We talked about that. The Yamoga Land Corporation president said they are willing to put some dollars to it. They are serious about it. That is mindboggling. I think we need to really consider some of the options here and some we are looking at. We just had some discussions on P3s. I think for the Sahtu partnerships and North-Wright, we see these opportunities as something that will benefit the Northwest Territories, benefit our people.

In the smaller communities, I understand about the runway length and the safety to them. I have landed many times on the Colville Lake runway. I can only imagine seeing it in Nahanni or Jean Marie or any other small communities in the Northwest Territories.

Mr. Speaker, this is not something that is taken very lightly by our residents in Fort Good Hope, Deline, Tulita, Colville Lake or Norman Wells. Our people every day have to get on those small flights, get on the flights and fly. We want to make a contribution to the Northwest Territories and be a partner. I do thank the Members for their comments. I thank Members for their support and Members who spoke on this motion. Sahtu people will remember this type of issue here, that it makes a difference in their life. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Yakeleya. To the motion.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Question.

MR. SPEAKER: Question has been called.

---Carried

Item 17, first reading of bills. Item 18, second reading of bills. Item 19, consideration in Committee of the Whole of bills and other matters. Tabled Document 7-16(3), Ministerial Benefits Policy, with Mr. Krutko in the chair.

Consideration in Committee of the Whole of Bills and Other Matters

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): I would like to call Committee of the Whole to order. Consideration in Committee of the Whole of Tabled document 7-16(3). What is the wish of the committee? Mr. Beaulieu.

MR. BEAULIEU: We move to report progress.

---Carried

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): I will rise and report progress.

MR. SPEAKER: Could I have the report of Committee of the Whole, Mr. Krutko?

Report of Committee of the Whole

MR. KRUTKO: Mr. Speaker, your committee would like to report progress. Mr. Speaker, I move that the report of Committee of the Whole be concurred with.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Krutko. A motion is on the floor. Do we have a seconder? The honourable Member for Frame Lake, Ms. Bisaro.

---Carried

Item 21, third reading of bills. The honourable Minister of Municipal and Community Affairs, Mr. Robert McLeod.

Third Reading of Bills

BILL 13: AN ACT TO AMEND THE COMMISSIONER'S LAND ACT

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the honourable Member for Deh Cho, that Bill 13, An Act to Amend the Commissioner's Land Act, be read for the third time. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Bill 13, An Act to Amend the Commissioner's Land Act, has had third reading.

---Carried

Before we prorogue this Third Session of the 16th Legislative Assembly, I would like to thank each of you for your contributions and bring to your attention the work that was completed during this session.

A session is one of the fundamental time periods into which a Parliament is divided, and usually consists of a number of sittings separated by periods of adjournment and ending with prorogation. Our Third Session began way back in the fall of 2008, resumed in February 2009 and again just a week or so ago, on May 27th, lasting a total of 35 days. During those 35 days, Ministers made over 80 statements, Members made over 360 statements...

---Applause

Over 400 questions were asked and answered. Members realize that this actually means more than 1,600 questions were actually asked. And I also understand that the term "answered" has several interpretations.

---Laughter

Twenty-four motions were debated in the House, standing committees presented eight reports, Members presented eight petitions, and 19 pieces

of legislation were debated and were passed or will be passed into law, including five appropriation bills

Our friends in the media tend to focus on the more sensational aspects of what happens in this Chamber, but these statistics represent the real and valuable work that we do on behalf of our constituents.

---Applause

I must commend Members for the attention you have shown and the judgment you have exercised in dealing with the matters that come before this House.

As we all know, the work of a Member does not end when this House adjourns. However, I urge you all to make the time to spend with family and friends and to enjoy our beautiful northern summer.

I would suggest that you begin with a celebration of National Aboriginal Day on June 21st. In 2001, Members of the 14th Legislative Assembly passed the National Aboriginal Day Act, making the NWT the first jurisdiction in Canada to recognize this day as a formal statutory holiday.

---Applause

This is our opportunity to acknowledge the outstanding achievements and to celebrate the diverse cultures of our Dene, Metis and Inuvialuit residents. This special date was chosen to coincide with the summer solstice, a culturally significant date for many Northerners.

Canada Day is also a time of great celebration in our Territory and I hope Members will take the opportunity to reflect on our special northern heritage and on our great country. We have so much to be proud and thankful for.

I would also like to add a word of caution as you go about enjoying our beautiful summer weather. I encourage everyone, whether you are driving our highways, boating, hiking, biking or just enjoying the outdoors, to do so safely. Please keep in mind not only your own safety, but also the safety of others.

I would also like to take this opportunity to thank the Pages we have had in the House during this final sitting, and, further, to extend the appreciation of the Assembly to all the Pages who have assisted us during this session. It is inspiring to have these young people here with us in the Chamber, and I hope that we, in turn, inspire them to someday return, maybe to sit in our seats.

I know that the work of government continues and that Members will be gathering throughout the summer to continue the work of the Assembly. But we will not be sitting again in this Chamber until we begin the Fourth Session of the 16th Assembly in October. I wish you safe travels until then and look forward to seeing you back in this House with a

renewed commitment and dedication to the people of the Northwest Territories.

Mr. Clerk, will you ascertain if the Commissioner of the Northwest Territories, the Honourable Anthony W.J. Whitford, is prepared to enter the Chamber to assent to bills and to prorogue the Third Session of the 16th Legislative Assembly.

Prorogation

COMMISSIONER OF THE NORTHWEST TERRITORIES (Hon. Tony Whitford): Please be seated. Tough job trying to decide what side to look at when I come in here.

---Laughter

Ah, but you'll see in the fairness in the Commissioner here shortly. It's a pleasure for me to be here again, and before I begin the official stuff, I will just give you a little bit of an update on what your Commissioner has been doing.

Last weekend, for example, I was in Iqaluit to attend the Annual Conference of Lieutenant Governors and Commissioners with Her Excellency Governor General Michaëlle Jean. Everyone in attendance, while there, enjoyed the opportunity to visit Nunavut on its 10th anniversary. For most of them, it was their first visit to the North and a very exciting one at that.

I took the opportunity while I was there to suggest that the NWT would like to host the 2012 Lieutenant Governor, Governor General and Commissioner's Conference. If this is approved by Rideau Hall, it would be a wonderful opportunity to showcase Yellowknife, our beautiful Legislative Assembly to a large group of visiting Queen's representatives from across Canada.

Now, earlier on this spring I completed a tour of the communities in the Sahtu region, which completed my visits to all 33 communities across the North.

---Applause

And I travelled on the ice roads and the winter roads as would the people who lived in those communities during the month of March, a beautiful time to be there. While some of the schools were on spring break, I did visit all the schools that were open with classes, where I met not only the principals but the teachers and most of the students.

On Sunday I will be in Calgary to attend the Gold Ceremony of the Duke of Edinburgh Award Program. This is a self-directed program of personal development for youth between the ages of 14 and 25 to be active, to participate in new activities and to pursue current interests in four different areas: community service, personal skills, develop physical recreation and taking part in an adventurous journey. It offers youth the opportunity

to set goals and to achieve results in fun and challenging ways.

The Duke of Edinburgh Award Program was founded in 1956 by his Royal Highness Prince Philip, the Duke of Edinburgh. The award came to Canada in 1963 and currently runs in 120 countries around the world and to date almost six million young people have challenged themselves by participating in this program and happily, proudly, some of them are northern youth.

His Royal Highness Prince Edward will be presenting the Gold Medals this weekend and I will be attending a meeting with him, the Yukon Commissioner Geraldine Van Bibber and other Northerners to discuss other ways of building and promoting this very beneficial program here in the North.

Now, as Commissioner of the Northwest Territories, I am pleased to assent to the following bills:

- Bill 2, Settlement of International Investment Disputes Act
- Bill 6, Species at Risk (NWT) Act
- Bill 12, Securities Transfer Act
- Bill 13, An Act to Amend the Commissioner's Land Act
- Bill 14, An Act to Amend the Motor Vehicles Act
- Bill 15, Miscellaneous Statute Law Amendment Act, 2009
- Bill 17, Supplementary Appropriation Act, No. 4, 2008-2009
- Bill 18, Supplementary Appropriation Act (Operations Expenditures), No. 1, 2009-2010
- Bill 19, Supplementary Appropriation Act (Infrastructure Expenditures), No. 2, 2009-2010

Prior to proroguing this Third Session of the 16th Legislative Assembly, I wish to announce that the Fourth Session of the 16th Legislative Assembly will convene on Thursday, October 15, 2009, at 1:30 p.m.

Now, as Commissioner of the Northwest Territories, I hereby prorogue the Third Session of the 16th Legislative Assembly of the Northwest Territories. Merci, mahsi cho, thank you, merci beaucoup and quanami.

---Applause

---PROROGATION

The House prorogued at 4:54 p.m.