



NORTHWEST TERRITORIES LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

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Day 1

16th Assembly

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Thursday, October 15, 2009

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The Honourable Paul Delorey, Speaker

Legislative Assembly of the Northwest Territories

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YELLOWKNIFE, NORTHWEST TERRITORIES**Thursday, October 15, 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. Michael McLeod, Hon. Robert McLeod, Mr. Menicoche, Hon. Michael Miltenberger, Mr. Ramsay, Hon. Floyd Roland, Mr. Yakeleya

The House met at 1:33 p.m.

---Singing of O Canada

Prayer

REVEREND RON MCLEAN: Let us pray. Almighty God, Creator of the universe and author of all good things, You have given us the honour of living in the Northwest Territories, and we are reminded to prove ourselves worthy of Your generosity and be glad to do Your will.

Bless our land with honest industry, truthful education and an honourable way of life. Save us from violence, discord, confusion, pride and arrogance, and from every evil course of action. Make us who come from many different nations and languages a united people. Give those whom we have entrusted with the authority of government the spirit of wisdom that there may be justice and peace in our land. We ask You to bless our Legislative Assembly gathering in session at this time. Bless our Premier, Floyd, the Speaker of the House, Paul, our Commissioner, Anthony, all our MLAs, all our staff and support workers, and bless the legislative building, where council is taking place.

We pray the decisions made will be to Your glory, and for the honour, safety and welfare of our people. We also ask that You bless and protect the families of our MLAs and their staff who remain in their respective communities. We give You thanks for the honour of serving You during all kinds of economic conditions. Let our hearts be thankful in troubled times, and do not let our trust in You fail. We ask You this through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

MR. SPEAKER: Please be seated. Mr. Clerk, would you ascertain whether the Commissioner of the Northwest Territories, the Honourable Anthony W.J. Whitford is prepared to enter the Chamber to open the Fourth Session of the 16th Legislative Assembly.

Opening Address

COMMISSIONER OF THE NORTHWEST TERRITORIES (Hon. Tony Whitford): Good afternoon, everyone, friends. Again it's a pleasure to welcome Members back to this House this

afternoon. Now, I know from my own experience that an MLA's work is never done, but I hope that you have all had time to connect with family, with friends and with constituents over the past summer. Being able to hear directly from the people that we are elected to represent can both help to better engage our residents in the business of the Legislative Assembly and inform the deliberations that will resume here today.

I want to take this time to say hello to the Junior Rangers that are your Pages today, I being an Honorary Junior Ranger myself. I wanted to slip that in here before I got into the business of the House.

During this session, the Government of the Northwest Territories will be introducing the following bills for consideration by this House:

- Appropriation Act (Infrastructure Expenditures) 2010-2011
- Supplementary Appropriation Act (Operations Expenditures), No. 2, 2009-2010
- Supplementary Appropriation Act (Infrastructure Expenditures), No. 3, 2009-2010

The government considers these bills essential to the good conduct of government business and, as such, I recommend their passage.

As the Commissioner of the Northwest Territories, I now declare open the Fourth Session of the 16th Legislative Assembly of the Northwest Territories.

Thank you, merci, mahsi cho, and qanamani.

SPEAKER (Hon. Paul Delorey): Good afternoon, colleagues. I would like to extend my thanks on behalf of all Members to the Honourable Anthony W.J. Whitford, Commissioner of the Northwest Territories, for opening this Fourth Session of the 16th Legislative Assembly.

I would also like to extend the Assembly's thanks to Ms. Teale MacIntosh for her lovely rendition of O Canada and to Reverend Ron McLean, rector for the Holy Trinity Anglican Church, for assisting us today.

The appreciation of the House is also extended to our guests and visitors who have joined us in the gallery.

Members, please join me in welcoming our Pages for the next two sitting days: the Junior Canadian Rangers. The Junior Canadian Ranger Program offers a variety of skill developing activities to promote traditional cultures and lifestyles to youth

living in remote and isolated communities. With us here today are: Joseph Omilgoituk of Aklavik, Nadine Elleze of Fort Providence, Myranda Calumet of Fort Resolution, Issiac Elanik of Sachs Harbour, Kyle Wolki of Sachs Harbour, Allison Bernarde of Tulita, Bryan Kimiksana of Ulukhaktok, and Samantha Kataoyak of Ulukhaktok, Frederick Simpson of Whati. The Ranger supervisors are: Ranger Kim Lucas of Sachs Harbour, Ranger Jamie Kimiksana of Ulukhaktok, and Ranger Lucy Fabien of Fort Resolution. The Canadian Ranger Patrol Group staff: Captain Sharon Low, Lieutenant Diane Porter, Warrant Officer Teddy Hughson, Warrant Officer Glenn Whitten, Warrant Officer Danny Ring, and Sergeant Rob Stevens. Welcome to you all. It is an honour to have you with us here today, and especially to your Junior Canadian Rangers to have as Pages. I apologize if I have pronounced your names not as your mother would pronounce them.

Colleagues, you may have noticed that we are just past the midpoint of the 16th Legislative Assembly. It is a time to reflect on what we have accomplished in the last two years and a time to determine what we wish to accomplish during the next two years. Surely I am not the only one to have noticed the swift passage of time, and before we know it, the Members of the 17th Legislative Assembly of the Northwest Territories will be assuming the seats that we sit in today.

Colleagues, I would also like to extend the sympathy of the House to the family and communities among us who have lost loved ones since we last met. The North has lost several respected elders, and while we mourn their passing, we celebrate the wisdom and knowledge that they have left behind.

Colleagues, we have met many times outside of this Chamber during our summer recess. Caucus has met over several days to determine and discuss our various roles within consensus government. That work was, I hope, enlightening, and I trust that as we come together in this Chamber, we will all bring new commitment to our unique processes and procedures. I ask you all to enter into this session with respect for the House, for your colleagues and for your responsibilities to the people of the Northwest Territories. I will, as always, do my utmost to assist you in achieving your goals and applying your rules as fairly and as consistently as possible.

Thank you, colleagues. We will return to orders of the day. Item 3, Ministers' statements. The honourable Premier, Mr. Roland.

Ministers' Statements

MINISTER'S STATEMENT 1-16(4): SESSIONAL STATEMENT

HON. FLOYD ROLAND: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It is my pleasure to welcome all Members back to this Assembly.

As the fall season settles in, the month of October marks the halfway point of our 16th Assembly. It has been almost two years since we first came together with individual mandates from the people of the Northwest Territories to govern and make decisions that would contribute to the betterment of our Territory as a whole and our future.

We identified then the vision, the goals and the priorities that are guiding our work today: strong individuals, families and communities sharing the benefits and responsibilities of a unified, environmentally sustainable and prosperous Northwest Territories.

We all agreed to work together as Northerners to realize a strong and independent North built on partnerships, an environment that will sustain present and future generations, healthy, educated people, a diversified economy that provides all communities and regions with opportunities and choices, sustainable, vibrant, safe communities, and effective and efficient government.

While the Assembly put forward this direction, Executive Council was tasked to develop and implement the vision that we had identified, and to be accountable to Members of this House and to the people of the NWT to get the job done.

To that end, we broke down our goals and priorities into specific actions, projects and investments and organized them into five strategic areas: Maximizing Opportunities, Reducing the Cost of Living, Building our Future, Managing this Land and Refocusing Government.

As I address you today, I am happy to report that this government has identified and implemented over 140 initiatives and investments dedicated to advancing the goals and priorities of the 16th Assembly.

These initiatives and investments, above and beyond our day-to-day work as government, recognize and reflect the importance of looking beyond the immediate and short-term needs of our Territory and people towards our vision and our future.

Investments and initiatives specific to the 16th Assembly shared vision of Northerners Working Together. They include:

- Funding to expand the implementation of our Healthy Choices Framework promoting active living and healthy foods.

- Enhanced family violence programming and new resources to support aftercare programs for those wrestling with addictions.
- Investments to improve housing conditions under the CARE program, and the addition of 500 units under the Affordable Housing Program.
- Substantial infrastructure investments in highways, winter road and airports that are improving connections between communities that will help address one of the key factors in our high cost of living.
- We have undertaken an electricity review in the interest of examining and addressing our approach to the distribution, regulation and subsidization of power in the NWT.
- Policing services have been enhanced in smaller communities through investments in new detachments and by expanding those detachments that serve multiple communities.
- Investments have also been made in school infrastructure, specifically in Inuvik, Fort Good Hope, Yellowknife and Ndilo, where new facilities are coming on stream. Further investments are planned for schools in Aklavik, Fort Simpson, Fort Smith, Gameti, Hay River, Tulita and Yellowknife.
- Beyond that, we have provided funding to schools to increase their teacher resources and to allow high schools to enhance their trade programs.
- The implementation of an income security framework, including changes for the Income Support Program and Seniors Supplementary Income Benefit, has provided additional resources to those most in need.
- We have advanced wind, biomass and mini-hydro projects that will reduce the reliance on fossil fuels, reduce the cost of living and support our commitment to greenhouse gas reductions.
- Programs and resources have been introduced to promote and support local business and community economic development efforts -- many of them in tourism -- in our most rural and remote communities.

Meanwhile, we are also looking inward, conducting reviews of GNWT programs to ensure that programs are achieving their intended results in an effective and efficient manner.

In all of this, Mr. Speaker, we have implemented changes to our government's capital planning process to improve the planning, acquisition and delivery of infrastructure, and this year will advance the largest single year capital budget in the history of the NWT.

We have committed and leveraged an unprecedented amount of federal economic stimulus investment.

We have advanced pivotal initiatives such as the Water Strategy, Land Use Framework and the Species at Risk Act. Work is underway to finalize a Wildlife Act, and we have articulated and, more importantly, renewed our commitment to the unique consensus-based system with which we govern.

During a period that has been challenged by the difficult and emotional task of putting our financial house in order, the economic realities of a global recession and the need to address critical issues such as H1N1 and the dramatic decline of the Bathurst caribou herd, we have initiated, implemented and completed an incredible amount of work.

As important as the work itself, however, is the manner in which we have addressed it.

The Strategic Initiatives committees that we established have allowed Members of the 16th Legislative Assembly to be directly involved in formulating and guiding the initiatives of government.

We have maintained a tight control on our costs. Spending growth has been held to 2 percent. Our budget process has been more controlled, planned and accountable. Supplementary appropriations have been cut by more than 50 percent.

Community governments are playing an increased role in targeting the priorities and investments in their communities.

Northern and aboriginal owned companies are providing increasingly key roles in the advancement of major infrastructure initiatives such as the Taltson hydro facility, the Kakisa Bridge, health centres, hospitals, schools and the many investments that we have made in the Mackenzie Valley Winter Road Bridges Program.

In fact, at a time when Canada's economy has slowed due to the international recession, our capital plan has provided significant investment in the NWT and substantial employment and contract opportunities for our residents and contractors.

Meanwhile, through processes such as our regional aboriginal leaders' forums, wildlife co-management boards, to round table on revenue options and the Ministerial Advisory Panel on the Economy, we are receiving input and guidance, forging stronger relationships with our aboriginal governments and engaging Northerners at all levels. In all of this -- the initiatives, the investments and the manner in which we have chosen to implement and advance our work -- we are building our future, our people, our leaders, our businesses and our communities.

Mr. Speaker, I was honoured two years ago to be selected as Premier, to lead and be accountable to

Members and to the people of the NWT in advancing our vision of Northerners Working Together. Despite the challenges we have faced, Members of this House and the people of the Northwest Territories can be assured that we have never once wavered from this direction or commitment.

As we approach the midway point of our Assembly, we have a foundation in place to empower our vision, the investments that we have identified, the processes that we have established and sometimes difficult decisions that we have made. I look forward to building on that foundation and to conclude the work that we began together.

In the long term, the Northwest Territories will play a crucial and growing role in filling the world's demands for natural resources. Meeting this rising demand will provide our people and our Territory with opportunities and choices. It will also be good for Canada, and we will continue to make this case to Ottawa to encourage them to clear the last few hurdles associated with the Mackenzie Gas Project, to advance support for the development of the NWT hydro as well as other alternative energy sources.

We will continue to champion the need for federal investment in our transportation infrastructure to open the door for future development and to lower the cost of living and doing business in the NWT. We will build on our efforts to finalize a deal on devolution and resource revenue sharing.

These are important initiatives. They concern issues that will require northern leadership and a northern perspective.

In the coming months it is my hope that we can also advance and work towards a common vision for the political development of our Territory to ensure that in the future these key decisions about our issues and about our future are made here in the NWT.

I believe that the 16th Legislative Assembly is uniquely placed to undertake and guide the work necessary to develop a common vision for the NWT, and to demonstrate that we have the capacity and the unity to govern ourselves effectively and with a view to our future.

I would like to commend my colleagues in this Assembly for their courage and foresight in identifying and supporting the sometimes difficult direction and initiatives that this government has taken.

Finally, Mr. Speaker, I would also like to recognize the men and women who work and serve as employees of our government across our Territory for their work to implement these initiatives while maintaining an ongoing delivery of government services that our Territory depends on. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Minister Roland. The honourable Minister responsible for Education, Culture and Employment, Mr. Lafferty.

MINISTER'S STATEMENT 2-16(4):
OFFICIAL LANGUAGES

HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY: Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, today I will be tabling the government's response to the Standing Committee on Government Operations Review of the Official Languages Act, Reality Check: Securing a Future for the Official Languages of the Northwest Territories.

Mr. Speaker, in reviewing the committee's report, I was very pleased to see that generally we not only want to see the same things for our official languages, but have many areas of common thinking. I thank the committee for the commitment and diligence they apply to their work. This will be fundamental in forming the government's strategic plans for languages as we move forward.

As well, Mr. Speaker, the Department of Education, Culture and Employment, which leads work on languages on behalf of the government, is undertaking a series of other important reviews on which we base our language plans. These include a review of the aboriginal languages chapter of Canada and NWT funding agreement, a review of the current Aboriginal Languages Strategy, the establishment of a single-window service centre for aboriginal languages and the work we are doing with the Francophone TeNOise regarding the improvements we will make in the delivery of government services in French.

Mr. Speaker, as you will see from our response, stemming the loss of aboriginal languages is at the root of our plans. We will be adopting an inclusive, philosophical approach that allows language communities the opportunity to drive change in their own unique way. We recognize that what is important to one language community may not mirror the priorities of another. Our comprehensive strategic plan developed over the coming months will demonstrate the individual nature of language communities and will respect the goals and vision of each.

Mr. Speaker, one important piece of consultation work will be the Languages Symposium taking place in March 2010. As you know, March is Aboriginal Languages Month and we will undertake some exciting community events during the month, culminating in a language symposium. I am pleased that the chair of the Standing Committee on Government Operations, Mr. Kevin Menicoche, agreed to co-chair a symposium, making our work on language a truly collaborative piece of work of this Assembly.

AN HON. MEMBER: Hear! Hear!

HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY: Another critical initiative we are taking is a lobbying campaign with the federal government and national aboriginal organizations to shine a light on the plight of aboriginal languages and secure additional funding to support them. I hope the Members of this House will support and join us in our endeavours in this regard too.

Mr. Speaker, we will work with the language communities to determine individual priorities and assess demands. Once this work is undertaken, the comprehensive plans will be written, including implementation plans and timelines. This will be tabled in the Legislative Assembly and will be a document that we will be accountable to over the coming years.

Mr. Speaker, when I speak my own language, I reflect the values of my people. I connect to our past and secure our future. It is my wish, and the wish of this government, that all our people may do the same if they choose, that anyone who wants to learn their language is assisted to learn and that anyone who wishes or wants to teach their language is supported to do so.

Mr. Speaker, again I thank the members of the Standing Committee on Government Operations for their report and I look forward to tabling the response later on today. Mahsi, Mr. Speaker.

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

MINISTER'S STATEMENT 3-16(4):
MINISTER ABSENT FROM THE HOUSE

HON. FLOYD ROLAND: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I wish to advise Members that the Honourable Bob McLeod will be absent from the House today and tomorrow to attend the Federal/Provincial/Territorial Committee on Internal Trade meeting and Northern Mines Ministers meeting in Whitehorse. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Roland. Item 4, Members' statements. The honourable Member for Nahendeh, Mr. Menicoche.

Members' Statements

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON
STUDENT HOME BOARDING POLICY

MR. MENICOCHÉ: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. It's great to be back in the House after quite a long summer break.

Today I would like to talk about an area of concern that I have that developed over this fall with regard to support of the high school education in the Northwest Territories.

The Minister of Education, Culture and Employment acknowledges that this is the most fundamental role to enable the provision of kindergarten to Grade 12

education. The Minister has seen extension of high school to many communities and the subsequent increase in the number of graduates. Just last June the Minister was with me and we had the pleasure of attending graduation ceremonies for 20 students in my constituency. Some of these students are from smaller communities or home boarded or live at the regional residence in Fort Simpson. The Minister also acknowledges that it takes a community to educate a child, and a community can extend to a person's region and First Nation.

I would like to bring attention to the occasional situation where our students live in another community and return home, but their parents continue to work down south. This is the case where a student is aboriginal, is from the NWT and her vision is to complete her education here. She has community and peer support and friends and extended family in her home community and at the regional centre. However, she is not able to get support from the Minister of Education to pay for home boarding.

Mr. Speaker, we have all heard about how not having to move to another school in another jurisdiction has knocked more than a few students off their track to high school graduation. There is a saying: the exception proves a rule. I think the Minister should examine the hard and fast application of policy in light of their departmental priorities.

The Minister must continue to support home boarding for a student who is completing high school in a familiar and supportive community, in spite of a relocation of family on the other side of the territorial border. I will have questions for the Minister at the appropriate time. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON
CONDOLENCES TO NUNAKPUT FAMILIES
ON PASSING OF FAMILY MEMBERS

MR. JACOBSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to begin by welcoming all the Members back from their summer break. I hope they enjoyed their time with family, friends and constituents.

In my region, our culture focuses on respect of our elders, for the people who passed away. I would like to start by paying respect to the people who have passed away and our families and friends. The Nunakput communities may be large in geography but when it comes to closeness, we are a very tight-knit family. When one of the members passes away, every person is affected. We all have memories of them and their contributions. We are connected by families and friends that they leave behind.

Since the last sitting of the Assembly, there have been many deaths in my region, unfortunately. During the summer, the smallest community of Sachs Harbour has been affected by the passing of Martha Keogak, and in particular the Esau family experienced the passing of elder Shirley Esau and her son Andrew Esau.

Today I give my condolences to the family and friends in my home community of Tuktoyaktuk. I give condolences to the family and friends of William Gruben, to his wife, Gail, and family, and his mother, Helen Gruben, and family; Bobby Kimiksana and to his family; and one of my childhood buddies, Clifton Gruben has passed away. He was also my soccer coach and, really, he will be sadly missed.

I would like to quote Cliff, who was first... I walked into the airport and he said, Jack, I made history. I said, what did you do, Cliff? He said, I was the first one to dump a load of gravel on 177. Every time I am going to be on that road, I will be thinking of Cliff.

In Ulukhaktok, Melvin Pretty, Leonard Aleekuk, Shirley Oliktoak and respected elder Jimmy Kudlak who passed away, I give my sincere condolences to their family and friends.

Mr. Speaker, lastly, I wish to give my condolences to all of the people of the Northwest Territories who have lost loved ones in the past year or in the past few months. Our prayers are with them and their families. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON DECLINE OF BATHURST CARIBOU HERD

MR. ABERNETHY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to welcome everybody back.

Mr. Speaker, earlier this fall the people of the Northwest Territories received some bad news, news that many of us expected was coming but hoped that would never actually reach reality. Now it is official. A June 2009 calving survey, photo survey of the Bathurst caribou herd, shows a significant decline in the numbers of the Bathurst caribou, from over 100,000 in 2006 to a staggering 31,897 this summer. What is worse is that the number of breeding females has dropped to around 16,600.

These numbers are almost unbelievable and there are a large number of theories about how or what has caused this to happen. These range from hunting, or over hunting, to predation, to climate change. Honestly, all of these probably play some part of the factor, but I'm not sure how.

However, arguing about how the numbers dropped doesn't help save those caribou that are still there. Now is not the time to debate the numbers, but to discuss and come up with concrete actions that would help restore healthy caribou numbers for future generations.

The loss in these herds have long-lasting and devastating effects on the people of the Northwest Territories, particularly the aboriginal people who have relied on the caribou as an essential source of protein for generations. The loss of this source of protein will have a significant effect on the health of aboriginal people and will likely increase the cost of living in small communities as residents seek out alternative sources for meat through grocery stores.

Another affected group will be the outfitters. This industry has traditionally taken a small number of caribou and brought in millions of new dollars into the northern economy. The majority of the operators are long-time Northerners with commitment and passion to the NWT that is unmistakable. These outfitters have invested significantly in the NWT and have some very impressive infrastructure on the land to support this industry. The loss of the caribou may force these outfitters to close their doors, driving long-term Northerners into unemployment or, worse, bankruptcy.

Mr. Speaker, these are clearly not the only people to be affected by the health of the Bathurst caribou herd. All of us as Northerners, and ultimately as Canadians, are affected.

So what is being done? I understand that ENR and the Wekeezhii Renewable Resources Board and others have been working to find some solutions. I believe that some meetings were held a couple of weeks ago with participation of affected and interested stakeholders to work towards this.

Mr. Speaker, later this afternoon I will be asking some questions on future direction, timelines and options available for the restoration of the Bathurst caribou.

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

---Unanimous consent granted.

MR. ABERNETHY: I hope that the solutions have interim measures that help address the health and cost of living challenges of people in these small communities, and support local businesses affected by the decline of the caribou. I will be asking the Minister responsible for ENR some questions later today. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON
GNWT POSITION ON 911 SERVICE

MS. BISARO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise today to express my extreme disappointment and dismay at the message contained in a letter recently sent to the City of Yellowknife from this government's Minister of Municipal and Community Affairs. The Minister's letter was in response to the letter from the City of Yellowknife in which Mayor Van Tighem asked the Government of the NWT to participate in the provision of 911 service for the NWT as recommended in the 911 analysis report, a report in which the GNWT was a full partner, I might add.

The answer in Minister McLeod's letter is a resounding no. Apparently this government feels that if NWT communities cannot have 911 service all at the same time, then no one community should have it.

The Minister's response is not only short-sighted but also shows a poor understanding of the study and the implementation report and its recommendations. It flies in the face of this Assembly's stated goal of sustainable, vibrant, safe communities.

As well, one of this government's strategic initiatives is Building our Future. Within that, an action item titled Increased Safety and Security. This action is further explained by the following statement: significant investments are also planned to improve people's sense of safety and security in their homes and in their communities.

Some 77 percent of NWT residents live in our seven largest communities, Mr. Speaker. The 911 analysis report recommends implementation of that service for all NWT communities, but through a phased approach.

As with any large project, implementation must start somewhere, and the report recommends the phased 911 implementation should start with those seven largest communities: Behchoko, Fort Simpson, Fort Smith, Hay River, Inuvik, Norman Wells and Yellowknife. It's a logical place to start and it would be a huge improvement to the safety and security of most of the NWT's residents.

The 911 report also recommends that the implementation be cost-shared between these seven communities and the GNWT, not that the GNWT pay the whole shot, but that the cost be borne by all parties involved. But both the Minister of MACA and our government refuse to consider this plan. It seems we should wait until all communities have the necessary phone infrastructure before even considering implementation of 911 service. Realistically, that day is 10 years away and even then any implementation will still have to use a phased-in approach.

I seek unanimous consent to conclude my statement.

---Unanimous consent granted.

MS. BISARO: Why must 77 percent of our residents wait for an essential service? How does this project not fit with this Assembly's goals and objectives? Does the NWT coroner have to again tell us that this service is needed? Do more residents have to die because 911 is not available in an emergency situation? Just one more death is one too many, in my estimation.

The government is now developing the 2010-2011 operations budget and it's time to allocate the funds required to start a phased implementation of 911 service. If safety really is a priority for this government, then the recommendations from the city's 911 report must be enacted in the next year.

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

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON
STUDENT HOME BOARDING POLICY

MR. KRUTKO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Today I'd like to speak also on the home boarding problem. Under the Education Act, section 118(1)(c), where a school program is not available in the home community, the district education council may operate student residences to provide home boarding.

I have received complaints from the parents of students from Tsiigehtchic who are attending high school in Inuvik. I think it's important that the government does whatever it can to ensure that the education experience is a good one.

The challenges these parents face is they had to go out on their own to find home boarding for their children in Inuvik and also to acquire that educational experience. I think it's critical that this government does everything it can to ensure that we have a good, healthy education environment for these children to partake in, especially the children from Tsiigehtchic who require home boarding, and as an important part of their educational experience we're ensuring that adequate programs and services are available and also ensuring that home boarding is available.

Where high schools are not available, the Department of Education must do everything it can to ensure that the high school experience is provided to those communities that do not have high school, such as Tsiigehtchic, and that home boarding must be an integrated part of that education experience. We must ensure these students have a safe and good place to live, but, more importantly, to ensure that their education experience is a good one.

With that, I will be asking the Minister of Education, Culture and Employment questions on this matter, especially as they have been raised by my constituents and the parents of the students in Tsiigehtchic.

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

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON TU NEDHE PRIORITIES

MR. BEAULIEU: Mahsi cho, Mr. Speaker. [English translation not provided.]

Mr. Speaker, today I would like to talk about some of the priority areas that I will be working on over the next two years. Since we have last sat I have had a chance to meet with many constituents and community leaders in both communities to discuss issues that are important to them.

Youth concerns continue to be high on the agenda for both communities. More programming, more facilities, more support for youth, and more recreation programs are still needed. I've been working on this since I've been elected and I will step up my efforts over the next two years.

Housing is still the number one concern for many residents and many constituents. I have worked closely with the two previous Ministers and will work even closer with the new Minister. The Housing Corporation has made some improvements in both Lutselk'e and Fort Resolution, but not enough.

Dust control is still a problem in both communities. I'll ask myself in year the 2009 why residents still have to put up with dust problems in their communities and homes. This shouldn't be a problem. I've been working towards establishing long-term solutions with MACA and the community governments.

We all know how important it is to have a decent highway to drive in and out of the communities. This is not the case for the residents of Fort Resolution. Part of Highway No. 6 is now being chipsealed. I will be making every effort to have the entire highway chipsealed into Fort Resolution.

In Lutselk'e, the road to Austin Lake is a high priority for the residents. I'll be working towards getting a commitment from this government to work with industry, if necessary, to have this road built.

For smaller communities like Fort Resolution and Lutselk'e, more jobs and services being delivered in the communities is important to its residents. That is why I will be making efforts on the issue of devolution and, ultimately, government jobs may be placed in these and other small communities. Along these lines I'll also be doing what I can to push for more job creation and more job opportunities for Lutselk'e and Fort Resolution. The employment rate

in these communities is half what it is in the larger communities.

Finally, the high cost of living is a huge concern for many families in these communities as the government has made progress in this area. But again, not enough. More has to be done.

I seek unanimous consent to conclude my statement.

---Unanimous consent granted.

MR. BEAULIEU: We need to keep working towards lowering these costs and I will be working towards this on behalf of my communities. There are other issues that I will continue to work on, but these are the priority areas that I have raised for my constituents and where I will be focused. Mahsi cho.

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

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON PROPOSED DOI T'OH TERRITORIAL PARK

MR. YAKELEYA: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Over the last four years I have had the great pleasure to walk 222 miles on the CANOL Trail in the proposed Doi T'oh Territorial Park, considered by some of the outdoor magazines to be one of the world's toughest hikes in the world. With 14 young leaders in the Sahtu, the proposed Doi T'oh Territorial Park came as a dream from the Sahtu people during the Sahtu Dene and Metis Land Claim negotiations in 1993.

The people of the Sahtu, specifically Tulita and Norman Wells, fought hard to have both the federal and territorial governments to agree to this piece of our land as a territorial park. There are significant opportunities for hiking, mountain biking, horseback riding, sport hunting, and guided tours. Investment in the proposed Doi T'oh Territorial Park can help promote the Sahtu and Northwest Territories as the place to visit and live. Unfortunately this investment has been deferred due to environmental remediation of contaminated sites in the area and negotiations for a land transfer agreement of the park from the federal government.

With such delays, things are getting out of control, Mr. Speaker. This past summer our future park was invaded by a group of land rovers from British Columbia. They tore up and down the trail for hundreds of miles in the Doi T'oh Canyon post park. They can do this legally, because we do not have a park yet, a park which the people of the Sahtu have wanted for a long, long time, a park where motorized vehicle traffic would be controlled. We have to get this park in place before it's too late.

We're trying to figure out how to clean up our land from the last invasion by four-wheel drives during World War II. The people of the Sahtu submitted a

CANOL Heritage Trail Management Plan during the last Assembly. We urged the Government of the Northwest Territories to move quickly on this matter. Our park needs to have an implementation plan within the life of this government here. The CANOL Trail and Doi T'oh Territorial Park offer great opportunity for the Sahtu and the people of the Northwest Territories. The Sahtu Dene and Metis fought in their land claim agreements for this and also the Government of the Northwest Territories agreed to establish a world-class wilderness park in the Sahtu for the Sahtu people of the Northwest Territories.

Mr. Speaker, we want a park and we want to have protection on our land. So we say, Mr. Government, help us protect our land and give us our park. Thank you.

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

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON PROMOTING THE MACKENZIE GAS PIPELINE

MRS. GROENEWEGEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. This morning I had an opportunity to take in a little bit of an infrastructure conference that's taking place here in Yellowknife. I had the privilege of moderating the panel that was talking about the potential for pipeline development as key infrastructure in Alaska and in the Northwest Territories.

Mr. Speaker, I took the opportunity, after Mr. Bell said we had been talking about a pipeline for a long time, to mention to the people gathered there that when I came to Hay River 35 years ago there was a 17-storey highrise on the landscape in Hay River that had been built specifically in anticipation of the Mackenzie Valley Pipeline. Now, well, maybe it's 40 years later, we're still having conferences, we're still talking about it. And what I want to say today is that after hearing the presentation by Bob Reid this morning from the APG, I was excited again about the magnitude and opportunity of such a project before us here in the North.

We have been through regulatory delays, and I know that the Joint Review Panel will report soon and the NEB will then take a look at that report, and that has been delayed and that has been discouraging. We've been through a global recession. We've been through a decrease in the price of natural gas. But, Mr. Speaker, we need something happy and something big for people to get excited about in the Northwest Territories, and I think that the Mackenzie Gas Project, which goes hand in glove with the potential for a Mackenzie Valley Highway, is something that would jumpstart an economy right now which is starting to, I must

say, kind of lag, and it affects all of us. It affects all our communities.

I feel sorry for those folks up in Inuvik that have invested a tremendous amount of money in equipment and infrastructure to prepare for the pipeline. I look at companies in my community like Northern Transportation, which could really use a boost right now in activity to enhance their fortunes. I look at a company like Canadian North that has just cancelled their service into Hay River and is looking at ways of cutting back.

With all the resources we have in front of us and all the opportunities we have, we have got to take a united approach, where we lose by default fighting amongst ourselves about these things.

I think we've studied the issue long enough. I think it's time to really come out strong, with a unified voice on a single project that we can agree on and let's get the message out there, let's seek the assistance that we need from Ottawa, and let's get together and let's have some good news for our economy for self-reliant people and self-reliant communities. Thank you.

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

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON FEDERAL INFRASTRUCTURE FUNDING

MR. RAMSAY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As we open up this fall sitting of the Legislative Assembly, I'd like to welcome Members back as well.

Mr. Speaker, now that we've adjusted our capital planning process, this fall sitting of the Legislative Assembly takes on a much higher profile than in the past, as capital expenditures will be debated and approved by Members during our three weeks here. This October also marks the halfway point for Members of the 16th Legislative Assembly, and seeing as we'll be discussing capital projects and infrastructure planning, I thought it would be wise to start this session with a statement about infrastructure.

Mr. Speaker, the government has delivered specifically on two key infrastructure projects in my riding of Kam Lake: the City of Yellowknife bypass road and the \$28 million renovation to Ecole St. Joseph School. Also within the city are projects like the Territorial Dementia Facility, the new data centre currently being constructed on Byrne Road, the Department of Transportation combined services building at the airport in Yellowknife and the K'alemi Dene School which recently had their grand opening in Ndilo.

As you can see, Mr. Speaker, much has been accomplished in a short period of time and I want to thank the government for their efforts in advancing these projects.

Mr. Speaker, as a government we are projected to spend upwards of \$500 million, half a billion dollars on infrastructure during the four years we are here. This is unprecedented spending in a time when our people, our economy and our future need it the most.

We still have the two years left to go, Mr. Speaker, and I want to go on record today as saying we need to develop a comprehensive, coordinated approach to trying to get federal investment for infrastructure in our Territory. We need to work with aboriginal governments, industry and our neighbours in the Yukon and in Nunavut to further our collective interests. All this in an effort so that we can continue to heavily invest in infrastructure to improve the quality of life for residents here in the Northwest Territories.

Mr. Speaker, it is abundantly clear we cannot do this alone. We need substantial investment in hydro development, alternative energy and transportation. We need the federal government. We need to have a game plan on what our asks are of the federal government and how it is that we pursue the federal government. In my estimation, we've been doing only a satisfactory job, but I believe, given some time and some resources, that we can, and should, be doing more in Ottawa on all fronts, Mr. Speaker, with a comprehensive and a coordinated plan. Thank you.

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

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON ENERGY EFFICIENT BUILDING STANDARDS

MR. BROMLEY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Building on achievements as noted earlier by Premier Roland, I would like to highlight some of the gains we have made in energy efficiency building standards during the life of this Assembly so far.

First, each new GNWT building must now achieve an efficiency 25 percent above the standards of the Model National Energy Building Code, thus providing a big benefit for the North and one that yields continual energy and financial savings and greenhouse gas reductions.

NWT Housing Corporation's 86 home renovations underway this fiscal year will meet the high energy efficiency standards of EnerGuide for Housing 80. Using these standards for the renovations results in a 25 to 30 percent reduction in annual energy cost for each home, for annual savings of over \$200,000.

Similarly, the City of Yellowknife introduced mandatory standards for new home construction and recently added this requirement, EGH 80, for residential renovations.

GNWT added additional efficiencies with the growing use of biomass heating systems, enjoying

good payback times and energy cost cuts by hundreds of thousands of dollars annually. Many of these projects have been wood pellet boilers in schools with the added benefits of having our young folk become familiar with such an approach.

Mr. Speaker, I think we can be proud of these achievements. They are substantial and they were not difficult to achieve once political will was clearly established.

Mr. Speaker, this is solid progress, but there is much more to be done. While the territorial government and larger communities with similarly high standards enjoy the benefits of increased local employment, reduced energy costs and decreases in greenhouse gas production associated with those standards, we are not insisting that our smaller communities adopt the same standards, thus ensuring they enjoy the same efficiencies and benefits.

Mr. Speaker, my colleagues asked for other larger projects that will get us the industry we need. Let's convert our systems across the North to renewable energy and enjoy all of those job opportunities, environmental benefits and social structure support that such an undertaking will bring.

Mr. Speaker, I will be asking the Minister of MACA, Municipal and Community Affairs, about this during oral questions. Mahsi.

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

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON DAY SHELTER FOR HOMELESS YELLOWKNIFE RESIDENTS

MR. HAWKINS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Today I wish to talk about what great strides and service to our public can happen when government works together in partnership with good corporate citizens and other levels of government. I raised the particular issue almost a year ago to the day, Mr. Speaker, when many Yellowknife Centre constituents had concerns with the lack of availability of public washrooms and how it relates to the homeless problems in our city. With limited options and very few resources, a solution has been found and certainly found none too soon, with winter knocking on our doorstep.

As many of us all know far too well, during the day homeless people often go throughout the streets exposed to many of the dark elements such as drugs, alcohol, and certainly the elements of nature. However, since raising this issue, a number of groups have decided to work together, and I'm very happy to say, with great results in their efforts. Mr. Speaker, as such, I wish to highlight with great appreciation of these partners. Firstly, BHP Billiton under the leadership of interim President Richard

Morland, the City of Yellowknife with the wisdom of our Mayor Gordon Van Tighem, and most certainly Sandy Lee, Minister of the Department of Health and Social Services.

---Applause

These partners have all come together to the table with real solutions to support the development of a day shelter for the homeless in the downtown of Yellowknife. Their partnership agreements cover the next three years. Each organization will contribute financially to the operation of this shelter. BHP is giving \$50,000 annually, the City of Yellowknife is giving \$25,000, the Department of Health and Social Services is providing \$125,000 annually.

So, in my humble view, Mr. Speaker, today marks a very special moment in the success of this government. It certainly demonstrates that this government is listening to the concerns of the community brought forward by its Members in their voice in this Assembly.

Mr. Speaker, as some may know well, the day shelter will provide counselling services and will be a safe place for homeless individuals to go during the day for food and washrooms. It will not only make our streets more appealing and safer for visitors and residents alike, but perhaps this will be the helping hand that assists those in the direction of getting back on the path of success from that destructive lifestyle, and in time I certainly hope that this will become a model for other communities throughout the North.

Mr. Speaker, as we all know, the day shelter is expected to open shortly and it certainly is being received very well in my riding. Mr. Speaker, government can't do anything, but once again I want to express my sincere thanks to BHP, the City of Yellowknife and the Department of Health and Social Services for doing something on this issue. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Hawkins. Item 5, recognition of visitors in the gallery

Recognition of Visitors in the Gallery

Colleagues, I'd like to draw your attention to the gallery, to the presence of a former Member of the Yukon Legislative Assembly and former Commissioner of the Yukon Territory, Mr. Ken McKinnon.

Mr. McKinnon is here to attend a conference on infrastructure and he's here as a guest speaker at that conference.

I would also like to acknowledge the presence of a gentleman that's known to many of us, former Clerk of this Assembly, Mr. David Hamilton.

The honourable Premier, Mr. Roland.

HON. FLOYD ROLAND: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's a pleasure, as well, to welcome Mr. Hamilton back to this forum. In his new role I'll introduce him and recognize him as a board member for the National Energy Board of Canada. Along with him is Ms. Sheila Leggett, vice-chair of the National Energy Board as well.

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

MR. ABERNETHY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to recognize a constituent of the Great Slave riding and also the president of the Union of Northern Workers, Mr. Todd Parsons.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Abernethy. The honourable Member for Range Lake, Ms. Lee.

HON. SANDY LEE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I am happy to see Mr. Hamilton there, who I haven't seen in a while and also I'd like to just welcome everybody and recognize a few people. First is Paddy Meade, the new deputy minister of Health and Social Services.

I have also a constituent, Mr. Ken Woodley, who is with the UNW.

I would like to recognize Arlene Hache, known for all the work she does in the community. Thank you.

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

MS. BISARO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm not sure whether or not Ms. MacIntosh is still up there, but I'd like to recognize a constituent, Ms. Doris MacIntosh, mother of Teale MacIntosh, who gave us such a wonderful rendition of O Canada earlier today.

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

MR. BEAULIEU: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to recognize Lucy Fabien, a constituent from Fort Resolution.

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

MR. BROMLEY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I, too, would like to recognize my constituent Ms. Arlene Hache, and she doesn't need any introduction here. Thank you.

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

MR. HAWKINS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Hamilton has been recognized several times, but I certainly have to rise to my feet to acknowledge his presence here. He's always been a mentor I've strived to aspire to and he's known me since I was a little kid, and certainly my family. So great appreciation that he's here today. Thank you.

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

MR. JACOBSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to recognize Jamie Kimiksana, escorting the Junior Rangers from Ulukhaktok here today. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Jacobson. If we've missed anyone in the gallery today, welcome to the Chamber. I hope you're enjoying the proceedings. It's always nice to have an audience in here.

Item 6, acknowledgements. Item 7, oral questions. The honourable Member for Nahendeh, Mr. Menicoche.

Oral Questions

QUESTION 1-16(4): STUDENT HOME BOARDING POLICY

MR. MENICOCHÉ: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. My question is for the honourable Minister of Education, Culture and Employment just in reference to my Member's statement. There's a young Dene woman from a small community in Nahendeh who wants to continue her high school and graduate at the Thomas Simpson School in Fort Simpson. She's unable to be supported by the educational system to live in residence. I think the biggest single reason was that her parents had to leave the North for work. However, she remained behind under the guardianship of her auntie. They had returned, the parents and the daughter had returned for about 10 months yet the decision for home boarding refusal was that her parents had left the region for work. I believe that being flexible with our guidelines will give our students a chance to complete their studies in Fort Simpson.

Mr. Speaker, will the Minister explain to me and the concerned community members, what is this policy that prevents us from providing educational services in this particular case? Mahsi cho.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Menicoche. The honourable Minister responsible for Education, Culture and Employment, Mr. Lafferty.

HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY: Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. This particular situation is quite unique on its own where we do work with the district education council at that level and same with the district education authority. They do have certain policies in place that I have to respect, as the Minister of Education, because they are following the guidelines of the Education Act, which gives the DEC the power to operate a student residence and make policies regarding operation of that residence. We are following those policies and I have to respect their decision as well. So we continue to work with the DEC. Mahsi, Mr. Speaker.

MR. MENICOCHÉ: Aboriginal education is an entrenched right, as Mr. Krutko quoted. We as the GNWT do have legislative requirements for home boarding. Aboriginal hunting is a universal right. Aboriginals can hunt anywhere. This is the same type of universal right that we must extend to our NWT aboriginal students, Mr. Speaker, who choose -- I repeat, who choose -- to have their education in the NWT. Their parents' particular circumstances should not be a determinant to our support for our students.

Mr. Speaker, will the Minister of Education explain how can we get so bureaucratic that we cannot do the right thing, review our guidelines and procedures and be flexible enough to support our students in remote communities? Thank you.

HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY: We are supporting the students in every way that we can that are in schools throughout the Northwest Territories. We provide the curriculum into the schools and funding to the school operations. The district education authority, the divisional educational board are the ones making these decisions. It is not just a bureaucratic decision; it is the board elected officials that make these decisions. I have to respect them, Mr. Speaker. I continue to work with them to improve in those areas. Not only that, Mr. Speaker, there has been some correspondence back and forth on the parents and the superintendent and also the divisional education board as well. There was a clear indication that a letter written to the parent, that the student does not qualify because the parents were down south. There was a policy that they have in place. That is what we have, Mr. Speaker.

MR. MENICOCHÉ: If the Minister of Education is not the guardian of our education system and policy, I would like to know who is. Mr. Speaker, we cannot fail our aboriginal students, especially those in small and remote communities who have the biggest disadvantages as they have to leave their home community for education. Will the Minister review the situation as it has occurred more than once in other jurisdictions, as well, as it has implications throughout the NWT? Mahsi cho.

HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY: In other jurisdictions there are different circumstances where an individual from a small community goes to a regional school within a respected riding. They would qualify once they meet all the criteria of the policy. We do support the policies that are in place. We are allowing the powers onto the regions. That is what we were given as a mandate a few years back. So I continue, as a Minister, to work with the board chairs, the board directors, the superintendent and the principals. Those are the individuals that work within the system. We can certainly look at this from their perspective to the district education authority. We can have our staff

look at the policy itself. The decision is their decision. Mahsi, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Lafferty. Final supplementary, Mr. Menicoche.

MR. MENICOCHÉ: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I have reiterated again and again that earlier I said that this student was here for 10 months, Mr. Speaker. I think the requirement that the Minister is quoting is not really the parents but was a one year requirement as well. Like, 10 months, Mr. Speaker. There has to be some flexibility with our guidelines and procedures. Thank you very much.

MR. SPEAKER: I didn't hear a question there. The honourable Member for Frame Lake, Ms. Bisaro.

QUESTION 2-16(4):
IMPLEMENTATION OF 911 SERVICE

MS. BISARO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My questions are addressed to the Minister of Municipal and Community Affairs today. I know that the Minister of MACA has received a copy of the City of Yellowknife's feasibility study and implementation analysis report. I know that the Minister has read the report. I know that he knows the recommended actions within that report. I have to ask the Minister, why do 77 percent of our NWT residents not merit the protection that a 911 service would provide?

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Ms. Bisaro. The honourable Minister of Municipal and Community Affairs, Mr. Robert McLeod.

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. That would leave 23 percent without any kind of service at all. That is a concern of ours. We would like to be able to assist in providing the service, but we have to also ensure that this service or any basic service is available to a lot of remote communities we have out there. Thank you.

MS. BISARO: I guess I thank the Minister for that response. He and I will have to agree to disagree again, I am afraid. I would like to ask the Minister whether or not he understands that we will not get phone infrastructure in the communities that hold 23 percent of our residents for a matter of five to 10 years? Does he understand that? Thank you.

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: Yes, Mr. Speaker, I understand that fully. Thank you.

MS. BISARO: I will consider that the Minister... I was lobbying him an easy one but if he does understand that, I really have to ask him again, why then is the department and the government -- because I think this is a government decision -- so against starting implementation of 911 on a phased approach? The report indicates that it has to be a phased approach no matter when we start. We cannot implement 911 in all of our 33 communities at the same time. I need to ask the Minister why we

cannot start with a phased-in approach, why we cannot start with the seven communities that have been recommended. Thank you.

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: I will go back again, that we would like to be able to provide a basic service to all of the Northwest Territories and I think that this is kind of a priority right now. I want to ensure that people that are driving the winter road from Inuvik to Tuktoyaktuk can phone 911. If they are driving from Fort McPherson to the border, I want to ensure that they can dial 911 and get the service required. So this is something that is a recommendation that came from a couple of reports and the coroner's report, but our goal was to try and ensure that we have basic service to all of the Northwest Territories so they can all enjoy the same comforts that they would in some of the seven larger communities that would have this service and the comfort of knowing that they can phone 911. Thank you.

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

MS. BISARO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The Minister's logic escapes me. I do not understand why we must wait 10 years in order to start an implementation project which is going to take a further five years to get done. We have to start at some point. I appreciate that there are some communities who do not have the amenities that I happen to enjoy here in Yellowknife, which is a large community, but I still maintain that the government must more seriously consider starting the service somewhere. Will the Minister consider re-evaluating his decision and his communication to the City of Yellowknife? Will he reconsider that decision and think about starting 911 phased in with our seven largest communities? Thank you.

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: As with most concerns that are brought to our attention from communities and from residents out there, we have to do our due diligence and consider all options before us if it is partial implementation. I think in a conversation with the Member, I kind of made reference to the fact that we haven't closed the door on this particular issue. It is something that we'll continue to work on. If we can find a way to partially implement this, then I think it's something we should seriously consider.

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

QUESTION 3-16(4):
MUNICIPAL ADHERENCE TO ENERGY
EFFICIENT BUILDING STANDARDS

MR. BROMLEY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Funds currently flowed to community governments on the New Deal have no conditions to ensure new buildings meet the necessary energy efficiency standards that we have in the NWT for the GNWT.

Communities are expected to complete community energy plans, but without a stipulation for meeting those requirements and frequently resulting in substandard energy efficiency building practices.

My questions are for the Minister of Municipal and Community Affairs. I understand we currently recommend that communities adopt our standards, but we don't require it. Given that we do transfer under the New Deal considerable dollars, and appropriately so, for infrastructure to community governments, can we at least in the short term, until that is actually fixed, require that buildings developed by them meet GNWT energy standards?

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Bromley. The honourable Minister responsible for Municipal and Community Affairs, Mr. Robert McLeod.

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The Member is right. But as we work with the communities, they're working on their energy plans right now. I think the communities are starting to recognize the fact that if they build buildings according to code, and the buildings that are going up now are not substandard buildings, I think a lot of them are meeting code and they're being built a lot better than they were in the past. I think communities, once they recognize the amount of money that they could save by improving on their infrastructure, I think that's a step that they'll take in that direction on their own. We see it happening with some of the designs that are already coming forward.

MR. BROMLEY: I wish I could come to the same conclusions or have the same observations as the Minister, but I tend to see substandard buildings in communities. I know some of the youth centres that have been built that I have seen don't have porches on them, the doors are open, and you can see daylight under the doors and so on. These are clearly not EGH or 25 percent better than the model National Energy Building Codes. That is why I'm looking to help the communities realize and enjoy the savings that we are in the larger communities and that this government is realizing. By simply putting in that stipulation, it's not that our contractors can't make these standards. They're doing it for us, they're doing it for the larger communities, and it's the same outfits that are doing the construction in communities.

Can we actually commit to getting a requirement to meet those standards in there so that communities can enjoy the same benefits that we enjoy ourselves?

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: First of all, the building of youth centres usually falls within the community and they make those decisions on their own. We've devolved a lot of the responsibility for the capital plans to the communities. We can assist the communities, we can make recommendations to the communities, but we've given them the

responsibility so we're not always telling them what to do. We can work with them. We can point out the advantages of designing their buildings and building them energy efficiently.

I had the opportunity just recently to attend the opening of one of the buildings built under this out in Dettah and they've taken some steps on their own to ensure that they have some energy efficient building practices in there. They did a fine job with that. I think the communities are going to start realizing that. I do believe, and still believe, that all the buildings that are built in the communities are built according to code.

MR. BROMLEY: Again, I'm sure they're built to a code, the problem is which code they're built to. That's the topic under discussion here. I'm the first to say we want the responsibilities to be taken up by the communities, and they are taking them up and so on, but here we have firm evidence of what the savings can be and we are not requiring communities to meet those standards, based on experience, and enjoy those benefits that we are allowing ourselves to enjoy without insisting that communities have that same opportunity. I hope the Minister will rethink that.

On the longer-term sense I'm wondering if the Minister would consider, perhaps with other departments if relevant, developing and adopting NWT building standards for all buildings in the Northwest Territories.

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: I agree with the Member that it is good advice for us to continue to try to work with the communities and encourage them to build their buildings with energy efficiency in mind. I have a lot of confidence in our communities' abilities to manage their own projects. I think we've seen in a few cases where they've recognized that there are savings in building energy efficient buildings and they're starting to move towards those lines. We've seen a few examples. I will take the Member's advice and this is something that we can continue to work with the communities quite diligently in making sure that all buildings are built with energy efficiency and the highest standard in mind.

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

MR. BROMLEY: I'll just ask that last question, I appreciate those comments from the Minister, I'll just ask the question: Will the Minister commit to developing and adopting, helping this government adopt building standards that are made-in-the-North building standards and applicable throughout the NWT?

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: We'll continue to work with our partners and the NWTAC and LGANT and coming up with a plan to move forward with this. As far as having our own set of standards in the

Northwest Territories, we are seeing a lot of examples now of buildings being built to EnerGuide 80 and higher. I think we're going to continue to move along those lines. I'll say again, the communities are recognizing the fact that there is a significant amount of money to be saved and I think they're taking steps to improve the quality of the construction of their buildings.

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

QUESTION 4-16(4):

FEDERAL INFRASTRUCTURE FUNDING

MR. RAMSAY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My questions today are for the Premier. I get back to my Member's statement from earlier today. I believe we can't underestimate the importance of a strong presence in Ottawa. I know the government, I gave them credit, I think we've gotten a fair bit of money from Ottawa, but I think the time is of the essence and I think we need to get more money from Ottawa. We have many demands, especially on our transportation infrastructure. We have to get more money in here. I'd like to ask the Premier what the game plan is going forward to try to get more money from the federal government.

I know in June I stood up in this House and I cited a project in the Yukon where the Yukon government received \$71 million for a hydro expansion in Carmacks. It's things like that: substantial investment from the federal government. Where is it at on this government's radar and how are we going to achieve more?

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

HON. FLOYD ROLAND: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. During the life of our Assembly we have engaged with Ottawa on quite a number of fronts and brought our message in to them and opened doors that were available to us. In fact, we recently just put in -- speaking of the Yukon example -- our request for funds that are available through the federal government for our Taltson Hydro Expansion Project. That was a \$100 million request that went through the Green Energy Fund, I believe it's called, and another avenue for the remainder.

What we've started doing is engaging through our lead Minister on infrastructure. That's why we've got a good share of the stimulus funding that's available, and we see as a result of that our large capital program. In fact, over three years in the life of this government, including the budget that will be coming forward on the capital, we'll be in the neighbourhood of well over \$700 million, close to \$800 million in infrastructure investment in the Northwest Territories. So we have been seeing results as a result of our work.

Our focus needs to be on fundamental or some key project areas and large scale. That is why when I've sent the message to the Prime Minister and to other Ministers it revolves around the Mackenzie Gas Project, Mackenzie Valley Highway and the hydro potential. There are three areas. At some point we need to, if the money were to become available for one and we had to choose, then we'll have to sit down with Members of the North to say what area. But we know, for example, there's a lot of work that's happening with the Mackenzie Gas Project and we're hoping to see those results bear fruit in the very near future. Thank you.

MR. RAMSAY: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to start by thanking the Premier for his response. However, when he talked about the lead Minister for infrastructure, I'd like to ask the Premier how are we currently coordinated in our efforts in Ottawa? Like, who's actually coordinating the government's efforts in dealing with the federal government? Is it the Premier? Is it the lead Minister for infrastructure? Is each Minister left to their own devices when dealing with Ottawa? Where does the buck stop when it comes to dealing with Ottawa, Mr. Speaker? Thank you.

HON. FLOYD ROLAND: Mr. Speaker, the process we use flows through the Department of the Executive as we establish through these Strategic Initiatives committees. For example, when we come through with requests from departments to advance -- whether it's Transportation, whether it is Health and Social Services, Education, Culture and Employment -- a number of these initiatives, we funnel them through the appropriate initiative committee. Those Ministers would sit down and we would coordinate with the Executive and see what areas we need to engage in, in Ottawa. So it's coordinated through the Department of the Executive. We do that work. Once we highlight what office it flows through and we put our specific Minister who's the lead of that section, and I use the infrastructure as an example, our infrastructure Minister, once we have those established as to where they would go, the projects that are on our list, that work is done, and done through the Executive working with all appropriate Ministers. Thank you.

MR. RAMSAY: Mr. Speaker, that's a good answer from the Premier. One of the concerns that I hear from the federal government is the mixed messages coming from the Government of the Northwest Territories when it comes to the federal government in dealing with the federal government. One of the things I'd like to ask the Premier today is whether or not the government has given any consideration to naming a Minister who's responsible for federal engagement, and everything runs through that Minister and that's where you know that the federal engagement is going to be handled by that one Minister. I think that's

something maybe the government should give some consideration to. I'm wondering if the Premier has given that some consideration. Thank you.

HON. FLOYD ROLAND: Mr. Speaker, that, in fact, falls in under one Minister now and that would be myself, as the Premier of the Northwest Territories, engaging the appropriate departments. Once we establish those trunk lines -- I guess is a way of putting it -- to appropriate Ministers, we'd hand off or establish a framework. But the overall coordination comes through the Premier's office and works with the appropriate Ministers and flows in that fashion. So there's much we need to do, and continue to do, to establish things. For example, my discussions with the Prime Minister on the Mackenzie Valley Highway, to establish that and open the doors, then to go to the appropriate Ministers. That is one of the reasons why I've hung onto the Aboriginal Affairs and Intergovernmental Relations portfolio as well, because that keeps us in the connection with all the work that's happening with all the other Ministers and their departments. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Roland. Final supplementary, Mr. Ramsay.

MR. RAMSAY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Again, I thank the Premier for that. If I was going to ask, and I will ask the Premier today if the government could produce a current comprehensive list of asks of the federal government and whether or not the government could provide that to Regular Members. I'd like to see that list. Thank you.

HON. FLOYD ROLAND: I'm sure we can pull that together for the Members. One of the first things that comes forward is some of the big work that's happening, and that's the stimulus package that's our capital program. That comes forward through example, and we'd be dealing with it during this sitting, is a lot of that work is entailed and incorporated into our budget process here. For the other work that we go above and beyond that for some of the bigger picture -- the hydro pieces, the Mackenzie Valley Highway, some of our initial work and ongoing work around the Mackenzie Gas Project -- I'd be glad to pull that information together and provide that to Members. Thank you.

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

QUESTION 5-16(4):
STUDENT HOME BOARDING POLICY

MR. KRUTKO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is directed to the Minister of Education in regard to my Member's statement with regard to home boarding for the students of Tsiigehtchic who are attending high school because they do not have high school in Tsiigehtchic.

Mr. Speaker, as I mentioned, I received several inquiries from the parents of these children and the struggle they were having of trying to get their children placed in home boarding in Inuvik. Mr. Speaker, there were residences by the department or the Beaufort Divisional Board of Education and I'm not too sure what's happened there, but apparently this has become an issue. I believe other communities have accessed this facility in the past, Sachs Harbour and other communities.

I'd like to ask the Minister of Education exactly what are we doing to ensure that those students that do not presently have high school in their communities and require high school elsewhere to ensure that we accommodate them by way of home boarding or having residences available to them so when they make that transition, that we are accommodating that educational experience? Thank you.

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

HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY: Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. There are other venues that the individual parents can go through. Part of that would be the local district education authority working along with the divisional education council, because those are the decision-makers in that region. When an individual student would like to attend high school in other parts of the community, then they make arrangements with the principal, with the parents, the superintendent and also the district education authority along with the DEC as well. Those are the people that are involved. There are certain conditions that they need to meet. That's the process that the community members can access if they want to go out of the community to attend school elsewhere. Mahsi.

MR. KRUTKO: Mr. Speaker, in regard to the concerns raised by the residents of Tsiigehtchic, it seemed like there was a breakdown in communication between the district education council and the community. I think there has to be a better coordinated effort. I'd just like to request from the Minister if they can ensure that they do meet with these communities prior to the students leaving their home communities, say in the springtime and whatnot, so when this transition will take place and make the decision of moving in the fall, that everything's set up by way of ensuring that home boarding is available to the students so they know where they're going to stay so they don't have to deal with it prior to the start of the school year.

I'd like to ask the Minister if he can pass that message on and intervene in regard to trying to have a smooth transition for those students who are attending high school outside of their home communities. Thank you.

HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY: Mr. Speaker, certainly one of our goals is to have every student

succeed in our school system. Certainly, I will take those into consideration about improving our communication dialogue, whether it be at the regional level, local level and even within our department as well, because we have to work with all the regions, all the communities, the schools, and if there is a communication breakdown, then if we are aware of it, we need to resolve that issue, the sooner the better. So, yes, certainly we will follow through with this with the respective riding. Mahsi, Mr. Speaker.

MR. KRUTKO: Mr. Speaker, I would just like to ask if there is a possibility of these parents being reimbursed for their losses for the costs associated with having to put up with making their own investments, finding these students a place to live during the transitional period. So I would just like to ask the Minister if he would consider looking at the possibility that parents are able to be compensated for any losses that may have occurred trying to find a residence for their students, in light of the facility which was there previous. So I would like to ask the Minister to consider looking at that option also.

HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY: Mr. Speaker, those are the discussions that likely need to take place at the local and regional level and the parents should also be involved in that process, as well as the MLA of the respective riding. We give funding to the regional groups and local groups, and the decisions lie with them according to their policy established under the Education Act. So that should be discussed at that level. Mahsi, Mr. Speaker.

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

MR. KRUTKO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to request the Minister's presence in the community of Tsiigehtchic to try to resolve this issue at the community level. He could bring in whatever staff he needs from the region and try to resolve this situation so it doesn't occur next year. I would like to formally invite the Minister to Tsiigehtchic to try to resolve this issue in the community, so that we can find some solutions going forward and this doesn't occur again. Thank you.

HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY: Mr. Speaker, I certainly will do what we can to resolve this issue. Whether my presence or my staff, we will certainly deal with those issues, because we need to put out the fire before it gets too big, and if it's just a matter of resolving an issue, then we should do that. But then, again, Mr. Speaker, it is at the local and regional level. I have to respect that as well, the decisions made at that level. We will continue to make those improvements. Mahsi, Mr. Speaker.

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

QUESTION 6-16(4):

SUPPLEMENTARY HEALTH BENEFITS POLICY

MR. HAWKINS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Today I'd like to ask questions to the Minister of Health and Social Services regarding the potential changes to the supplementary health benefits. Mr. Speaker, as it stands now there are concerns from the constituency about the fractured information that isn't getting out there as to what may or may not be happening, so the people are very concerned about this. I would like to ask the Minister directly today, can the Minister provide us an update as to what has been happening behind the scenes regarding this potential change and what consultation has been done with stakeholders as well as MLAs to date? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Hawkins. The honourable Minister responsible for Health and Social Services, Ms. Lee.

HON. SANDY LEE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to thank the Member for the question. Mr. Speaker, what's being done right now is that we are following the recommendation of the House, which was passed in April, to re-look at the changes being proposed and to do more consultation work so that we could have input from the public and to answer some of the questions and to give out the necessary information so that people could understand the program better and the changes being proposed. So we are doing that right now. The interdepartmental group has been working to analyze the data, get more data and look at some information. We have also brought together a number of NGO groups that represent all of the interest groups in the Territories. They have begun meeting to give us advice on how we should do this better, and they've had their initial meeting and we expect that they will continue to meet and give us guidance. When their work is completed and when our information is ready, I want to confirm again that we will be going out to the public, and the public will have an opportunity to provide their input. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. HAWKINS: I appreciate that answer. Mr. Speaker, is there anything available publicly as to what process is going on, on who to engage and who is being engaged regarding this potential change? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

HON. SANDY LEE: I would encourage the Members to advise the public who may be calling them, that this is the process we have underway and that's the information that I've been giving out to the public, members of the public that have been communicating with me. So I just want to reassure the public that we are following the direction of the Assembly, that we will be consulting with them and it will be public and open and it will be wide and we will let them know as to the schedule when it's finalized. But right now the work is being done with

the stakeholder groups to give us advice. Thank you.

MR. HAWKINS: Mr. Speaker, the last answer of the Minister, I certainly hope it would be available on the Minister's website so that it's easily accessible. Mr. Speaker, my next question would be: as promised, the Minister did say that the department would consider the issues fully that were raised in opposition, and certainly one of the issues to give this context was to drop the income test limits on this change. So in the context of fairness and definitely certainty to a number of my constituents, is this one of the issues that are being evaluated to completely drop, such as drop the income test level to make sure that the extended health benefits are certainly fair and reasonable to all Northwest Territories residents? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

HON. SANDY LEE: I can assure the Member that the program we design will be fair and equitable and that it will address providing support to those who need it the most, because, as the Member knows, we currently have a group of residents who are low income and children without dental benefits and they are being excluded from the current program. So those are the kind of things that we are looking to include.

Mr. Speaker, I can assure the Member that we are open to looking at all aspects of that program, and that's the commitment we made and we're doing that and we're asking the stakeholders to advise us on that. So we are undertaking a thorough review of the changes being proposed. Thank you.

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

MR. HAWKINS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As I'm sure the Minister understands, it's a very important issue in my riding, as well as I'm sure hers and throughout the Northwest Territories. Mr. Speaker, one of the issues that causes such frustration is the inability to understand how big this problem could potentially be. So has the department looked at this issue from the point of view of costing it out as to what these changes may reflect and is that information available? Because in light of the fact that if there is significant changes, we need to address that and understand those potential changes, but most certainly we could also be considering the option of why are we bothering with changes and dismiss the whole policy if it's not considered reasonable in that due course. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

HON. SANDY LEE: Mr. Speaker, the department and the government understands how important these supplementary health benefits programs are. We want to -- and this has been under review for at least 10 years previous to when the policies were changed in October of 2007 or August of 2007, I believe -- continue the work to improve the

program. I understand that people want to get involved and they want to be able to have an input into the process, and in order to do that, they need to have really good information about what this program is and what's being changed, what's being proposed for change and how. I want to commit to the Member again, and to the rest of the public, that I am open to having a full and wide dialogue and the public will have an opportunity to give us their input on income test or not or whatever else that is being proposed with these changes. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

QUESTION 7-16(4):

DECLINE OF BATHURST CARIBOU HERD

MR. ABERNETHY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My questions today are for the Minister of Environment and Natural Resources and are based on my Member's statement from earlier today. I understand the department facilitates stakeholder meetings to discuss 2006 and 2009 caribou census reports. I also believe that the meetings included representation from the Wekeezhii Renewable Resources Board, the Tlicho Government, outfitters, Yellowknives Dene, the Akaitcho, as well as other potentially affected stakeholders. Could the Minister responsible please tell us what the intent of those meetings were and what were the general findings in the discussions during those meetings? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. When we released the survey numbers for the Bathurst herd, I was accompanied by the grand chief and some of the other chiefs from the Tlicho. It was made clear that we have a very serious issue here and what we are attempting to do now is work back from the end of December where we want to have recommendations, plans, whatever we finalize before the winter hunt hits full steam. Working back from there, we want to start a process of consultation with all the affected aboriginal governments, co-management boards and other stakeholder groups, to look at the numbers, get briefed and come up with recommendations on what we should be doing in terms of trying to control the one thing that is having a growing impact and that is the harvest. This is a situation, an issue that has been dealt with already.

Up the valley, the Inuvialuit, Gwich'in and Sahtu have already dealt with the issue of the climbing numbers. The North Slave is now going to be challenging the Tlicho to deal with that issue. Thank you.

MR. ABERNETHY: I am glad to hear that those meetings are taking place. I think it is incredibly important to involve all potentially affected stakeholders. When can we expect to see some recommendations on a recovery strategy for the Bathurst caribou? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: There is a two-pronged approach going on. We have obligations, as a result; self-government with the Tlicho Government. With the Tlicho Government we are going to pull together a report with our joint proposal to the Wekeezhii board as it pertains to the issue of caribou within the Tlicho region. At the same time, we are going to use the similar recommendations and go and consult with the other aboriginal governments; the Akaitcho, the Metis, as well as other stakeholders, so that we can hopefully reach a common conclusion, which we will have to reach a common conclusion so that by the end of December we are ready to implement some very stringent measures that are going to be safeguarding and preserving the herd as first and foremost priority. Thank you.

MR. ABERNETHY: Thanks to the Minister for that. Just so I heard correctly, December. Next part of my question is: I have talked to a number of people in the community. One of the things that I have heard is, has the government considered helping or deflecting the harvest to neighbouring herds such as the Bluenose East or the Ahiak. Has this been considered by the Department of Environment and Natural Resources? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: There are options that different parts of the country can look at. There are other species that may be healthier and could sustain some harvest: the use of moose, bison. All the caribou herds are in distress. The Beverly, for example, has all but disappeared. The Ahiak, we believe, is going to be, once the count and the census is done, will be demonstrated to be in the same circumstance. Those options are going to have to be looked at in conjunction with as we move into the east with the Nunavut government and other governments to make sure that whatever we do is sustainable and is based on the best evidence possible. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Miltenberger. Final supplementary, Mr. Abernethy.

MR. ABERNETHY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to thank the Minister for that response. Just for the record, I am going to be asking some questions on this later to the Minister responsible for Industry, Tourism and Investment, probably early next week. My last question today to the Minister responsible for ENR is: as I mentioned earlier in my Member's statement, the loss of the Bathurst herd have significant impacts on the health and the cost of living of aboriginal residents who rely on the barren land caribou due to the loss of

the primary source of protein. What is the department doing to address these potential problems, specifically health issues and cost of living issues that may result of the recovery of these Bathurst caribou? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: We have engaged in a process in the North Slave with the Tlicho to look at what restrictions. Based on those restrictions that are going to be implemented, we will be able to determine next steps, what are the impacts, how do we collectively work together. As the grand chief from the Tlicho said himself, there are other species that now are not on the favoured preference of some of the folks, like bison or like moose, that we may have to encourage people to take advantage of, where possible and where sustainable. Those types of discussions we are going to have to have as we move forward with December 31 and the restrictions. Thank you.

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

QUESTION 8-16(4):
MONITORING USE OF THE
CANOL HERITAGE TRAIL

MR. YAKELEYA: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In my Member's statement I made reference to a group from B.C. The land rovers had made a trek along the CANOL Heritage Trail pretty close to about 10 miles from the Twitya River. I want to ask the Minister of Environment and Natural Resources in terms of what this department is doing in terms of monitoring the environment, the ecological damages that these six vehicles might have done. I ask if he is aware of this situation and give us an update to see what is taking place to protect the land on that trail.

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

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to thank the Member for bringing that matter to our attention recently. I had some discussions with the department; we are aware of the concern. We are going to look at the facts that the Member has indicated and try to get an assessment. We are also interested. I haven't had a chance to talk to the Members personally about suggested next steps. I know that there are some suggestions in terms of limiting access, trying to do things on the border side to make it clear to those folks thinking that they can come in from another jurisdiction, that there are...what the standards are and our expectations when it comes to use of the land and the trails of the Northwest Territories side. Thank you.

MR. YAKELEYA: I know that I just brought this issue up to the Minister a couple of days ago. I do

appreciate his response today. I would like to ask the Minister in terms of assessing this situation here -- it is very concerning to the leadership in the Sahtu just in Norman Wells and Tulita -- will the Minister work with the leadership, the chiefs, the Metis and the Tulita Land Corp president, the Norman Wells Land Corp president in terms of looking at how we could do an assessment by working with his department to look at the trail and see for himself first-hand as to the type of damages these land rovers have done on the CANOL Trail?

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Yes, I commit to do that on these issues that relate and pertain to issues on the ground, in the regions, in the Sahtu. It makes only good common sense to, in fact, work with the folks that are there, the aboriginal governments that are there, and our own people, to make sure we're doing the right things for the people in the Sahtu.

MR. YAKELEYA: Certainly the people in the Sahtu appreciate hearing the comments from the Minister in terms of doing some further investigation of this situation. I also would like to ask the Minister if he would work closely with the other Ministers -- Minister Michael McLeod and Minister Bob McLeod -- in terms of the overall picture of the CANOL in terms of looking at how we can in the future look at issues like this that would have some restrictions on motorized vehicles on the CANOL.

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: I'd like to assure the Member that we'll work with all the McLeods necessary to deal with this issue and all the ones at our disposal, which are many and very competent, every one of them.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Miltenberger. Final supplementary, Mr. Yakeleya.

MR. YAKELEYA: I also would ask the Minister if he would commit to working very strongly with the Department of Indian and Northern Affairs in terms of this trail because of the jurisdiction issues, and looking if the Department of Indian and Northern Affairs can also put some pressure on these users of motorized vehicles in areas such as the CANOL.

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: We have a very positive working relationship with Indian and Northern Affairs and, yes, we will engage with them as appropriate as well.

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

QUESTION 9-16(4):

PROMOTING THE MACKENZIE GAS PROJECT

MRS. GROENEWEGEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My questions are for the Premier and they relate to my Member's statement about the Mackenzie Gas Project. I want to get clarity from the Premier as to what role we play and what role we can play to

advance the agenda of the people who are actually doing this, the proponents. We have spent an inordinate amount of time and money as a government to get ready for this. We have seen industry spend an inordinate amount of money to get ready for this pipeline. Other than sitting on the sidelines waiting for the Joint Review Panel to report and waiting for the NEB to review that, what active role can our government take to ensure that the Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development still understands that this is a project that we need? This is a project that Canada needs. This is a project that we need. How can we give it some kind of prominence or priority in terms of all those discussions that go on with Ottawa?

We went down there for NWT Day. We talked about devolution, resource revenue sharing, specific infrastructure funding, housing funding, protected areas. They give us one little thing, they say there you go, go away now, we gave you that. How can we get this pipeline, which I think would be a great economic boost to this Territory right now, somehow communicate that is front and centre for us, that we've had theme days on? I think that's the truth. Thank you.

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

HON. FLOYD ROLAND: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The way we've been working on the Mackenzie Gas Project, number one, from a number of levels. We ourselves have worked internally to prepare departments for when permits would start flowing through appropriate departments. We've worked with Municipal and Community Affairs to help with communities to try to deal with some of those issues, through Aboriginal Affairs and Intergovernmental Relations and the Executive. We've worked with aboriginal governments to work with them on coming up with a common set of messaging. Over and above that we have worked through Industry, Tourism and Investment to build a business case, so to speak, of all the benefits this would pass on. Not only to the North and northern businesses and to governments, we've also built the business case of how much this will build in revenue to the federal government, to Alberta, to Ontario, because of all the materials and work that would happen being developed in those jurisdictions and flowing through to the Northwest Territories.

So we've built the business case and we've taken that now and gone down and used that information whenever we have meetings with other Ministers, myself with the Prime Minister, as well with Minister Strahl, Minister Prentice, Minister Baird at times. When it came to the stimulus package, we used that avenue to see if that could be used to help offset the costs there. The magnitude of this project goes beyond those types of projects or initiatives

that the federal government would put in place. Our avenue has been to go up to the higher ends, and that's the Prime Minister's office and a number of the other Ministers, to work on them in a sense of the information, the business case, and work with industry in making sure our numbers work together.

As well, on the other side of the equation, we've had to work on our environmental side with industry to let them know that this wasn't just going to be a project for the sake of a project. It was going to happen on the basis as we saw it happening or liked to see it happen in the North. That business case has been worked along. We've had to coordinate that. We continue to coordinate that and continue to stay in touch with the bodies that are in place to, for example, see where the Joint Review Panel is and their news recently coming out and confirming that they'll come out in December with their electronic report and, as well, the recent announcement on the National Energy Board that they've put a timeline in place. So that's good news, as well, that people are lined up and prepared and are waiting for the transmittal of that report, and once we have that we know there's much more work going on. For example, our meetings with the federal government, our meetings with industry, and our meetings with the leadership across the Territories on this project and trying to keep things moving along and the information flowing.

I know it's been very frustrating on the outside dealing with, for example, the Mackenzie Delta businesses that have felt the slowdown because exploration has slowed. But there is much work still going on and we're hoping to see the fruits of that work come forward in December.

MRS. GROENEWEGEN: I know it is a complex issue and it's affected, as I said, by things like the downturn in the economy and all those things which we don't have control over. But I still get the sense that when you're listening to the federal government via the Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development, that they are still kind of throwing back at us that they are getting mixed messages. Some people want this, some don't. Some people consider this a priority, that a priority. I guess, is that just a stance, posturing that's taken by the federal government just so they can, I don't know, find their way out of giving us solid and concrete kinds of responses or is our message mixed and are there too many voices?

HON. FLOYD ROLAND: I would say that question flows right into the work that I've been trying to do as Premier, working with the regional leadership across the Northwest Territories. There are always going to be cases where we agree to disagree, for example, on initiatives and steps that we would like to take as a government that the aboriginal government would see as not their priority, for example. That was an issue that we started this

government around devolution and resource revenue sharing, for example. There are jurisdictions or places within our Territory that are still in the negotiation phase that would want some certainty in their area of negotiations before, for example, the pipeline goes through their jurisdictions. But we've continued to work with them, we've continued to work with the federal government in trying to smooth out that messaging in the sense of being more consistent in the benefits that would flow from that and that type of production that would go on as we see the Mackenzie Gas Pipeline put in place.

There is still a challenge in coming up with a consistent message out of the North, but I believe that our messaging has become closer and closer together. For example, when people used to say what's happening in the Deh Cho. Dehcho has moved along significantly in their process, have had many meetings. In fact, their chiefs have met with the Aboriginal Pipeline Group on an ongoing basis to get either information as to that process or what's going to happen as that program moves forward. So we've been building on that sort of a basis as we go forward and we will continue to do so. Thank you.

MRS. GROENEWEGEN: Maybe it's just my own sense, but this issue of the hopes that have been pinned on the Mackenzie Gas Pipeline seem like they have kind of dropped down on the radar a bit of late. So I'd like to ask the Premier: people out there are looking for some hope for some economic activity. I mean, we've got a big capital budget and there are definitely things going on in the North, new things, new mines, there are bright spots on the horizon, but there are lot of people who have banked on this Mackenzie Gas Project proceeding. Is there anything the Premier can tell us in the House and tell the public of the Northwest Territories, the business community, the people who are looking for work out there today, that gives him hope and a feeling of encouragement that, in fact, in the near future we will see the wheels begin to turn on this major project? Thank you.

HON. FLOYD ROLAND: Mr. Speaker, the messaging that we have for our own constituents and people of the Northwest Territories, the businesses, is an important one. That is, we continue to support and work to push the Mackenzie Gas Project forward in as many avenues as we can. We continue to go to the federal government to highlight the importance.

Our Minister of Industry, Tourism and Investment, when he travels to the U.S., travels to Ottawa, travels to B.C. or Alberta, continues to send a message about the benefits of the Mackenzie Gas Project, because the more people -- not only in the North but in the South -- that resonate on our messaging also enforce with the federal

government that if they are to make an investment, for example, in the Aboriginal Pipeline Group, that that investment will bring a return to the federal government as well as other governments across this country. So we continue to do that.

The messaging that I will send, continue to send, to the businesses in the Northwest Territories, is there is much work still going on. I know there's frustration out there about that, but there's much work going on. In December the announcement on that report was a good one, and NEB making their recent announcement is even a better one. So things are starting to line up and we're very hopeful that once December comes, things will start to pick up the pace and move along. Thank you.

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

QUESTION 10-16(4):
PROVISION OF 911 SERVICE

MS. BISARO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I must follow up from my questions of the Minister of Municipal and Community Affairs earlier and ask him another question or two on the same subject.

In the Minister's earlier responses to my questions, I understood him to say that 911 service must be in all communities or in none of our communities and it makes me wonder whether or not he heard me say that implementation can't happen all at once. There is absolutely no way we can implement 911 service in all 33 communities at once. So I again have to ask the Minister, why do we have to wait for the government to assist communities to get 911 service? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Ms. Bisaro. The honourable Minister of Municipal and Community Affairs, Mr. Robert McLeod.

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: Mr. Speaker, I'd have to review Hansard, but I don't think I made the comment that 911 has to be available in every community. I think the word I said was "basic service" in each community, and I've assured the Member that we haven't closed the door on this and we will explore all options and see what works well.

We have had recommendations and motions moved from the NWTAC. We've had recommendations from the coroner's office. So as I said in my last statement before, this is something that we're going to have to have a look at and see if it's feasible and see if we can work out some partnerships so we can get this thing moved forward. Thank you.

MS. BISARO: Thank you to the Minister. That's a little more conciliatory than what I thought I had heard earlier. I guess the Minister says that we want to provide basic service to all communities. I have to ask the Minister what he means by "basic service."

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: When I talk of basic service I talk cell phone service and the comfort of knowing that they can call and have people respond within a matter of minutes, whether they're 20 kilometres out of town, which in some cases... So just the basic service that some of the larger communities take for granted. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. McLeod. The time for question period has expired; however, I will allow the Member a supplementary question. Ms. Bisaro.

MS. BISARO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I appreciate that. I appreciate the answer to the question, but I wonder if the Minister understands that if we start to establish a 911 service, that there is a CRTC decision which requires then that NorthweTel provide cell phone service wherever there is enhanced 911 service. Does the Minister know that?

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: The Minister is aware of that, and in a conversation that I had with the Member, she had indicated that this may be a ruling that's coming down. So I am aware of it and if that... That's another option that we'd have to look at, is the ruling that comes down and how it might affect our ability to provide service to all of the Northwest Territories. Thank you.

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

MS. BISARO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm not sure what else I can ask. I guess, you know, things are going to be looked at and I suppose I should take some comfort in that, but I still don't take much comfort in the fact that this government is not going to, I don't think, seriously look at assisting our communities, those that can assist them in providing 911 service. Will the Minister answer or let me know whether or not his department is going to have funds in the 2010-11 operations budget that will allow our communities to implement 911 service?

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: No, Mr. Speaker, not at the moment. But like I said, it's something we continue to work on.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. McLeod. Item 8, written questions. Item 9, petitions. Item 10, reports of standing and special committees. Item 11, tabling of documents. The honourable Minister of Finance, Mr. Miltenberger.

Tabling of Documents

TABLED DOCUMENT 1-16(4):
NWT CAPITAL ESTIMATES 2010-2011

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Mr. Speaker, I wish to table the following document titled

Northwest Territories Capital Estimates 2010-2011.
Thank you.

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

TABLED DOCUMENT 2-16(4):
GNWT RESPONSE TO STANDING COMMITTEE
ON GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS REVIEW OF
THE OFFICIAL LANGUAGES ACT

HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY: Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. I wish to table the following document titled Government of the Northwest Territories Response to the Standing Committee on Government Operations Review of the Official Languages Act. Mahsi, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Lafferty. Item 12, notices of motion. Item 13, notices of motion for first reading of bills. Item 14, motions. Item 15, first reading of bills. Item 16, second reading of bills. Madam Clerk, orders of the day.

Orders of the Day

PRINCIPAL CLERK OF OPERATIONS (Ms. Bennett): Orders of the day for Friday, October 16th, 10:00 a.m.:

1. Prayer
2. Ministers' Statements
3. Members' Statements
4. Returns to Oral Questions
5. Recognition of Visitors in the Gallery
6. Acknowledgements
7. Oral Questions
8. Written Questions
9. Returns to Written Questions
10. Replies to Opening Address
11. Petitions
12. Reports of Standing and Special Committees
13. Reports of Committees on the Review of Bills
14. Tabling of Documents
15. Notices of Motion
16. Notices of Motion for First Reading of Bills

17. Motions

18. First Reading of Bills

19. Second Reading of Bills

20. Consideration in Committee of the Whole of Bills and Other Matters

- Tabled Document 1-16(4), NWT Capital Estimates 2010-2011

21. Report of Committee of the Whole

22. Third Reading of Bills

23. Orders of the Day

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Madam Clerk. Accordingly, this House stands adjourned until Friday, October 16th, at 10:00 a.m.

---ADJOURNMENT

The House adjourned at 15:42.

