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**The Honourable Paul Delorey, Speaker**

**Legislative Assembly of the Northwest Territories**

Members of the Legislative Assembly

Speaker

Hon. Paul Delorey

(Hay River North)

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Mr. Tom Beaulieu

(Tu Nedhe)

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*NWT Power Corporation*

Mr. Norman Yakeleya

(Sahtu)

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Box 1320

Yellowknife, Northwest Territories

Tel: (867) 669-2200 Fax: (867) 920-4735 Toll-Free: 1-800-661-0784

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**YELLOWKNIFE, NORTHWEST TERRITORIES**

**Tuesday, March 1, 2011**

**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

The House met at 1:36 p.m.

# Prayer

---Prayer

**SPEAKER (Hon. Paul Delorey):** Good afternoon, colleagues. Welcome back to the Chamber. Orders of the day. Item 2, Ministers’ statements. The honourable Minister of Education, Culture and Employment, Mr. Lafferty.

# Ministers’ Statements

## MINISTER’S STATEMENT 117-16(5): ABORIGINAL LANGUAGES MONTH

**HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY:** Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. Language is about identity, who we are and how we understand and interact with each other. Promoting Aboriginal languages encourages the promotion of healthy lifestyles and family and cultural values.

In 1993, the Assembly of First Nations declared the Month of March Aboriginal Languages Month. Since then, the Northwest Territories honours Aboriginal languages and cultures in March. This year, Mr. Speaker, we not only celebrate Aboriginal languages through initiatives in place for 2011 but also recognize the achievements of 2010.

Mr. Speaker, 2010 was a very active year for Aboriginal languages, starting with the Northwest Territories Aboriginal Languages Symposium. The information generated from the symposium formed part of the Aboriginal Languages Plan. The strategy, “Northwest Territories Aboriginal Languages Plan - A Shared Responsibility,” was tabled during the October 2010 session of the Legislative Assembly.

The development of the plan was a collaborative effort involving many people across the Territory and reflects not only priorities of the people of the Northwest Territories, but also recognizes that languages strengthen our society and underpins our culture. Implementing this plan will help us strengthen awareness of our northern uniqueness and identity, part of this Assembly’s vision for a strong, independent North built on partnerships.

Mr. Speaker, the overarching aim of this document is “A Shared Responsibility,” because the

participants of the symposium told us about the revitalization, preservation and maintenance of the Aboriginal languages in our Territory are the responsibilities of all stakeholders.

Mr. Speaker, 2011 will also be an active year. We are developing a full implementation plan for the Aboriginal Languages Strategy, which will outline a time frame and give more detail for the actions and outcomes proposed in the strategy.

The work plan is framed over a 10-year period and will address issues including government services, education programming, actions required to support revitalization and language community activities.

Next summer the Government of the Northwest Territories will host a second Northwest Territories Aboriginal Languages Summer Institute, a partnership between the Department of Education, Culture and Employment and the University of Victoria Certificate Program in Aboriginal Language Revitalization.

The partnership with the University of Victoria program benefits from the university’s relationship with the En’owkin Centre, the post-secondary education institute of the Okanagan First Nations known for its commitment to language revitalization. The two-week institute brings together community language workers and teachers representing official languages of the Northwest Territories. It is our goal that this is another initiative that will enable more people to speak their Aboriginal language in the coming years.

Mr. Speaker, Aboriginal Languages Month is a good opportunity to recognize the hard work of the language communities and applaud them for their ongoing dedication to ensure that languages flourish.

This government is committed to continuing its support of language and cultural activities. The involvement of each of the language communities is essential if we are to protect, maintain and strengthen language usage.

We hope all Aboriginal language speakers, language students and, indeed, all Northerners enjoy the celebration of language and culture in their communities during Aboriginal Languages Month.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Lafferty. Before I go on to Ministers’ statements I’d like to draw your attention to the gallery and the presence of a former Member of the Assembly, former Minister, former Sergeant-at-Arms, former Commissioner, marriage counsellor extraordinaire, Mr. Tony Whitford, in the gallery today.

---Applause

I’d also like to draw your attention to the presence of the Auditor General for Canada, Sheila Fraser, and her staff: Andrew Lennox, assistant auditor general; Jerome Berthelette, assistant auditor general; Glenn Wheeler, Tedd Wood, Eric Hellsten and Ghislain Desjardins.

The honourable Minister responsible for Finance, Mr. Miltenberger.

## MINISTER’S STATEMENT 118-16(5): PROPOSED DEVOLUTION FINANCIAL ARRANGEMENTS

**HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. A recent report commissioned by the Gwich’in Tribal Council has raised some questions about certain financial aspects of the devolution agreement-in-principle. The Government of the Northwest Territories does not agree with most of the conclusions of this report. We remain confident that the financial provisions of the devolution AIP are fair and reflect the best deal available. I rise today to set the record straight and address some of the confusion this report may have caused.

First of all I would like to point out that devolution is not just about money, it is about moving responsibility for public lands and resources from the Government of Canada to the Government of the Northwest Territories. With devolution, the people of the NWT will be making decisions respecting land, water and resource development that are currently being made in Ottawa. The financial components of the AIP are important but they need to be considered against the entire devolution agreement.

Anybody can pick and choose selected portions of the AIP and criticize them, but that isolated criticism is meaningless if it doesn’t take into account the benefits and advantages that have been achieved in other parts of the AIP. The Gwich’in report in fact concludes that “accepting the proposed AIP would be beneficial, but not optimal.” Taken along with the rest of the deal, it is the GNWT’s position that the financial arrangements of the AIP provide the basis for a final devolution agreement that will create real benefits for all NWT residents. Devolution negotiators spent considerable time and effort maximizing the financial benefits of the deal. All of the issues were raised and discussed at the table, from the treatment of resource revenues from Norman Wells to the net fiscal benefit and A-base funding. If there had been any realistic prospect of dramatically improving the financial components of the federal offer, the GNWT would have pursued it.

The net fiscal benefit reflected in the AIP is a vast improvement over previous federal offers. Once we have devolution, the Government of the Northwest Territories will collect the resource revenues that are currently going directly to Ottawa. These resource revenues will reduce our formula financing grant, but only by 50 cents for every dollar collected. The net fiscal benefit or the difference between the resource revenues we collect and reduction in the grant is subject to a cap equal to 5 percent of our gross expenditure base; about $60 million right now. By comparison, the Yukon devolution agreement only allows them to keep $3 million in mineral revenues and between 20 percent and 40 percent of oil and gas revenues, with everything above that going to Ottawa. It’s no wonder that the Yukon government is already indicating a desire to renegotiate their agreement.

The arrangements in the AIP are completely consistent with what the provinces would receive under the Federal-Provincial Equalization Program. Under this program, 50 percent of a province’s resource revenues are excluded from the equalization calculation, not 100 percent like the GTC report claims. Certain provinces did negotiate special time-limited agreements for off-shore revenues 25 years ago, but off-shore resources are not part of the NWT devolution AIP. While provinces that do not receive equalization payments get to keep 100 percent of their resource revenues, no province receiving equalization gets better treatment than what is contemplated in the devolution AIP.

The GTC report questions whether the net fiscal benefit will be adequate for managing the resources being devolved to the Government of the Northwest Territories, but this is not the purpose of the net fiscal benefit. The Government of the Northwest Territories will receive funding -- known as A-base funding -- each year to cover the cost of operating the programs and services that will be devolved to the Government of the Northwest Territories. This is funding over and above any resource revenues the Government of the Northwest Territories will retain.

A-base funding will begin at $65.3 million per year and will escalate annually under the terms of the Territorial Formula Financing. This amount was based on the work that the GNWT did to determine how much it would cost to operate devolved programs.

There has been some public discussion of a higher A-base amount supposedly negotiated in 2007. The GNWT and Aboriginal governments did propose a higher A-base figure to Canada in 2007, based on a best-case scenario that assumed very high levels of resource development in the Northwest Territories. There was never any guarantee that we would experience that level of development and Canada never did seriously entertain the proposal.

What Canada has agreed to, however, is to negotiate a post-devolution resource development cooperation agreement. We recognize that there may be times when additional investment may be necessary to help the Government of the Northwest Territories deal with the pressures of high levels of resource development. Where there are major projects with considerable national, environmental, social and economic significance, it would be in the interests of Canada and the Government of the Northwest Territories to work together to address their implications. Rather than try to accommodate that through higher A-base funding, these implications can be considered through a post-devolution cooperation agreement with Canada.

Mr. Speaker, it is the Government of the Northwest Territories position that we have achieved a good deal on devolution that includes fair and reasonable financial arrangements. After years of negotiations we have an agreement-in-principle that can serve as a basis for a devolution agreement that will create real economic benefits for all NWT residents, Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal alike. We have the basis of a deal that will give us access to substantial resource revenues and legislative authority over public lands, water and resources. We have the basis of a deal that will establish government-to-government relationships with northern Aboriginal governments and give them a share of revenues earned from resource royalties.

We have the basis for an agreement that will see Canada continue to contribute to the development of projects of national significance in the Northwest Territories. And we have the basis for an agreement that will see the Northwest Territories enter into negotiations with Canada over revenue sharing for offshore oil and gas resources.

Based on the current agreement-in-principle, the Government of the Northwest Territories would stand to receive $26.5 million in one-time transition costs from Canada. The first year of the agreement we would receive another $65.3 million in A-base funding. On top of the A-base funding, we would also begin to receive annual revenues from the development of NWT resources. Over the past five years we calculated that we have missed out on $200 million in resource revenues based on the current AIP. That’s money that the Northwest Territories governments could have invested in economic development, infrastructure and programs and services for our residents.

Today we are faced with all the potential impacts of resource development but have no control over the pace of development. This will be rectified with devolution and the Government of the Northwest Territories will have the tools necessary to manage risks. Every day that goes by without a devolution agreement, opportunity is lost. Non-renewable resources are being extracted from public lands in the Northwest Territories and resource revenues are flowing out of the North.

We can hold out for a marginally better financial deal from Canada, Mr. Speaker, but we will never be able to make a deal rich enough to make up for the millions of dollars that we are losing each year that we do not have a devolution agreement. This is a fair deal and an important step. It’s time to get down to business and put NWT governments in charge of the decisions that affect our Territory and our future. Mahsi.

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

## MINISTER’S STATEMENT 119-16(5): 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 to attend the Arctic Gas Symposium in Calgary. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Roland. Item 3, Members’ statements. The honourable Member for Nunakput, Mr. Jacobson.

# Members’ Statements

## MEMBER’S STATEMENT ON BEAUFORT-DELTA FLIGHT DISRUPTIONS

**MR. JACOBSON:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Recently planes were unable to land in Inuvik for a number of reasons, notably that runway did not have enough friction for the airplanes to land properly. Our region and our communities rely heavily on the airports, especially Inuvik. The reliability of infrastructure, wherever there is a telecommunications system at our airports, the airport systems are a critical process to the economic development projects and the people’s safety. It is a critical time to provide a certain standard of living for our residents in the Beaufort-Delta and the more northerly communities. Mr. Speaker, a friction problem at minus 20 degree weather might be allowable in Vancouver Island, but not in the High Arctic. It is unacceptable.

Airport managers have been working hard and resources that they have been... Our government needs to do more to help them. Airports all over the Beaufort-Delta require more resources. Some communities in Nunakput have recently had airport construction, like my three airport terminal buildings in Sachs, Paulatuk and Ulukhaktok. I would like to thank the Minister and rehabilitation he has injected are greatly appreciated, but our resources are referring to the technology. You would think that especially in the High Arctic the government would have issues such as de-icing our services preparation techniques in and around the airport.

Most of the people in the Beaufort-Delta recognize unique challenges living in the region, but we are concerned if our flights are cancelled. We had three flights cancelled this week out of here, out of Yellowknife heading into Inuvik, which caused havoc with communities and doctors’ appointments. Resources, lack of certain technologies are used elsewhere. Other technologies of this government must be required to advance the aviation tracking communications, weather tracking systems. These systems are additional for pilots in conditions such as fog and blizzards.

As I expressed previously, small, remote communities in Nunakput solely rely on airports for all of our means of transportation. A schedule of chartered flights cancelled, preventing people carrying out business, medical appointments, visiting family and other unique opportunities like the kids’ hockey tournament in Inuvik coming up this weekend, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, I will have questions for the Minister of Transportation at the appropriate time. Thank you.

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

## MEMBER’S STATEMENT ON CONDITION OF HIGHWAYS NO. 1 AND NO. 7

**MR. MENICOCHE:** Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. [Translation] I will be talking about things that are important issues to my constituents. One of the items that I would like to express is the Liard Highway, and since the spring, it has been hard to travel because of the condition of the highway. [Translation ends]

...from washboards to washout to bathtub-size potholes, highways No. 1 and No. 7 continue to challenge drivers in the Deh Cho region and the Government of the Northwest Territories. Poor road conditions in my region have a negative impact on residents, tourism and business, not to mention taxpayers who foot the bill for the repairs.

I am extremely disappointed that I see no investment in the upgrades to highways No. 1 and No. 7 in the 2012-13 capital plan. As MLA, I feel I have worked hard, yet my region has been kept out of the capital planning process. I feel government is forgetting about my constituents. Bad road conditions are a barrier to people who want to visit, do business and live in my region. Technology exists and is emerging that can help road conditions in the Deh Cho. Special chipseal formulas are being developed that are more responsive to our northern conditions. Our roads are valuable pieces of infrastructure. Highways No. 1 and No. 7 form a unique circular route from Alberta up to the Deh Cho and Fort Liard and back into British Columbia. This Deh Cho connection is important in my riding and even for the North as a whole, Mr. Speaker.

In 2010, the B.C. government invested $87 million in its northern highway system, including a paving project on Highway No. 77 that connects to the highway just south of Fort Liard. As I have said before, these roads are not just a tourist attraction, they are a transportation lifeline for the Deh Cho. Nahendeh constituents make a living driving it every day. The Government of the Northwest Territories is eager to build new infrastructure without maintaining what they already have. Mr. Speaker, the Department of Transportation must work to upgrade the highways No. 1 and No. 7 in my region in the capital plan for the next coming fiscal year. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

## MEMBER’S STATEMENT ON NWT OMBUDSMAN OFFICE

**MS. BISARO:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Today I want to revisit a topic I’ve brought to the House several times before. In May of 2008 and again last February I spoke of the need for the NWT to have an ombudsman’s office. The need for this service has not yet gone away, Mr. Speaker. We are one of only three jurisdictions in Canada which does not have an ombudsman. Our sister territory, Yukon, is not one of them. The Yukon does have an ombudsman office for Yukon residents.

There are many, many situations where NWT residents need an impartial arbiter, an ombudsman to assist them with a dispute or a disagreement so they can avoid having to go to court to settle it. Disputes such as landlord-tenant issues that are outside of the jurisdiction of the rental officer, decisions by a self-regulating body, decisions by housing authorities, income support issues where an appeal has been denied, administrative decisions by officials in hospitals and other medical facilities, decisions made by the Workers’ Safety and Compensation Commission. There’s many more.

In my last question and answer session with the Minister of Justice I was advised that a number of possibilities exist for someone who has a problem with a government decision to appeal it. I agree with them, there are some. People can talk to department staff, there are appeal boards in some cases and some people can ask their MLA for help. However, none of these possibilities provides an impartial forum and when all opportunities or all options are exhausted and the individual still feels wronged, the only action left to them is to take the matter to court and that’s an expensive and an intimidating solution for most people, Mr. Speaker.

On previous occasions when the establishment of an ombudsman office was raised in response to my questions, the Minister of Justice advised that his department had looked at it and determined that such an office was not necessary. However, he also said that the department would continue to look at options in conjunction with the Department of Executive. I figure it’s time, Mr. Speaker, to find out if either department has done any looking in the last 12 months, so I will have questions for the Minister of Executive at the appropriate time. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Ms. Bisaro. The honourable Member for Hay River South, Mrs. Groenewegen.

## MEMBER’S STATEMENT ON ALCOHOL IGNITION INTERLOCK DEVICE REGULATIONS

**MRS. GROENEWEGEN:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In recent years the Northwest Territories has seen improvement in the number of alcohol-related vehicle collisions on our roads and highways and yet in 2009 there were 35 collisions involving alcohol, resulting in 18 persons injured and one person dead.

Back in 2003 the Legislative Assembly passed amendments to the Motor Vehicles Act that introduced new measures to reduce impaired driving. The amendments provided the drivers convicted of impaired driving were prohibited from driving the length of time depending on the number of offenses. It also identified conditions that could be imposed on drivers who want to have their licences reinstated. One of these was a requirement to use an alcohol ignition interlock device. This is a mechanism like a breathalyser that is installed in a motor vehicle’s dashboard. Before the vehicle’s motor will start, the driver first must exhale into the device. Basically, if the breath alcohol concentration is greater than 0.02 percent, the device prevents the engine from being started. There are also safeguards to prevent cheating. To my knowledge, requiring the use of this device has not been used as yet.

I think there may be reasons to consider such an option. Let me be clear that I do not condone or approve in any way people drinking and driving under the influence of alcohol, but sometimes a person needs a driver’s licence for emergency or safety reasons or to make their living either on the job or their commute to work. If the person’s licence is renewed on condition that an alcohol ignition interlock device would be installed in the person’s vehicle, this could provide more assurance that the driver will be sober.

Mr. Speaker, I encourage the government to develop regulations as to what situations might warrant the use of an ignition interlock device and a program to implement its usage. But, Mr. Speaker, at this time a judge cannot make an ignition interlock device a condition of a person seeking limited driving permission because such regulations as a companion to our Motor Vehicles Act have never been developed.

Mr. Speaker, I will have questions today for the Minister of Transportation on this subject. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mrs. Groenewegen. The honourable Member for Tu Nedhe, Mr. Beaulieu.

## MEMBER’S STATEMENT ON WINTER ROAD TO LUTSELK’E

**MR. BEAULIEU:** Mahsi cho, Mr. Speaker. [Translation] Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I will be talking on behalf of my community of Lutselk’e in regards to a service. [Translation ends]

I speak of a winter road. A winter road to Lutselk’e will provide a service to their citizens that are enjoyed by 29 of the 33 communities in the Northwest Territories. That enjoyment is the ability for those communities to access their communities with their personal vehicles.

Where possible, I feel that this government should provide a road that can be used by community members to lower the cost of living by buying goods in larger centres and opening a door for tourists, even allowing the community to hold revenue-generating events such as fishing derbies. While the majority of the NWT wish to have better highways leading to their communities, communities like Lutselk’e dream of some day when they will no longer be isolated and can drive on winter roads to and from their communities.

As it stands today, the people of Lutselk’e are limited to even what kind of furniture they can buy due to transportation, and the amount of food they can transport to their communities due to freight costs or limited space when they can only use snowmobiles and boats.

Members of Lutselk’e have even indicated they would work with the Department of Transportation on a route and construction of the road. There exists several options for routing of a winter road to Lutselk’e. I have been provided with options such as coming off of the Ingraham Trail or building a road through the bush to the Great Slave Lake across from Lutselk’e all the way to building all the way on the Great Slave Lake around to Lutselk’e and a couple of options in between.

A winter road to Lutselk’e is much needed and would be much appreciated by the people of Lutselk’e and I will have questions for the Minister of Transportation at the appropriate time.

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

## MEMBER’S STATEMENT ON NORMAN WELLS BLOCK LAND TRANSFER LEASE

**MR. BROMLEY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My comments today are in regard to the recent Norman Wells block land transfer lease decision. This action is wrong every way you look at it. Negotiations leading up to the 144 square kilometre lease or sale were confidential, not just ignoring but excluding the interests of the Town of Norman Wells. The department allowed the corporation 10 months to get their application right and the municipality 72 hours to respond, without even providing the necessary documentation on which to base their response. Our municipal partners were treated with contempt. Even the terms and conditions of the lease are confidential. The Town has been told that they are protected under the Access to Information and Privacy Act; more contempt.

This lease was granted even though there was no development proposal justifying the need for this huge total parcel. At a minimum, this makes a joke of the progressive improvements to our own Commissioner’s Land Act. How do you require security deposits if you don’t even know what the land use is going to be? We’ve debased our own law.

Lacking a clear development proposal, we can only presume the corporation is going to sit on the land. This is called speculation, which is specifically discouraged under our own land pricing policies, so we have violated our own policies.

This all makes a pretty embarrassing checklist. The failure to accommodate our own law, the secretive process, the exclusion of municipal interests, the preferential treatment and receipt of a deficient application, the buffet-style selection of lease versus sale. This is one of the most questionable government actions I have come across. The final outcome, putting this municipality at the mercy of the corporation with rights to all lands surrounding it, strangles and robs this community of its future.

The Minister recognizes the possibility of errors and is going to review how future major sales and lease agreements are handled. I’m not convinced he realizes the serious and flagrant failure to act in the best interests of our communities for this case. For the sake of our relations with all municipal government partners, I hope his review is done quickly and transparently and includes a look at the ethics of the actions taken. I’m calling on the Minister to do this in full consultation with committee and with the NWT Association of Communities. I’ll be asking questions.

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

## MEMBER’S STATEMENT ON NORTHERN NURSE DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMS

**MR. ABERNETHY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Today I’d like to follow up on some conversations I’ve had earlier in this House with the Minister of Health and Social Services on the Community Health Nurse Development Program, the NP Program and the Introduction to Advanced Practice. The last two are delivered by Aurora College.

We all know that health and social services in the Northwest Territories is facing some significant challenge. As we move forward, our programs and services here in the Northwest Territories evolved as outlined in the Framework for Change to be more responsive and cost effective and better suited to the residents of the Northwest Territories. Some hard decisions are going to need to be made and we’re going to have to dig in and review our programs to make sure that they are meeting those needs. These training programs -- Community Health Nurse Development Program, Nurse Practitioner Program and Introduction to Advanced Practice -- are no different. We do need to review them. The Minister has indicated that the department is in fact reviewing them.

In reviewing them I think it’s critical that we’re aware of the facts. I’d like to talk about some of the facts here today and I’d like to actually start off first by saying when we were having our previous conversations, I was talking about one position in the Community Health Nurse Development Program. The Minister has kindly reminded me that there were four in 2010-2011, not one as I had indicated, but there was one enrolled when I was having that conversation. I apologize for that confusion.

Since the program was implemented in 2007, 21 individuals were enrolled. Of those, 17 have graduated and are currently working in the Northwest Territories; 14 of them as community health nurses and three in other capacities.

We have 65 community health nurse positions in the Northwest Territories. Of these, 15 are filled and 50 are vacant. Given that 14 of them are from the Community Health Nurse Program, that means 28 percent of all community health nurses in the Northwest Territories accessed employment and were trained via the Community Health Nurse Development Program. This is something we can’t forget when we review the program. Without question, this program is a success.

The Nurse Practitioner Program is delivered by Aurora College and it’s my understanding that the funding for that will end technically in June 2012 when the last of the current students graduate. This program is important and I will be asking the Minister some questions on that when we get to question period. I think it’s important that that program be assessed based on the value it adds and our potential value with putting nurse practitioners in the communities. We can’t forget the value that nurse practitioners will have.

I will have some questions on community health nurses, IAP and NP during question period.

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

## MEMBER’S STATEMENT ON VIOLENT CRIME RATE IN THE NWT

**MR. RAMSAY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Today I’d like to continue to speak about violence and crime in our Territory. I have the utmost respect for the words spoken by our Chief Justice of the Supreme Court, the Honourable John Vertes, who appeared on Northbeat last evening. I appreciated what he had to say and I agree with him that we have to address the issues that face us. He stated that in the last five years violent crime has gone up by 28 percent in the Supreme Court of the Northwest Territories. Our violent crime rate continues to rise and we have the highest incarceration rate in this country.

Yesterday I talked about recidivism, data collection, and the need to better measure the success of programs and services we have for those incarcerated for violent crimes. Work must continue in this area.

My opinion is we should be putting violent, dangerous, repeat offenders away before they kill or maim someone else. I’d like to see our prosecutors seeking dangerous offender applications on those individuals that continue to prey on our people and use violence as a means to get what they want. My point is: how many violent crimes does it take, how many people have to get hurt or even killed before dangerous offender status is sought?

Our problems run deep. I have to agree that we have to address the root causes of violence and violent crime in our communities, like homelessness, unemployment, alcohol and drug addiction, gambling, poverty and family breakdown.

Between Health and Social Services, Education, and Justice this government spends over $700 million a year. We have to start asking ourselves what kind of difference are we really making. Is all the money being spent on the right programs and services for our people? Do the programs and services that we have currently work and for their intended purposes?

We cannot afford to keep trying to spend our way out of all the problems that face this Territory or limp along hoping all of our problems are just going to go away. We have to continue to chip away at the problems. They’re not going to disappear overnight, but, again, we must continue to tackle the issues facing our communities every day.

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

## MEMBER’S STATEMENT ON DEVOLUTION AGREEMENT-IN-PRINCIPLE

**MR. KRUTKO:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Alienating the members of Treaty 8 and Treaty 11 from the signing of the devolution agreement undermines the fundamental basis of treaty rights in the Northwest Territories with treaty Indians.

The majority of the lands in the Northwest Territories are covered by two treaties: Treaty 8 and Treaty 11. In 1898 Treaty 8 was signed in the southern part of the Northwest Territories. In 1921 Treaty 11 was signed in the northern part of the Northwest Territories, which goes all the way to the Arctic Ocean.

In 1973 the Dene Nation led a court challenge, better known as the Paulette Case, which clearly defined that the Dene did not extinguish their rights under Treaty 8 and Treaty 11 to lands and resources. It clearly defined that they do have fundamental rights to lands and resources throughout Treaty 8 and throughout Treaty 11. There was also the Calder case in B.C. with regard to the Nisga’a which clearly defined that there has to be a comprehensive claims process to allow for those rights to be negotiated and defined.

Under the Dene/Metis claim, which took place during the ‘70s and ‘80s which clearly illustrated and identified the rights to lands resources, the management of land, water and resources, and also the fundamental rights in regard hunting, fishing and gathering. The Government of the Northwest Territories are not honouring their obligations under the modern day treaties or Treaty 11 and Treaty 8 with regard to the fundamental rights of indigenous people that are protected under Section 35 of the Canadian Constitution and also recognized under the UN Declaration for Indigenous Peoples.

That is the problem I see with devolution. You do not have the Dene people signed onto that agreement which affects treaty lands, Treaty 8, Treaty 11. The groups that have signed on do not have treaties. For me, that is the issue. The fundamental treaty rights of these indigenous people who are indigenous to the Mackenzie Valley which encompasses the largest portion of the Northwest Territories and who is going to be affected by this devolution agreement is being undermined by the government and is not fulfilling its obligations and ensuring that they will be full participants and that this shall be included in all negotiations that affect them.

I will have questions for the Minister of Finance later.

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

## MEMBER’S STATEMENT ON WASTE REDUCTION AND RECOVERY PROGRAM FEES FOR PAPER BAGS

**MR. HAWKINS:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Today I’d like to talk about the GNWT’s Waste Reduction and Recovery Program expansion. This program has been part of Managing This Land Strategic Initiative to meet the 16th Assembly’s goals on sustainable environment. This is a program I support.

One month ago the government implemented the second phase of its Single-Use Retail Bag Program. This program applies not only to grocery stores but also to all retail stores in the Northwest Territories. Therefore, outside of a few prescribed examples, every bag will now be charged a 25 cent environmental fee.

The purpose of this program is very clear: it’s designed to discourage the use of needless bags. I support that principle. It makes a lot of sense. Clearly it will divert plastic bags from our landfill sites and reduce litter and waste on our land. Clearly it’s a good principle that I think we all stand behind. With this good principle, we should hope that this will reduce landfill costs and create revenue which will help bolster the GNWT’s Environmental Fund. It’s a fund I support that has good initiatives.

I’m hopeful that this summer, as well, we’ll certainly see a reduction of plastic bags flying around our community and certainly stuck in the trees and bushes. A side benefit that’s not accounted for, but will certainly be seen.

While these are well and good intentions for this program, I’m being asked by many why this levy applies to paper bags. This is a surprise to many of my constituents out there who were concerned that the 25 cent levy is applied to paper bags. Paper bags are both recyclable and biodegradable. Anyone who has a woodstove out there will certainly tell you they’re great for starting fires. What is the point of having a levy on such a product that is recyclable and biodegradable? The big question now becomes, is it just simply a bag tax or is it an environmental fee.

These products are going just a little too far for what people are wondering why the government penalizes them on what is considered a good bag.

Mr. Speaker, I will have questions for the Minister of Environment about the thoughts as to why they approached this matter in this way. Paper bags are environmentally friendly, they are biodegradable, and they’re certainly achieving good land stewardship, which I wholeheartedly believe in. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Hawkins. Item 4, returns to oral questions. Item 5, recognition of visitors in the gallery. The honourable Member for Yellowknife Centre, Mr. Hawkins.

# Recognition of Visitors in the Gallery

**MR. HAWKINS:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I have a number of people that I’d like to recognize today. The first person I’d like to recognize is Chris Bassi. He’s in the front here. He’s a retired bridge engineer and, of course, he retired to Yellowknife where his daughter Sheila Bassi-Kellett works, as we all know. As well in the gallery, I’d like to recognize a constituent as well as a neighbour, Didier Bourgois, and he has, I believe, his cousin here from Paris, and her name is Dr. Elizabeth Dey. May I welcome her. The last person I’d like to make note, Mr. Speaker, while I have the floor, is I’d also like to acknowledge in the gallery our retiring or outgoing Sheila Fraser, who is our Auditor General. She is a giant among her peers and my wife happens to be her biggest fan. She will be dearly missed. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** The honourable Member for Great Slave, Mr. Abernethy.

**MR. ABERNETHY:**  Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I’d like to recognize two constituents of the Great Slave riding: Mr. Mark Bogan and Mrs. Theresa Crane. Welcome to the gallery.

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

**MR. JACOBSON:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I’d like to welcome Mr. Tony Whitford again, a past Member. I’d like to welcome Tony. It’s always good to see you. And Ms. Sheila Fraser and her staff Andrew Lennox. Good to see you, Andrew. The most important person in the building for me today is my wife, Jenny. She’s up...(inaudible)...and back home. She just flew down from a five-day blizzard so it’s good to have her in the House today watching us work. Thank you.

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

**MR. RAMSAY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I’d like to recognize one of my favourite constituents, Ms. Joy Watt, who’s in the audience this afternoon. As well, I’d like to recognize the former Commissioner, former Member for Kam Lake as well, Mr. Tony Whitford. As well, of course, the Auditor General, Ms. Sheila Fraser, and her staff as well. I’d like to welcome them and everyone that’s in the gallery today. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Ramsay. If we’ve missed anyone in the gallery today, welcome to the Chamber. We 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 Frame Lake, Ms. Bisaro.

# Oral Questions

## QUESTION 544-16(5): TERRITORIAL OMBUDSMAN OFFICE

**MS. BISARO:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My questions today are addressed to the Minister for Executive, and it’s quite convenient because he also happens to be the Premier and my questions go across several departments.

I mentioned in my Member’s statement that I think that there still is a need for an ombudsman office. I also mentioned that I have heard from another Minister that apparently they are working in conjunction with the Executive to consider options for an ombudsman office. I’d like to know from the Minister for Executive what action has his department taken in the last year with regard to the establishment of an ombudsman office. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Ms. Bisaro. The honourable Premier, Mr. Roland.

**HON. FLOYD ROLAND:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The Department of Executive has worked with the Minister of Justice and his department in this area and looked at jurisdictions across this country as to where an office may be situated, an office of the ombudsman. The research shows that for a position of that nature needing to be arm’s length from government and not tied to a particular ministry, most jurisdictions have that position tied to their Assembly. Thank you.

**MS. BISARO:** Thanks to the Premier for those remarks. I didn’t really get any idea of whether or not there’s been any action over there, but I’d like to ask the Minister if he can explain to me and to this House just what priority an ombudsman office has in this government’s total priorities. Is there any hope that it might soon be on the radar? Thank you.

**HON. FLOYD ROLAND:** As I was trying to say, in the research that was done, a position of that nature is not put in place by the government in the sense of the Cabinet. It is put in, in this case it would be through the Assembly and the Board of Management, is my understanding. Thank you.

**MS. BISARO:** Thank you to the Premier. I now understand where he was going. Not in my backyard, I guess. I’d like to know from the Minister whether or not the issue of an ombudsman office is far enough to the forefront of this government that it might be included in transition documents to take us from the 16th Assembly to the 17th. Thank you.

**HON. FLOYD ROLAND:** The government, at this time with the existing arrangement, we have one seat on the Board of Management and, I don’t know; we’d have to sit down and talk with members of the board to see if, in fact, it is on their agenda. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Roland. Your final supplementary, Ms. Bisaro.

**MS. BISARO:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I’m not too sure what I can ask at this point. I have no question, Mr. Speaker.

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

## QUESTION 545-16(5): DEVOLUTION AGREEMENT-IN-PRINCIPLE

**MR. KRUTKO:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is directed to the Deputy Premier, Mr. Miltenberger, in regard to my comments in regard to the alienating of the treaty and the people in the Northwest Territories which make up the Treaty 8 and Treaty 11 and includes the majority of the Mackenzie Valley in the Northwest Territories. In light of that, we do have some obligations.

I’d like to ask the Deputy Premier exactly what are we doing to mend the fences to accommodate the treaty people in the Northwest Territories who basically have fundamental rights under Treaty 8, Treaty 11 and the modern day treaties and also in Section 35 of the Canadian Constitution.

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

**HON. FLOYD ROLAND:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As this question is directed, if I was not able to do the job then we would obviously go to the Deputy Premier in this case. As Premier I take direction from the Cabinet and Members of the Assembly in much of the work we do. In this area, the Member has raised a number of concerns and issues around the devolution agreement. As the devolution agreement is spelled out clearly, we look at the constitutional protection and rights of Aboriginal peoples throughout the Northwest Territories and that’s been incorporated. As for reaching out and looking towards working with the groups towards signing and joining us as we go down this path of negotiations, that door is open and we’re, as I have pointed out in the review of Executive budget yesterday, that we would have to this Assembly in a supplementary appropriation to ask for additional resources and we’re prepared to do that once we have a framework and a budget put out. Thank you.

**MR. KRUTKO:** Mr. Speaker, as I illustrated in my Member’s statement, there have been fundamental court cases in the Northwest Territories with regard to the Paulette case, the Calder case in B.C., and also other court cases in Canada in regard to the Delgamuukw decision, which clearly illustrate that the governments, regardless if it’s the Government of the Northwest Territories or the Government of Canada, have a fiduciary obligation to protect the rights of indigenous people in the Northwest Territories and in Canada under those particular court cases, but more importantly, under Section 35 of the Canadian Constitution. So we do have a basic fiduciary obligation to protect those rights. By this transfer taking place without those indigenous people signing on and not endorsing this, are we fundamentally breaching that accommodation to ensure that we protect the rights of indigenous people especially the treaty Indians in the Northwest Territories?

**HON. FLOYD ROLAND:** Mr. Speaker, the signing of the devolution agreement, the work that is going to start in preparation for negotiation is part of a long process that has included Aboriginal groups from the very inception of the framework through to a signing of the past government and a number of the groups that went into the federal government to the process we’ve engaged in as the 16th Legislative Assembly. Clearly, again, the AIP has language throughout the agreement that talks about protecting the rights of Aboriginal peoples across the Northwest Territories under Section 35, under the land claims agreements and many of those areas, so we have, in fact, written into this agreement and we practice it as the Government of the Northwest Territories. For example, in any legislation that comes before this Assembly, if it has language that talks about non-infringing an Aboriginal people’s rights. Thank you.

**MR. KRUTKO:** Mr. Speaker, as we all know, the indigenous people of the Northwest Territories, especially the ones with treaty rights, basically have a fundamental right spelled out in Treaty 8, modern day treaties and also under Section 35 of the Canadian Constitution. Mr. Speaker, it is clearly illustrated that we have a duty to consult and include and involve them in these processes. From what is clearly stipulated, they haven’t been involved in this process. If anything, they have been alienated because of their views and the government that does not like to accommodate those views and basically remove them from the table. I would like to know what are we doing as a government to accommodate treaty Indians in the Northwest Territories, ensuring that their fundamental rights are not being breached by this agreement.

**HON. FLOYD ROLAND:** Mr. Speaker, I disagree with what the Member stated about not honouring those agreements. In fact, clearly, during the life of this Assembly, we can show many examples of where we have gone above and beyond working with Aboriginal organizations and governments across the Northwest Territories, right from working together on the Water Strategy, the Wildlife Act, where the groups have joined us in writing the act, to the agreement-in-principle and devolution process. In fact, the door remains open for them to join the process and, in fact, help design some of the negotiation mandates that would be there when it is a joint mandate that we would approach the federal government on, for example. We have gone a long ways. In fact, right from when the letters were initiated by the chief negotiators to Minister Duncan’s office and to my office, as well as letters gone directly to each regional leader about the agreement-in-principle and the work done.

We have worked with the groups starting in November, after the chance to do their internal review. We sat with them early in November, in December, in January. In fact, January 23rd when we held the meeting and had more work done towards the protocol and even provided that I would be available to pull myself out of meetings if they wanted to change some of that language to go forward. What happened there? The groups, instead of working on additional language and requesting that I come out of those meetings, worked on a protest. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**MR. KRUTKO:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I clearly would like to stipulate that we do have an obligation to include First Nations people, and more importantly, that they do have fundamental rights to lands and resources in the Northwest Territories, not only the Government of Canada and the Government of the Northwest Territories. Again, it is those rights that are being questioned here. I think it is not a question of process, it is a question of fundamental rights. What is the Premier doing to try to accommodate those First Nations groups, especially ones with treaties who have not signed, and to allow them to continue on either especially in their opinions, more importantly having a process that they can be fully integrated into the negotiations of the process than simply sitting on the sidelines? Thank you.

**HON. FLOYD ROLAND:** Mr. Speaker, everything the Member said and his recent comments about the rights of Aboriginal people in the North, we agree. That is why the agreement-in-principle has the language it does about protecting Aboriginal rights. The section where the Constitution, Section 35, the land claims, we have that language throughout the agreement-in-principle. They are on the sidelines because they choose to. We have, in fact, invited them to be a part of this process going forward.

Following the signing, I have sent the letter to all the regions asking them to join with us again in this process as we go forward. In fact, again, I committed to Members of this Assembly, through the Executive budget review, that we would be prepared to put a budget in place to engage with communities and leaders on the AIP process towards the signing and joining them. Thank you.

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

## QUESTION 546-16(5): BEAUFORT-DELTA FLIGHT DISRUPTIONS

**MR. JACOBSON:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In my Member’s statement today it was regarding the trouble that we have been having in Inuvik at the airport with the aircraft not being able to land due to high winds and the friction. Mr. Speaker, will the government allocate resources to enhance the airports to develop operating systems that will lead the world in Arctic aviation in regards to airport runways? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Jacobson. The honourable Minister of Transportation, Mr. Michael McLeod.

**HON. MICHAEL MCLEOD:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I personally take full responsibility of all the issues that come forward on our projects on any of our operations. However, I certainly can’t control the weather that has been posing a lot of challenges to us. Mr. Speaker, this weekend we had a number of flights cancelled, as the Member indicated. We had a total of six flights that were scheduled to go into the community of Inuvik. Only one aircraft was able to land. It was not due to runway conditions. It was due to the high winds that we experienced over the weekend, especially in the Beaufort-Delta.

**MR. JACOBSON:** Mr. Speaker, is the Minister able to get us some starting staff and paying maybe a little bit of overtime to start getting the sweepers out at seven o’clock in the morning instead of eight, to make sure that runway is open so the planes could land? It wasn’t only the high winds and the cross-winds. The friction on the aircraft, the weight and balance issues, Mr. Speaker. Is it possible to get the Minister to let the department in Inuvik at the airport start at an earlier time? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**HON. MICHAEL MCLEOD:** Mr. Speaker, I am not sure where the Member is getting the indication that we are not allowing our people to work overtime. We provide all the resources to ensure that the aircraft that can land, that we have the right landing conditions. This year and over the last three years, we have been challenged with conditions that reduce the friction. That concerns the carriers. We have tried all types of methods to improve that. We have utilized our resources a lot more than we did historically, including the use of sand. We have tripled the amount of sand that we use on this airport. We certainly need to revisit the challenges that are being brought forward by climate change, where we have conditions of unusually warm weather followed by a decrease and a drop in temperature that freezes the moisture that is on the runways. That may be a requirement for us to look at using rather than sand and dry chemicals. We may have to look at de-icing through liquid form. We are trying to address the issue. There are challenges in doing so. Thank you.

**MR. JACOBSON:** Mr. Speaker, why is it we are getting so much frost on the runway? I heard reports. It is not only the condensation. Are there any chemicals that were put on there by the Canadian military regarding the CF-18s? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**HON. MICHAEL MCLEOD:** Mr. Speaker, all the information points to the issues being brought forward by climate change. We had zero degrees temperature for several days followed by extreme cold in that area. We have this year applied 230 tonnes of sand where historically we have provided 50. You can tell that there are some challenges in dealing with ice conditions. We need to look at what are the jurisdictions doing and including some testing of our own to try to address the issue as we feel that this is going to be an ongoing issue occurring every year. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. McLeod. Final supplementary, Mr. Jacobson.

**MR. JACOBSON:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. You know that having that airport open 24 hours a day is a main key to the Beaufort-Delta in regards to the communities of Inuvik and all the surrounding communities because of the air medevacs and the jet service and that not having any flights per day causes havoc. We had over 200 people stranded in Inuvik. Mr. Speaker, can the Minister commit to me today to talking to the department regional superintendent in Inuvik to see what we can do if they have to start early, and is he willing to do that in regards to getting a commitment from him? Thank you.

**HON. MICHAEL MCLEOD:** Mr. Speaker, we have to make sure that we identify the difference between what happened over the weekend with the high winds and what’s been happening on the days that we have warm temperatures at the Inuvik Airport.

This weekend, as the Member is indicating, there were a lot of cancellation of flights. We have no control over that. The runway was dry, the runway was extremely good for landing conditions, it was as a result of the high winds. The airport was open and there was no concern over the staff hours at that point.

If there is an issue that the Member is wanting us to address over and above what we’re doing, we’d be glad to sit down and talk about the circumstances. We provide overtime, we provide materials, we have provided a lot of extra this year and we’ll continue to do so. We’ve committed to meet with the municipality, the town council in Inuvik and we will continue to have our staff available for discussion on this issue. Thank you.

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

## QUESTION 547-16(5): NORMAN WELLS BLOCK LAND TRANSFER LEASE

**MR. BROMLEY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I’d like to follow up with my Member’s statement with questions to the Minister of Municipal and Community Affairs. First I’d like to ask the Minister to explain his actions on the granting of a 147 square kilometre lease in the Norman Wells block transfer area. Since the Minister thoroughly informed himself of his powers and obligations before signing this lease, what particular legislative, regulatory and policy references guided the Minister in the lease of this land, which the sole unclaimed lands in the block land transfer are surrounding the community of Norman Wells, to a private interest? Thank you.

**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 Norman Wells Land Corporation made application for this land and we had a look at the application. All the proper processes were followed and so the land was hereby leased to the Norman Wells Land Corporation.

So I can assure the Member, regardless of what he says and the accusations he makes about a deficient application having not seen it, then I can assure the Member that all proper processes were followed. Thank you.

**MR. BROMLEY:** Thank you. I have seen a lot of documentation here provided by the community. The departmental correspondence indicates that beyond standard leasing conditions, the terms and conditions of the lease are confidential under the ATIPP legislation. Without being able to see the lease, this probably means that the conditions fall under the category for proprietary business information, but a development proposal is hardly confidential business information. It’s essential public knowledge for review of a proposed land use. If there is no development proposal and the land is just being held for future development, this is speculation. So which is it, Mr. Speaker, a secret business scheme or a land grab for speculation? Thank you.

**HON. ROBERT MCLEOD:** Thank you. The Norman Wells Land Corporation has indicated that they want to use the land for future economic base for their membership and they do have some ideas as to what they want to use the land for. Obviously if they go to develop it in the future, there are a few issues that need to be taken care of and the appropriate bodies have to be applied to, but they have made it quite clear that this land is supposed to be and they have a future economic base for their constituents. They also have indicated preliminarily what they want to use the land for. Again, I will say for the fifth time, they’ve met all the proper processes in the disposal of Commissioner’s land. Thereby the land was leased to the Norman Wells Land Corporation. Thank you.

**MR. BROMLEY:** Thank you. In my humble opinion, it certainly did not meet all those requirements and I will be asking this government to include in the review the specifics of this case. So I’m wondering if the Minister can confirm that his review of the leasing policies of this government will include a specific review of the processes in this case and the ethics that were followed in doing this. Thank you.

**HON. ROBERT MCLEOD:** The Member is throwing accusations out there and talking about ethics and I take offense to that. All the proper processes were followed, it came down to -- and I’ve heard from folks in Norman Wells -- the fact they just don’t like it and in the words of one member of the Norman Wells Community Council, we got beat to the punch. That’s the basis for all of this. If there needs to be a transparent review of how this land was disposed of, we welcome that, because all proper processes were followed. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you. Mr. McLeod. Your final supplementary, Mr. Bromley.

**MR. BROMLEY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Again, I disagree with the Minister. The community put in their interest for this land in 2002. So the Minister knows full well that they have expressed a long-term interest in this.

Mr. Speaker, the Minister has given away all of the land surrounding this community. There are no options for this community. Do we not have a fiduciary role to our municipalities and how much trust can we expect from our municipalities in the future as a result of this action? Thank you.

**HON. ROBERT MCLEOD:** Thank you. The Member disagrees with the Minister because he doesn’t like it either, as he disagrees with a lot of things that go on in this Legislative Assembly. Mr. Speaker, the land in question is not going to impede the Norman Wells community from expanding. There’s still plenty of Commissioner’s land within the municipal boundaries. The Norman Wells Land Corporation saw an opportunity to acquire some land for the future of their people and what they want to do with them, so they made application. The application was reviewed. Hereby they now have the land.

Again I say, Mr. Speaker, that all the proper processes in this particular case were followed and it just came down to the fact that they didn’t like it. Thank you.

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

## QUESTION 548-16(5): WASTE REDUCTION AND RECOVERY PROGRAM FEES FOR PAPER BAGS

**MR. HAWKINS:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In my Member’s statement today I talked about the concerns, but certainly with support, for the single bag program that really I think demonstrates good environmental stewardship and I think makes a lot of sense when it comes to plastic bags. I’ve heard a lot of people, if not every person I’ve spoken to on this particular issue, that they do support the initiative that is targeting plastic bags.

Mr. Speaker, where the concern arises from people is many people have been shocked, or certainly taken by surprise in one manner or another, that paper bags are included. I’m wondering if the Minister of Environment and Natural Resources can explain the rationale as to why paper bags were included in this particular levy when most people feel that they are recyclable and biodegradable and they don’t even meet what would be considered good stewardship of our environment. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Hawkins. The honourable Minister responsible for Environment and Natural Resources, Mr. Miltenberger.

**HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. When we looked at the lifecycle of the plastic bag, the paper bag and even the ones that are called biodegradable bags and compared it to the lifecycle of reusable bags, clearly all three were found wanting in comparison to the reusable, and that while paper may biodegrade in a landfill somewhat faster than other products, it takes more energy to produce and ship, it weighs more and in effect causes just as much waste or more than plastic because it’s bulkier. In fact, we have an initiative currently underway in its second phase where we are canvassing the North to see what interests there are and what options and innovations are there to deal with some of the massive amounts of paper products that we now currently put into our landfills. This is one way to reduce some of that burden on our landfills. Thank you.

**MR. HAWKINS:** Thank you. I wouldn’t disagree with the Minister on his comments about is it waste and is it needless waste, and I’m paraphrasing, in my own way, that more bags are probably bad. I think that that’s a common understanding out there, but the problem is, I don’t think people understood when they were supporting the bag levy process and certainly the reduction initiative, that paper bags were included in this particular initiative.

Mr. Speaker, in going forward on this particular case, is the Minister’s department going to do further work on this initiative? Would he be willing to inquire with the everyday citizen, and I’m trying to step aside from these special interest groups, would he inquire with the everyday citizen as to what type of cost this has on the lives of Northerners, what type of impact on the cost of living has it affected Northerners? Thank you.

**HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER:** Thank you. I would suggest it’s had a marginal and probably positive impact on the overall broad cost of living in the Northwest Territories. This is entirely a voluntary fee. People do not have to use plastic bags or buy bags at the store. As well, we also know that we are extending the life of our landfills, which has a significant cost for all of us who are dealing with Municipal and Community Affairs. You look at the cost of maintaining landfills and putting new ones in place, it is significantly less burden on the environment, as the Member himself pointed out in his comments, where you see bag products scattered across the landscape no matter which community or how far north, south, east or west you go.

**MR. HAWKINS:** Undoubtedly the Minister and I are certainly on the same page on this particular issue. I believe in the reduction initiative. That shouldn’t be confused over the concern that’s been raised to me, the fact that paper bags have been included. That’s really the particular issue, which is what type of consultation specifically pointed to paper bags would be part of the reduction initiative that the 25 cent levy would be applied to them outside of the average special interest group which was fully in support of banning practically everything.

**HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER:** The work we’ve done in this area has been I think very successful. There’s been significant consultation and the recognition that there are, in this particular issue, three types of bags that are clogging up the landfills and scattered across the countryside. Paper, while in some people’s mind it may be something that’s seen as what’s the problem, is very energy intensive, it’s bulky, it takes up a lot of waste that when you combine it with all the other paper product waste -- for example, the tons and tons of paper generated by business and government or the wastepaper products with cardboard in them -- it’s an enormous impact and negative impact on our environment. This adds together to help us address that issue.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Miltenberger. Final supplementary, Mr. Hawkins.

**MR. HAWKINS:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I’m in full support of reduction where we can and certainly where it makes sense. The question I really have now for the Minister is: is part of this program, what type of analysis and evaluation was ever taken into consideration about the spurred off, unforeseen industry of making all these recyclable bags that people now have tons of and in the sense that instead of using paper bags as a clear, biodegradable, environmentally sound, reasonable option, a lot of people are now buying all these multiple bags or getting stuck with them when they go to conferences and meetings? It’s created an industry in itself. Did the department do any type of evaluation in that regard?

**HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER:** I will commend the Member for taking full advantage of the niche opportunity that appeared as I am as well a personal recipient of some of the bags that he’s put out as Member for Yellowknife Centre. I think he’s to be commended for that. We know just on the plastic bags alone, that we’ve eliminated millions and millions and millions of bags from the environment and replaced them with reusable bags that have a much greater life expectancy and are reusable. I think it’s a very good step and I know the Member fully supports that.

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

## QUESTION 549-16(5): NORTHERN NURSE DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMS

**MR. ABERNETHY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My questions are for the Minister of Health and Social Services and follow up on my Member’s statement. I know we have a lot of hard decisions coming at us with respect to health and social services as the system evolves and becomes more affordable. Clearly, without question, our training programs need to be considered and reviewed as well. I just want to make sure that we’re reviewing them with full knowledge.

As I’ve indicated earlier, the CHN development program, the stats speak for themselves. Things like the NP are a little bit more questionable and I think if we’re going to be reviewing things like the NP program, or, rather, the department’s going to be reviewing the NP program, we need to make sure that we’re doing it fairly. The intent of the program and what the college is doing is northern training for northern nurses for northern jobs is why we’re running the Nurse Practitioner Program. The college is doing that, there’s no question in my mind. Health and social services on the other side has to employ these nurse practitioners. I’m not sure that is necessarily happening.

My question for the Minister is: what is the Department of Health and Social Services doing, what work are they doing with the nurse practitioner students currently at Aurora College to help them transition into northern employment with us as nurse practitioners? What is the department doing? Have they met with the students? Are they doing grad placement with them? How are they going to ensure that those northern nurses practise nurse practitioner in the Northwest Territories?

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

**HON. SANDY LEE:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I’d like to thank the Member for the information he provided in his Member’s statement, because it is information that we are aware of. We had our briefing session on that. We are aware of the successes and challenges in the human resource programs that we have for the health care professionals. As the Member stated, I’d like to confirm that we are reviewing the program. We have to look at it fairly and comprehensively because we do have limited dollars, but at the same time we need to meet our priorities. So we will continue with that review.

With respect to the Nurse Practitioner Program, obviously I’m very interested in making sure that the program we fund to train these people will translate into employable positions within our system. We will evaluate that and monitor that and take actions accordingly.

**MR. ABERNETHY:** Thanks to the Minister for that. My question was a little bit more focused on the current class. Right now if we’re going to evaluate the Nurse Practitioner Program and the end result is that the northern nurses don’t want to work in the Northwest Territories, I question the value of the program at all. If it turns out that the northern nurses do want to practise as nurse practitioners in the Northwest Territories but we’re not offering them employment, that doesn’t mean the program is a failure, it means we haven’t done our job of helping them transition in.

I talked to one of the nurse practitioners this weekend and she indicated to me that nobody from the department has talked to them at all. Nobody’s gone to the school to talk to the nurse practitioners about future employment. If we’re going to fairly assess this program and evaluate its future, I think we need to make every effort to make sure that we’re meeting with those people and helping them transition into employment to meet the need and intent of the program as it was originally designed.

Going back to my original question: is the department planning to go to the college and meet with these students and talk about future employment for nurse practitioners outside of Yellowknife? Hay River, Fort Smith, Inuvik, smaller communities? Even Yellowknife. Is that going to happen?

**HON. SANDY LEE:** Placing all of those nurse practitioner grads into our system would require partnership between the department and the government as an employer and the graduating students. I could tell you that we have a history of really good work in employing those nurse practitioners coming out of Aurora College. We have enough nurse practitioner positions within the whole Territory to employ every one of them if they wanted a job. It is difficult to always match nurse practitioners and other health care professionals who graduate from our education system into the exact positions and communities that they would like to have.

Earlier in the House I committed to meeting with the nurse graduates of Aurora College. I’ve e-mailed them and they said they’ll get back to me. They were very excited to hear about that. I would commit to doing the same thing with the nurse practitioners.

**MR. ABERNETHY:** I fully understand the challenges of trying to place nurses and nurse practitioners in the system and I’m very pleased that the Minister is committing to meet with or have her staff meet with the nurse practitioner students. I know they’d like that as well.

Secondary, sort of, to this is the IAP Program, it’s delivered by the same instructors who deliver the Nurse Practitioner Program and it’s all interrelated with the Community Health Nurse Development Program. For instance, IAP is an integral part to the CHN Development Program. My question to the Minister is: after the assessment, if the program is going to be eliminated, Nurse Practitioner, will there be additional consideration given the IAP to make sure that we continue to deliver it in some capacity? We need to think long term on this one. This is long-term planning. That program is critical. All nurses that work in health centres need it or should have it. The CHN Development Program is dependent on it. I’d like to know that it’s going to be given some consideration separate and above and apart from the Nurse Practitioner Program as well.

**HON. SANDY LEE:** The short answer is yes, we would review each program separately and give them all due consideration. Just for the record, I think we should make it clear that a decision has not been made to discontinue the Nurse Practitioner Program. We did let them know that current funding commitment is until 2012 but, as the Member knows, because we had an in-depth briefing, we are reviewing the entire, well, we’re reviewing the Human Resource Training Program that we have with Department of Health and Social Services, not only because we’re always under financial constraints, but also because we want to make sure that the people we train are in line with the demands of the jobs that our system needs.

As I stated in our briefing session, we do need nurses and there are practitioners, but we’re also in need of other health care professionals such as home care workers, dental therapists. We need more people to be trained in counselling. We need personal attendants to get ready for the two long-term care facilities that we’re building in Behchoko and Norman Wells. As the Minister and as a department and as the government, we want to review who we are training so that they’re in line with the needs of jobs that are coming forward for the next number of years.

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

**MR. ABERNETHY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I agree with everything that the Member is saying. We have to look at the system as a whole. I think that’s where I started my whole statement from. What I’m suggesting now is that it’s important when you’re looking at the NP and IAP as one program that you don’t think of them just as one program. They are two different programs and they need to be considered that way. Ultimately I support the Nurse Practitioner Program and don’t want to see it go anywhere. My question to the Minister was: will she look at the IAP as part of the whole, but also as an independent, important aspect of a separate program, the Community Health Nurse Program?

**HON. SANDY LEE:** Yes, I said yes, and I’ll say it again. I understand the challenge that the Member is pointing out is the fact that right now we block fund the program to Aurora College. Yes, I will commit to reviewing that separately on the merit of each program.

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

## QUESTION 550-16(5): WINTER ROAD TO LUTSELK’E

**MR. BEAULIEU:** Mahsi cho, Mr. Speaker. In my Member’s statement I talked about the need for a winter road to Lutselk’e. I have questions for the Minister of Transportation on that. Will the Minister direct his staff to start working on the possibility of a winter road with the community within the next few weeks?

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Beaulieu. The honourable Minister responsible for Transportation, Mr. Michael McLeod.

**HON. MICHAEL MCLEOD:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Constructing a winter road into Lutselk’e is not something that we have on our capital plan at this point. We’d have to have further discussion as to routes that the Member or the community is considering and the rationale behind it.

**MR. BEAULIEU:** Will the Minister work with his department and the community to complete a feasibility study of a winter road to Lutselk’e?

**HON. MICHAEL MCLEOD:** As the Member knows, there are challenges in looking at construction of an ice road over the lake to Lutselk’e. There are serious issues when it comes to ice conditions and pressure ridges and things of that nature. There’s also the safety of travellers on a lake the size of the Great Slave Lake. We are also monitoring the possibility of future development such as Avalon, which is in a stage where it’s still being considered as to what their plans will be in the long term. We can certainly start looking at routes that might be preferred, that would work, and start costing them out, but it would be very preliminary at this point.

**MR. BEAULIEU:** Will the Minister work with the community, then, to determine those routes looking at all the routes? In my discussions with community members, I’ve been given three or four different options, maybe even five different options on what they said would be good routes. Everybody has their reason for doing it. I recognize that the Minister has responded to me in the past about pressure ridges on the lakes. A lot of the possibilities are over land. Can the Minister work with the community to determine the routes and look at all the routes?

**HON. MICHAEL MCLEOD:** We certainly can undertake to do what the Member has requested. There are serious challenges, of course, as to what the mines or exploration companies are going to be doing and that would be something we’d have to have a lot better information. We also would be challenged as to how we would pay for such a road that the Member is suggesting. Those things have to be looked at. I don’t have any problem directing our staff to start having those discussions with communities. There may be other routes that haven’t been considered yet and we’d like to look at that, if we can get that time to discuss it with the members of his community. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. McLeod. Your final, short supplementary, Mr. Beaulieu.

**MR. BEAULIEU:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Will the Minister take a look at the preliminary possibilities in the infrastructure plan to construct a winter road in the next capital planning process? Thank you.

**HON. MICHAEL MCLEOD:** I can commit to the Member that we can do some class D costing of what it would take to build a winter road to his community and maybe look at a number of scenarios to see what we’re spending now and what it would cost to do a winter road overland to his communities. Thank you.

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

## QUESTION 551-16(5): CONDITION OF HIGHWAY NO. 7

**MR. MENICOCHE:** Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. The Minister of Transportation and I have many debates and discussions over Highway No. 7 and I’d like to continue that once again.

This fall he had indicated that there was an engineering study done on Highway No. 7, some samplings of geotechnical work. I just want to know the results of it and was there a report that was completed on that. Mahsi cho.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Menicoche. The honourable Minister of Transportation, Mr. Michael McLeod.

**HON. MICHAEL MCLEOD:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The Member is right; we have had a lot of discussion on this issue and I’m surprised he’s back requesting information again, with a little more drama this time. Mr. Speaker, we have budgeted $12 million for a three-year period for Highway No. 7. We have done a lot of the work that we have indicated. There is still a lot of work that has to be done. Some of the geo-assessments have been done. The survey work has been done for the most part. We can provide that to the Member in writing. I believe we had this same discussion when we dealt with our capital budget, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. MENICOCHE:** He had indicated that the engineering study was completed. I was just wondering how much additional work was pinpointed by that study and which areas would be worked on this year. Thank you.

**HON. MICHAEL MCLEOD:** Mr. Speaker, as the Member knows, the Highway No. 7 is at the point of its life where it needs to be totally reconstructed. That is going to cost roughly $250 million or close to that amount. Mr. Speaker, we have identified several areas that we’re going to be working on and focusing on this year. There is some work that’s going to be done at kilometre 76 to develop a quarry, we’re going to be doing some work from kilometres 20 to 37, and doing some embankment investigation and some construction at kilometre 170. Those are the areas that we have targeted for this year. I think, Mr. Speaker, there are some areas that will be carried over from last year that we have to also accommodate in this year’s construction season. Thank you.

**MR. MENICOCHE:** Then the answer is easy: we just have to request $250 million from the capital planning process. Just moving forward, though, Mr. Speaker, I know that the residents of Fort Liard and Fort Simpson travel quite a bit in between. I would like to thank him for the update on the plans; however, the section from the B.C. border to Fort Liard is something that the Fort Liard residents are really interested in chipsealing or else some other alternative methods. Are there any plans to look at that? Thank you.

**HON. MICHAEL MCLEOD:** Mr. Speaker, we certainly can look at the condition of the road and provide what was targeted for investment for that section. Mr. Speaker, in the Member’s statement he indicated that there were bathtub-sized holes in the road. He forgets I also drive on that road on occasion and I have never seen a bathtub-sized pothole on Highway No. 7. That’s not to say that it has its challenges, especially in the spring, and we’re probably going to be hearing a lot more as we move into the spring thaw and the condition of this road deteriorates and we have huge issues. It’s going to warrant further investment.

The B.C. government has earmarked some dollars for their section of the road. They, of course, are investing in the road because of the forestry development that’s happening in their area and also the oil and gas exploration that’s happening on the B.C. side. We don’t have that to encourage us or to convince our federal counterparts for investment, so it’s difficult. The Member is indicating he would want to request $250 million. He’d have to get in line as there’s a very limited budget we have of capital and huge needs. It’s a challenging situation that we’re in. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. McLeod. Your final, short supplementary, Mr. Menicoche.

**MR. MENICOCHE:** Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Just in terms of chipsealing, will the Minister and his department consider a chipsealing project if the municipality of Fort Liard actually moves towards chipsealing their main street? They may have a plan for this summer and an opportunity, because the chipsealing machine will be there to do some of the highway towards the B.C. border at that time. Thank you.

**HON. MICHAEL MCLEOD:** Mr. Speaker, we always try to take the opportunity, when the equipment is in the area, to work with communities to provide them with the information of what work will be done and what we can accommodate while the machine and equipment has the opportunity to do some chipsealing. Our intention, of course, is to try to get the whole road reconstructed first and then provide chipsealing. We are also focusing to do that in other areas of the NWT, but just to find adequate resources to reconstruct some of these roads is proving very challenging and it may take some time.

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

## QUESTION 552-16(5): ALCOHOL IGNITION INTERLOCK DEVICES

**MRS. GROENEWEGEN:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In my Member’s statement I was talking about alcohol ignition interlock devices. The Motor Vehicles Act was amended in 2003. I would like to ask the Minister of Transportation is there any provision in legislation or regulation for a judge to order that a person can have their driver’s licence reinstated once an alcohol ignition interlock device is installed in their vehicle. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mrs. Groenewegen. The honourable Minister of Transportation, Mr. Michael McLeod.

**HON. MICHAEL MCLEOD:** Mr. Speaker, I don’t believe we have any legislation that will allow a judge to order an ignition interlock on vehicles at this point. Thank you.

**MRS. GROENEWEGEN:** As I said in my Member’s statement, I don’t condone people drinking and driving, but these devices must have some merit, because it seems like it is possible for those to be ordered in other jurisdictions. Was it ever the intention of the Department of Transportation to create a regulation in concert with the Motor Vehicles Act that would have seen such a device as an alternate to a person’s licence being completely suspended? Thank you.

**HON. MICHAEL MCLEOD:** Mr. Speaker, we haven’t considered amendments to the legislation as of yet and it may be a challenge to do so as we have conditions that other jurisdictions don’t have. We have minus 40 below weather and this could be a real challenge with the equipment. We don’t have licensed mechanics to install this device on vehicles in all our communities and any time there’s a malfunction, this would be an issue. At this point we’re looking at it. We don’t have all the answers and we’re not considering it until we can have further research on how it would work. Thank you.

**MRS. GROENEWEGEN:** Mr. Speaker, I’d like to ask the Minister is this something that would have to be changed in legislation or is this something that might have already been contemplated in legislation in some form and it could be done by a regulation, which would be much less onerous. Thank you.

**HON. MICHAEL MCLEOD:** I’d have to confirm, but I believe it would require changing the Motor Vehicles Act. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. McLeod. Your final supplementary, Mrs. Groenewegen.

**MRS. GROENEWEGEN:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Is this something that the Minister would consider pursuing? Thank you.

**HON. MICHAEL MCLEOD:** Mr. Speaker, we are looking at it already. We have looked at the device and try to see if it would work in the conditions that we live in. At this point, we are not convinced it will work. However, we will study options, if not this particular device, then maybe there are other things out there that could work to allow certain individuals to keep their jobs or whatever the case may be. We will continue to monitor. We will continue to research it and share the information with the Member. Thank you.

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

## QUESTION 553-16(5): CORRECTIONS PROGRAM REVIEW

**MR. RAMSAY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I want to follow up again today on my Member’s statement, and again I have some more questions to the Minister of Justice on the corrections program review. I would like to thank the Minister for getting me a copy of that, but, of course, having a copy of that leads to many more questions. I would like to begin by asking the Minister a question. Of the 18 recommendations that are contained in the report, which ones have been actioned on or is there a plan to enact any of those recommendations in that plan? Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Ramsay. The honourable Minister of Justice, Mr. Lafferty.

**HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY:** Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. Part of the plan is we will be acting on amending some of the policies and programs in place. There have been recommendations brought forward to our attention. My department is going through each and every recommendation on which ones should be expedited and others might take a bit longer time. We will be going through each recommendation and see which recommendations we could implement right away. We will be informing the Members as we progress. Mahsi.

**MR. RAMSAY:** Mr. Speaker, I’d hope that the department could come forward with an action plan. The review itself is now two and a half years old. I think the department needs to work with the Standing Committee on Social Programs to make sure that the recommendations that are there -- and there are 18 of them. They are all good recommendations, Mr. Speaker, but some of them certainly stick out a little bit more than others. I would like to get a commitment from the Minister to work with the Standing Committee on Social Programs to go through the recommendations and develop an action plan on following that up. Thank you.

**HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY:** Mr. Speaker, it has always been part of the plan. When recommendations come up, whether it be these 18 recommendations focusing on improving offender supervision and rehabilitation, I can go make some changes to our programming. Then we need to inform the Members and work with the Members on identifying certain areas where they have concerns or issues. We need to hear from the Members, as well, or ideas being generated by the Members. That can be integrated into our changes or amendments that we are going to be making to our programming. By all means, we will be working with the Social Programs committee on this particular piece of work. Mahsi.

**MR. RAMSAY:** Mr. Speaker, I was wondering if the Minister could share with us what he feels the department’s priorities are when it comes to those 18 recommendations. Thank you.

**HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY:** Mr Speaker, the 18 recommendations, as I stated, we are as a department going through each and every item and highlighting which areas should be expedited or, I guess, delivered immediately. Those are areas that we can share with the standing committee. The rest, if it is a long-term strategy, then we need to highlight those as a second phase and a third phase. We will be sharing that information with the standing committee. Mahsi.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Lafferty. Final supplementary, Mr. Ramsay.

**MR. RAMSAY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It has been two and a half years. Again, I think it is very important that the Minister and the Department of Justice get together with the standing committee and develop an action plan on how we move this forward, how those recommendations are acted upon. Again I want to ask the Minister if this work can be concluded by the end of the life of this government, which is September. Thank you.

**HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY:** Mr. Speaker, although it has taken over two years, we want to have a program that is beneficial and that will resolve some issues or concerns are being brought to our attention through these 18 recommendations. We want to have the best product that is suitable to improve the offender supervision and also rehabilitation. The Member has alluded to rehabilitation on numerous occasions. We want to have the best product that we can deliver. That is probably why it is taking us some time, but we are coming to a conclusion in that respect. One of the goals, of course, either at the end of this Assembly or into the new 17th Assembly, but this is one of our priorities that we want to start working on. Mahsi.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Lafferty. Item 8, written questions. Item 9, returns to written questions. Item 10, replies to opening address. Item 11, petitions. Item 12, reports of standing and special committees. The honourable Member for Kam Lake, Mr. Ramsay.

# Reports of Standing and Special Committees

## COMMITTEE REPORT 7-16(5): REPORT ON THE REVIEW OF BILL 16, AN ACT TO AMEND THE DOG ACT

**MR. RAMSAY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The Standing Committee on Economic Development and Infrastructure is pleased to provide its report on Bill 16, an Act to Amend the Dog Act, and commends it to the House. Thank you.

**Introduction**

The Standing Committee on Economic Development and Infrastructure is pleased to report on Bill 16, An Act to Amend the Dog Act.

The interest in and response to this Bill from both within and outside the Northwest Territories was unprecedented. The committee held public hearings on Bill 16 in Yellowknife, Hay River and Inuvik between January 13 and 19, 2011, and in Fort Smith on February 10, 2011. All of the public hearings were very well attended. The committee would like to thank all hearing participants, as well as everyone who sent in written submissions.

The committee’s clause-by-clause review of the bill took place on February 23, 2011. During this review, the committee passed 12 motions to amend the bill. The Minister concurred with all of these amendments. Following the clause-by-clause review, a motion was carried to report Bill 16, as amended and reprinted, as ready for consideration in Committee of the Whole.

**Locally Accepted and Traditional Practices**

The most controversial and debated provisions of Bill 16 were the two clauses providing exemptions for locally accepted and traditional practices. The first occurred in proposed Section 3, which sets out dog owners’ duty of care to provide adequate food, water, care, shelter, ventilation, space and protection from heat and cold. Proposed subsection 3(2) provided that a dog owner did not fail in his or her duty of care by treating a dog “in accordance with generally accepted local or traditional practices of dog care, use and management.”

The second of these clauses occurred in proposed Section 4, which prohibits permitting or causing distress to dogs. Proposed subsection 4(3) provided that the prohibition on permitting or causing distress to dogs did not apply if the distress resulted from activities carried on “in accordance with generally accepted local or traditional practices of dog care, use and management.”

An overwhelming number of presentations and written submissions argued that the two clauses were loopholes that would allow dog abuse to go unpunished, and recommended that the exemptions be removed altogether. Some also took offense to the clauses as they felt they suggested that cruelty to dogs was condoned in traditional Aboriginal societies, which the committee heard clearly was not the case. Instead, the committee heard that although as in any society there were always some people who abused dogs, this was not an accepted norm; rather, most people respected the working dogs they depended on to survive, and cared for them accordingly.

Some people supported the exemptions out of concern that traditionally accepted Aboriginal dog care practices, though not cruel, are different from what Southerners are used to and might be misconstrued as abuse. The concern is that this might result in harvesters being punished or prevented from carrying out traditional activities on the land. As an example of different cultural perspectives on dogs, some people mentioned that practices such as dressing a dog in a sweater or carrying it around in a small bag might also be considered cruel and disrespectful. However, of the people who supported keeping exemptions for local and traditional practices, many were concerned that the wording that appeared in the bill was too vague and would not necessarily be interpreted in keeping with their intent.

During the clause-by-clause review of the bill, the committee and Minister agreed to three amendments to the bill related to this issue.

The first amendment removed the “locally accepted and traditional practice” wording from proposed Section 3, which sets out dog owners’ duties of care, and replaced it with a clause providing that a person does not fail in his or her duty of care by treating a dog in accordance with a municipal bylaw. This amendment is intended to reflect the fact that some communities have bylaws which set out standards of care for dogs, often in more detail than this bill provides, and to defer to those locally set standards.

The second amendment replaced the “locally accepted and traditional practice” wording from proposed Section 4, which prohibits causing or permitting distress, with more specific provisions modeled on the Manitoba Animal Care Act. This section provides an exemption for “accepted activities,” which are harvesting and protection of people from wildlife. Regulations may provide for additional “accepted activities” and may also prohibit specific practices and procedures. Accepted activities must be carried out in a manner that is either consistent with generally accepted practices and procedures or that is otherwise reasonable in the circumstances. Accepted activities must not be carried out in a manner that causes undue suffering.

The third amendment provided the regulation-making authority for “accepted activities.”

**Injurious Heat and Cold**

Proposed Section 3 of the bill places a duty of care on owners to protect their dogs from “injurious heat and cold.” During the public review process, there was a great deal of discussion about the difference between breeds such as the Canadian Eskimo Dog, which is well adapted to the northern climate with thick fur and fat layers, and other types of dogs which are now common in the Northwest Territories, but are much less able to withstand the cold. It was generally agreed that “injurious heat or cold” could mean very different things depending on the type of dog.

During the clause-by-clause review of the bill, the committee and Minister agreed to an amendment to specify that “injurious heat or cold” must be interpreted “having regard to the physical characteristics of the dog.” The intent was to provide clear direction to those interpreting and enforcing the act that they must consider an individual dog’s adaptability to heat and cold, rather than, for example, determining that a specific temperature constitutes “injurious” heat or cold in all cases.

Mr. Speaker, I would now like to pass the committee report over to my colleague Mr. Bromley.

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

**MR. BROMLEY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Euthanizing Dogs**

The committee was made aware of some specific instances of cruelty in the destruction or attempted destruction of dogs. Although euthanization by lethal injection performed by a veterinarian is not an option in most communities, other methods of destroying dogs that are quick and painless are available.

During the clause-by-clause review of the bill, the committee and Minister agreed to an amendment providing that “a person who destroys a dog shall do so in a manner that prevents undue suffering.”

**Dogs Running at Large and Dogs in Harness**

During the public review process, several people brought to the committee’s attention outdated provisions on owners’ duties to keep their dogs from running at large and restrictions applying to dogs in harness. The committee and Minister agreed to three amendments to address these concerns during the clause-by-clause review of the bill.

Proposed Section 5, which prohibits owners from allowing their dogs to run at large, taken with the current definition of “running at large” in the Dog Act, required owners to have their dogs either muzzled or under physical control at all times. While this is often a requirement of municipal bylaws for public safety reasons, many people argued that it was an unduly onerous standard to apply outside of communities. For example, the provisions would have meant that common practices such as hiking, skiing, hunting, trapping or fishing with dogs off leash in wilderness areas would be in violation of the law.

Two amendments were made to address this issue. The first adds a new definition of “immediate control,” which can include physical control of a dog with a leash or other device, but also includes control through voice commands or other signals. The second amendment changed proposed Section 5 so that “immediate control” is the standard required of dog owners when outside of communities.

Proposed paragraph 6(b) prohibited leaving a dog in harness outside of a municipality except in cases where the dog was muzzled or under the care of someone at least 16 years old. Objections to this provision were that muzzling sled dogs is itself a cruel practice and that dog teams are often capably handled by mushers younger than 16. The amendment to this provision removes the reference to muzzling and the age requirement, and requires instead that dogs in these circumstances be under “the immediate control of a person capable of ensuring that the dog will not harm the public or create a nuisance.”

**Other Amendments**

Bill 16 provided for maximum fines of $5,000 for a first offence and $10,000 for a second offence. Although many people expressed support for these maximums, some raised concerns that they might be too onerous given the economic conditions in many NWT communities, especially for a first offence. During the clause-by-clause review, the committee and Minister agreed to an amendment that decreases the maximum fine for a first offence to $2,500.

Proposed Section 8.3 also required that a dog taken into custody by an officer be kept for three days before any steps were taken to sell, give away or destroy the dog. Some people were concerned that this process might happen too quickly for an owner to be located and notified, and/or to respond in time. During the clause-by-clause review, the committee and Minister agreed to an amendment to extend the minimum time for keeping a dog in custody to five days. It should be noted that as stated in proposed Section 8.6, municipal bylaws on impounding, selling or destroying dogs that are taken into custody prevail over this act. Therefore, if a municipal bylaw sets a shorter or longer period for holding a dog in custody before taking further steps, that is the number of days that will apply when a dog is seized under the authority of that bylaw.

In addition to the amendments described above, two amendments of a minor and technical nature were agreed to by the committee and the Minister during the clause-by-clause review.

**Other Issues**

Although this bill will be an important tool to prevent cruelty to dogs, it is not sufficient in itself. The committee heard that further action by the GNWT will be needed in order to achieve the intent of the legislation. The committee would like to highlight the following issues that were raised during the public review process.

**Access to Veterinary Services**

Many presentations and submissions called attention to the lack of access to veterinary services in most NWT communities. In particular, the absence of spay and neuter programs was identified as an underlying contributor to cruelty and abuse because it results in so many unwanted puppies. Several people spoke to the success of the mobile vet clinic in the Sahtu that takes place in partnership with the University of Calgary. The committee believes that there are opportunities for similar programs to be established in other regions with minimal or no requirement for GNWT funding.

**Recommendation 1**

The committee recommends that the Department of Municipal and Community Affairs initiate discussions with stakeholders and veterinary colleges to explore options for expanding access to veterinary services, and in particular spay and neuter programs, throughout the NWT, and where necessary, facilitate the implementation of such options.

**Assistance to Community Governments**

Committee members were concerned that the Department of Municipal and Community Affairs had not consulted with community governments prior to the introduction of Bill 16 about whether they will have the resources to implement it. For example, communities may not currently have adequate shelters to meet their obligations for dogs taken into custody under the act. Bylaw and dog officers may require training on the new requirements.

**Recommendation 2**

The committee recommends that the Department of Municipal and Community Affairs consult with community governments prior to the coming into force of the act to ensure they have adequate resources, including staff training, to implement the act.

Mr. Speaker, I will now pass the floor back to my colleague Mr. Ramsay. Thank you.

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

**MR. RAMSAY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and thank you, Mr. Bromley.

**Public Education**

One witness began his presentation by stating “I’d just like to touch on a key word and that key word is ‘education.’” The committee heard several comments on the same theme, which spoke to the need for public education on the responsibilities of dog ownership, and on traditional and modern dog care practices in the NWT. A Sahtu-based study provided with one written submission, strongly recommended that such programs target youth, who are often dogs’ primary caregivers.

**Recommendation 3**

The committee recommends that the Department of Municipal and Community Affairs initiate discussions with stakeholders on the development and delivery of a public education program on dogs, and, if and as appropriate, assist with the development and delivery of such a program.

**Comprehensive Animal Protection Legislation**

Several presentations and written submissions to the committee advocated for comprehensive animal protection legislation, which already exists in most other Canadian provinces and territories. Such legislation would protect not only dogs but all domestic animals. Currently the only means of prosecuting people who abuse animals other than dogs in the NWT are the Criminal Code provisions, under which it is very difficult to convict offenders.

**Conclusion**

Once again, the Standing Committee on Economic Development and Infrastructure would like to thank all those who participated in the public hearings on Bill 16 and who provided written submissions. I also want to thank our staff: Ms. Collette Langlois, our director of research; Ms. Jennifer Knowlan, our committee clerk; and Alicia Tumchewics, our committee researcher, for all the work in helping coordinate the public hearings and taking in all the submissions that we received along the way.

The committee is pleased that this bill was brought forward during the life of the 16th Assembly and strongly encourages the government to follow through on its intent by devoting the necessary attention to the implementation of the new Dog Act and other recommendations contained in this report.

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

## MOTION TO Receive COMMITTEE REPORT 7-16(5) and move INTO COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE, CARRIED

**MR. RAMSAY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I move, seconded by the honourable Member for Weledeh, that Committee Report 7-16(5) be received by the Assembly and moved into Committee of the Whole for further consideration.

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

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Question.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Question has been called.

---Carried

Item 13, reports of committees on the review of bills. Item 14, tabling of documents. The honourable Minister responsible for Environment and Natural Resources, Mr. Miltenberger.

# Tabling of Documents

## TABLED DOCUMENT 160-16(5): ENVIRONMENT AND NATURAL RESOURCES FRAMEWORK FOR ACTION 2008-2012: STATUS REPORT TO DECEMBER 2010

**HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I wish to table the following document entitled Environment and Natural Resources Framework for Action 2008-2012: Status Report to December 2010.

## TABLED DOCUMENT 161-16(5): AUDITOR GENERAL’S REPORT ON THE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND SOCIAL SERVICES

## TABLED DOCUMENT 162-16(5): AUDITOR GENERAL’S REPORT ON THE SPECIAL AUDIT OF THE DEH CHO BRIDGE PROJECT

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Miltenberger.

In accordance with Section 30 of the Northwest Territories Act I wish to table the Report of the Auditor General of Canada on Northwest Territories Health Programs and Services, 2011, Department of Health and Social Services, 2010.

In accordance with Section 30 of the Northwest Territories Act I wish to table the Report of the Auditor General of Canada on Northwest Territories Deh Cho Bridge Project 2011 and Department of Transportation.

Tabling of documents. Item 15, notices of motion. The honourable Member for Great Slave, Mr. Abernethy.

# Notices of Motion

## MOTION 41-16(5): INDEPENDENT INVESTIGATION OF INCIDENT AT STANTON TERRITORIAL HOSPITAL

**MR. ABERNETHY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I give notice that on Thursday, March 3, 2011, I will move the following motion: I move, seconded by the honourable Member for Nahendeh, that this Legislative Assembly strongly recommends that the Minister of Health immediately order an independent external investigation covering all aspects of the Leishman incident, with recommendations, as necessary, to improve safety and security for all patients and staff and improve the overall quality of care for all patients receiving care with Stanton Territorial Hospital.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Abernethy. Item 16, notices of motion for first reading of bills. Item 17, motions. Item 18, first reading of bills. Item 19, second reading of bills. Item 20, consideration in Committee of the Whole of bills and other matters: Tabled Document 4-16(5), Executive Summary of the Report of the Joint Review Panel for the Mackenzie Gas Project; Tabled Document 30-16(5), 2010 Review of Members’ Compensation and Benefits; Tabled Document 38-16(5), Supplementary Health Benefits – What We Heard; Tabled Document 62-16(5), Northwest Territories Water Stewardship Strategy; Tabled Document 75-16(5), Response to the Joint Review Panel for the Mackenzie Gas Project on the Federal and Territorial Governments’ Interim Response to “Foundation for a Sustainable Northern Future”; Tabled Document 103-16(5), GNWT Contracts Over $5000 Report, Year Ending March 31, 2010; Tabled Document 133-16(5), NWT Main Estimates 2011-2012; Tabled Document 135-16(5), GNWT Response to CR 3-16(5), Report on the Review of the Child and Family Services Act; Tabled Document 156-16(5), Supplementary Estimates (Infrastructure Expenditures), No. 5, 2010-2011; Tabled Document 157-16(5), Supplementary Estimates (Operations Expenditures), No. 3, 2010-2011; Bill 4, An Act to Amend the Social Assistance Act; Bill 14, An Act to Amend the Conflict of Interest Act; Bill 15, An Act to Amend the Fire Prevention Act; Bill 17, An Act to Amend the Income Tax Act; Bill 18, An Act to Repeal the Settlements Act; Bill 19, Municipal Statutes Amendment Act; Bill 20, An Act to Amend the Evidence Act; Minister’s’ Statement 65-16(5), Devolution Agreement-in-Principle, Impact on Land Claims and Protection of Aboriginal Rights; Minister’s’ Statement 88-16(5), Sessional Statement, with Mr. Krutko in the chair.

By the authority given me as Speaker by Motion 31-16(5), I hereby authorize the House to sit beyond the daily hour of adjournment to consider the business before the House.

# Consideration in Committee of the Whole of Bills and Other Matters

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko):** I’d like to call Committee of the Whole back to order. Consideration in Committee of the Whole of bills and other matters: tabled documents 4, 30, 38, 62, 75, 103, 133, 135; Bills 4, 14, 15, 17, 18, 19, 20; Minister’s statements 65 and 88. What is the wish of committee?

**MRS. GROENEWEGEN:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. We would like to continue considering the NWT Main Estimates, 2011-2012. We would like to start off with the Department of Health and Social Services and then go to Justice and the Legislative Assembly; following that, the supplementary appropriations. That would be TD 156 and 157.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko):** Is committee agreed?

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko):** With that, we’ll take a short break.

---SHORT RECESS

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko):** I’d like to call the committee back to order. Prior to the break we agreed to continue on with Department of Health and Social Services and the Department of Justice and the Legislative Assembly. With that, at this time I’d like to ask the Minister if she would be bringing in witnesses. Ms. Lee.

**HON. SANDY LEE:** Yes, please, Mr. Chairman.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko):** Is committee agreed the Minister can bring in her witnesses?

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko):** Sergeant-at-Arms, escort the witnesses in.

For the record, Ms. Lee, could you introduce your witnesses?

**HON. SANDY LEE:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I have with me to my right Deputy Minister Paddy Meade. Further right is Mr. Derek Elkin, director of finance. To my left is Mr. Dana Heide, assistant deputy minister of operations.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko):** Thank you, Ms. Lee. Welcome, witnesses. We’re on page 8-7. Mr. Abernethy.

**MR. ABERNETHY:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I seek unanimous consent to go back to page 8-29.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko):** The Member is seeking unanimous consent to return to page 8-29. Is committee agreed?

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko):** Mr. Abernethy.

**MR. ABERNETHY:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Earlier when we were considering this department we had a number of questions that we had asked. I’d like to just follow up on some of those questions.

One of the questions we were asking relates to the Minister’s response to the Child and Family Services review and was about publication information. We had asked for some plain language information, how-to resources, things on the website, pamphlets and whatnot to be done up and it was consistent with one of the recommendations we had in the act. I was wondering if the Minister could tell us if they are going to move on that. Whether we can expect to see some of those plain language how-to guides and resources for print and distribution to people throughout the Northwest Territories done during the 2011-2012 fiscal year.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko):** Ms. Lee.

**HON. SANDY LEE:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I responded to the chair of Standing Committee on Social Programs on that issue on February 25th and indicated that we will implement that.

**MR. ABERNETHY:** So we’re happy to see that commitment. We’re happy that’s going to get done.

The second one we talked about previously was the policy and standards manual. When we were out talking to the people, including staff, it was made clear that a lot of work needed to be done to the policy and standards manuals to make them a little bit more clear, a little bit more plain language, make it easier for the employees to understand, but also clarity for, once again, residents of the Northwest Territories. We were at that time seeking a commitment from the Minister to include these revisions in the 2011-2012 main estimates for completion or at least noticeable completion or progress during the 2011-12 fiscal year. I was wondering if the Premier can let us know the status of that request.

**HON. SANDY LEE:** That item also was requested by the Member in the standing committee and I responded to the standing committee on the same day, February 25th, that we will implement that within the upcoming 2011-12 fiscal year using our own resources. That would also include consulting with child protection workers and managers. Thank you.

**MR. ABERNETHY:**  I’d like to thank the Minister for the commitment to get that done. Once again, I think that’s incredibly important for our users and for the administration of the Child and Family Services Act overall.

Another area that we talked about was obviously a critical area to us, and it’s one of the aspects that made the Child and Family Services Act unique in all of Canada, and that was the establishment of child and family services committees. Currently, there is one child and family service committee in the Northwest Territories and that’s in Fort McPherson. Yet the act does say that we will have a child and family service committee in all the communities throughout the Northwest Territories. We had asked during our previous discussion that the Minister commit to five. There was some discussion during business planning, I believe it was in the business plans, that the department would work towards having five committees established in the 2011-12 fiscal year, but we didn’t see any budget line for it, and I still don’t see a budget line for it in the main estimates. I’m wondering what is the status of the commitment for five in 2011-12 as outlined in the business plans. Thank you.

**HON. SANDY LEE:** Our commitment is to bring that forward into the next business plan process. Thank you.

**MR. ABERNETHY:**  That’s not consistent with what we heard during the business planning process this time. We were under the impression that the department was going to work towards the implementation of five. With one already in place, that means four more. Meaningful work towards implementing four more for a total of five during the 2011-12 fiscal year. I’m curious why that’s gone, why that’s no longer a commitment of the Minister as outlined in the business plans.

**HON. SANDY LEE:** It is consistent with the way the main estimate is presented. There is no money allocated for the children and family services committees. Our response to the recommendation from the committee was that we do appreciate the need for that. We would like to proceed with that but in order to do a proper job of it, we need to get the funding for that. We believe one of the main reasons these committees have not been successful in being established, even though, as the Member states, that these were provided for within the legislation, is because it’s not properly resourced. To be able to do that we believe that it should be presented as a part of the business plan process and properly resourced. For that reason we are making a commitment again that we will present it as a business plan initiative for the next fiscal year, 2012-13, which process would begin almost immediately after the main estimate is approved and finished. Thank you.

**MR. ABERNETHY:**  Mr. Chair, I remain confused. Once again, during the business planning process we understood that the department was committing to making substantial progress towards having five child and family service committees in the Northwest Territories. We didn’t see the budget line in the 2011-12 main estimates, which is why, frankly, we were confused. We fully expected to see that. As I’ve said, it’s an incredibly integral part of the Child and Family Services Act and its implementation. We’re talking about empowering communities and giving them the ability to help themselves when it comes to child apprehensions. We’re talking about implementing committees which could significantly save us money and improve results for our children, those children that are in jeopardy within the communities.

Frankly, I need to understand how it went from being yes, in the business plans we’re committed, to the main estimates, no evidence of it at all, to now, oh, we’re going to do it in 2012-13. How can the Minister commit the next government? I mean, often I hear we can’t commit the next government to this, that or the other. I’m not confident that by saying today, oh, we’ll do it in 2012-13 means that it’s going to get done. We’d like to see something done now. We would like to see a commitment to move on the child and family services committees as the Minister said she would during the business planning process. Where is the consistency? I don’t understand what I’m being told, Mr. Chair.

**HON. SANDY LEE:** Mr. Chair, the Member can be as confused as he lets himself be, so I’m not sure if I can help him with that. The fact is, and when I say that we’re going to proceed, we’re going to present this as part of the next business plan, it doesn’t mean that I’m committing the next government. We are still going to be in this Assembly as we review the next business plan. The Member’s been here for three years. He knows what the process is. We’ve outlined in our reply to the committee a number of competing priorities that the Members have presented to us and the Member knows already that the business plan review process considers lots of initiatives that come forward from not only this department but from all other departments as well. I have made it clear that my department will present this and the other item that the committee has presented as a priority item.

There’s nothing to be confused about the fact that this was mentioned in the business plan which we reviewed in September and the main estimates that are before us. It does happen between the business plan and the main estimates. We have presented detailed information about how much money it would cost for us to establish these in the communities and to properly resource them and to do it right. I really feel, Mr. Chair, that the department went a long way in meeting the demands of the committee. They asked for four things to incorporate into our existing budget. The budget is already stretched and we have offered to incorporate upwards of $600,000 from within to meet the demands of the committee and the Members. This is not just my budget, Mr. Chairman, it is our budget and the Member knows how the money flows. You can’t get blood from a stone unless we take it out of somewhere. I mean, it’s not responsible math just to say add something more on and not look at the whole picture. Thank you.

**MR. ABERNETHY:**  It’s easy to be confused when somebody tells you one thing and you believe it and you expect it to appear in the main estimates and then it doesn’t appear in the main estimates. We are all in support of that initiative to have five in the communities, we all expected to see it and I don’t see it. It’s easy to be confused, Mr. Chairman.

I also must point out to the Minister this is her third term and she knows how main estimates coming into an election work and business planning. It’s my understanding that as a Member of this 16th Assembly we’re not really going to have an opportunity as Regular Members to sit in front of the business plans for the 2012-13 fiscal year and discuss them. It just doesn’t happen. Once again, I’m confused why she thinks that’s the process that’s going to be in front of us, because we’re not going to have an opportunity to look at them. I remain concerned. I remain confused. It was explained to us that it was going to be done and now we’re hearing, no, we don’t have the money. We said yes, but we don’t have the money so we’ve changed our mind.

This is something the Minister committed to and I think the Minister should live up to that commitment. I’d like to understand how the Minister went from being supportive of this thing and all of us expecting it to happen to being off the agenda, off the radar, not happening. The Minister’s staff went to the communities. They heard clearly. I’m disappointed. I’m radically disappointed in this Minister’s rejection of these committees for the 2011-12 fiscal year.

**HON. SANDY LEE:** Mr. Chairman, I don’t have anything to add to that. Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko):** Next I have Mr. Bromley.

**MR. BROMLEY:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I would like to ask what the Minister is planning to do to enhance prevention and early intervention aspects of child and family services as a result of our review and how this is reflected in the budget as presented here.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko):** Minister Lee.

**HON. SANDY LEE:** Mr. Chairman, prevention and early intervention, we do that in many of our program areas, but in specifically for healthy families, the Member knows that we are proposing to expand the programming to Inuvik and Fort Simpson. That is part of this main estimate. Thank you.

**MR. BROMLEY:** Mr. Chairman, I do indeed know that. What we had asked the Minister was to do more in terms of prevention and early intervention. I am happy to see that the Minister is going to be recommending further expansion on healthy programs in 2012-13. That sounds like good work. These are expensive programs, although I have to say I would like to debate any budgets provided to us on that, certainly not what we were told when we looked in the healthy families.

I would just like to say, Mr. Chairman, looking at our report, prevention programs are starved for resources and lack capacity to take on more clients. The unfortunate reality is that crisis cases eat up the lion’s share of child welfare resources. This crisis response mode is not sustainable. The Minister is right; this is our budget, we are together on this. We have done a lot of work on it and listened to the people. What we are hearing is much more is needed on the prevention side. We raised this. We are refusing to accept this budget until we get more in that area, which means the Minister, or we will have to make judgment decisions on where the money will come from and we are hoping the Minister will take that on. But we have tried to say this is clearly the responsibility. We need more on prevention and intervention services. Now there are a million ways that the Minister could provide to deliver prevention and early intervention services. We go on to suggest, Members heard how many parents, especially young parents, would benefit from counselling and support groups. We need to vastly improve pre and post-natal care and parenting skills, offer respite services and child care plus in-home supports and home visitation programs. Investing in these prevention programs early will reduce the demand for protection services in the near future. These are investments. That is how we see them.

I am asking the Minister again. I am informing the Minister that we need to see action for us to make progress here. We are waiting. I welcome any comments from the Minister.

**HON. SANDY LEE:** Mr. Chairman, as the Member knows, there are a number of prevention programs that are being delivered within the health and social services system and the authorities. I do agree with the Member that prevention is important and that it has to be part of our work. I do agree with him that, like any other health and social services system across the country, our systems often respond to post event rather than pre-event. It is for that reason that we have worked to expand prevention and early intervention into additional communities in this budget. I do not have any more money than what I had before this Assembly in this main estimate.

The Child and Family Services Act review report did come out and we have accepted 63 out of 73 recommendations. There are some that we are saying we will need to get additional funding to be able to do that properly. We are making a commitment to the Member, that I will be putting forward as a new initiative or a continuing initiative, prevention and early intervention money for the next business plan cycle.

This budget is a government budget. This is the Cabinet budget that we are putting forward to the Members. That is the commitment I can make. Thank you.

**MR. BROMLEY:** Mr. Chairman, that is not good enough, obviously, or we wouldn’t be here. We have stated in our report that there are, in fact, some prevention programs, but as I said, we found that the programs are starving for resources and lack capacity. The Minister agrees with us that prevention is a key part of the approach, but the Minister doesn’t realize that we are saying it needs to be a much larger part and that we will gain savings from that. That will contribute to our health delivery programs. It is the Minister’s responsibility now or ours to find those dollars.

**HON. SANDY LEE:** Mr. Chairman, I don’t want to read too much into it, but is the Member suggesting something that we could move around within the budget? If so, I would like to hear what he would like to take out in order to pay for what he thinks is important.

**MR. BROMLEY:** Mr. Chairman, no. I have been asking the Minister where her priorities are able to shift. If not, the next step would be that we would sit down and determine that, I would imagine.

**HON. SANDY LEE:** Mr. Chairman, the letter that I sent to the standing committee on February 25th is the analysis we have done. It is the government’s position on this issue. Thank you.

**MR. BROMLEY:** Mr. Chairman, just to confirm, the Minister sees no other work that the department can do in the area of prevention and early intervention other than a couple of healthy family programs for 2012-13. Thank you.

**HON. SANDY LEE:** Mr. Chairman, the Member knows that our budget, every cent and every dollar is allocated so I am not sure where he thinks that I could come up with $1.4 million to expand this program within this budget. I know that the Members have suggested that I look at $12 million under Child Protection Program but a lot of them are under contracts already. I would be happy to provide the Member with detailed information if he had an idea about where to move the money. I could tell you right now that even one of these two move it will have a consequence.

Mr. Speaker, I talked to the chair of the standing committee. I was under the understanding that the response I provided is something that is workable with the committee and the Members on that side. I am not aware of any other arrangements that the Member has. I think the Member has an obligation to look at the entire budget and not just go with what he thinks should be done. If he has something that he wants me to move, I would be happy to take it to Cabinet upon doing the analysis. These budgets are not done by just one person. Thank you.

**MR. BROMLEY:** Mr. Chairman, if I could ask for a detailed breakdown of the contract services, $12.724 million, that would be very useful. I would appreciate that this afternoon. Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko):** Mr. Elkin.

**MR. ELKIN:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Under page 8-30, there is $12 million under children’s services, $7.7 million for foster care that is flowed to the eight authorities. Under residential care, there is $3.6 million which is for children’s group homes including the Inuvik Group Home, Trailcross Treatment Centre, Polar Crescent Group Home and the Territorial Treatment Centre. There is, as indicated on that page, $858,000 for intervention services flowed to the authorities.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko):** Next I have Mr. Beaulieu.

**MR. BEAULIEU:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I have a very similar line of questioning as my colleagues, maybe just to clear something up that the Minister has brought open here in the House that felt that this would not be a problem with me. I had indicated that I was optimistic about this, but once we took a more detailed look at it, it was not something that I too am comfortable with. I see this as a fairly simple process, actually. I want to talk first about child and family services committees that our Standing Committee on Social Programs talked about. That was the establishment of five more communities that would go into the business plan for 2011-12. When we got together, the question was the cost. I don’t believe the cost of establishing these committees at the cost that was provided to us by the Minister. We are looking at this. It seems like we have done a whole bunch of work as a committee. We travelled around the communities and we got some recommendations that we thought were going to make a difference. There was obviously an issue with this whole system and the way the child and family services was being run. That is why there were so many kids in care and there are kids in the wrong cultural not in their home, basically not in their home communities, not in culturally that is foster homes. Many of them are good foster homes. I am not putting down the foster homes, but many of them are issues. We heard right across the Territories and all the small communities that didn’t like the idea of kids going into foster care and then being removed from the community and so on.

We provided options in recommendations in the report, one of them being child and family services committees. I thought the department would look at that, take a look at the five communities that had the highest apprehensions and then take that money instead of having the kids in foster care and develop committees, not balloon the costs for each committee and then provide it back to us and say you can’t do anything with it. That is not something we had expected. We thought that these were good recommendations that came that we thought would improve things over the long run. If we are not going to do anything, then why didn’t we just learn that at the very beginning?

We have to make recommendations. We went through the review. We are making recommendations. If the department doesn’t want to do the key issues that we felt were going to resolve some of the longstanding issues with the total area of child protection, the whole child and family services, then we should have been told that right off the bat.

It is no use doing the review because we don’t have the money to do it. We know the health budgets were tight. These were recommendations where we felt that money could be moved into other areas that would be lessened by these actions, by creating committees in communities where there are the highest apprehensions that would be the cost of foster care would go down. Then we run these committees and now attempt this and then do the early intervention. That is the same thing. If we are going to add, and we didn’t ask to add the two more healthy family programs, we asked for early intervention and we asked for prevention. There could be all kinds of things involved in that. Now it’s a good idea to expand the Healthy Families. We thought that that was a good program. There are two more in expansion. I don’t recall us saying that we would go into Fort Resolution or Lutselk’e with the committee. If the department felt that this was feasible to go into the regional centres because the regional centres are the bigger communities and the bigger communities are where the higher birth rates are and the Healthy Families go from the time there is a pregnancy up until, I forget the age, but I think something around preschool and then they work with these families. We’re in communities where there are higher birthrates, then we’re probably hitting a majority of the communities and then the prevention in the long run again pays money down the road on having healthier families and you don’t have so many issues later on and these groups are actually working with the families. To me it seems like we should be looking at this area, that’s why we’ve gone back to 8-29. Look at that budget and figure out how we can do this. Then let’s take another look at the numbers. Has the department take another look at the numbers. These numbers here seem to be very high. Why would we need $125,000 to train a child protection worker in each community where we’re trying to set up a committee? Why?

Anyway, I’d like the Minister to respond to some of that.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Abernethy):** Thank you, Mr. Beaulieu. Minister Lee.

**HON. SANDY LEE:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I want to just remind the Member, who is standing committee chair, that I agree with him and I said that in my letter on February 25th that the prevention, and I quote, “the prevention oriented recommendations of Standing Committee on Social Programs will, in the long-term, have a positive effect on these expenditures.” I agree with him. The standing committee review of the CFSA and those recommendations about prevention and increasing child and service committees and doing more of that work, I agree with him that that is a positive step and I’ve said that.

Now the issue here is that the committee is saying that you should expand this program now and you should do that by finding savings from within because prevention will save money. I think that ignores the staggering effect it has in prevention work and what’s already there, because we already have children in foster care and if you were to take this money out of that $12 million, the money that is allocated to kids in foster care and the families that are taking care of them, we have kids in Trailcross, we have kids in residential care, we have kids in care and we have to pay for them this year.

So if you’re going to take any of that out of there, I don’t have money to take out of there so that I can create the children and family services committees this year. That’s what I’m telling you. I agree with you; in the long run that is the right way to go. So children and family services committees, we have worked on this for the last 10 years because the legislation provides for that, but no Legislature has ever approved money for it. So coming forward in the next business plan, this will be the first time when we will actually go to business planning and ask for money, but we need to do it properly. To have children and family services committees to work, most people that want to sit on it would like to be paid to do that. They also want to be trained to see what the Child and Family Services Act says, in how do you intervene. If you want to bring elders and community people together to do this important work, then they need to be properly supported and trained just like community justice committees.

The reason why that succeeded, and I worked in Justice when that came up in the ‘90s, they were very well supported. They had a coordinator headquartered in Yellowknife, they had regional coordinators, there were staff, there were people like Nick Sibbeston who chose to work there. That was done properly.

So I’m saying you can’t say just because you want prevention now to take the money from people that are already in the hospital sick so that you can do prevention. I think that’s the right way to go and what I’m saying is the business plan said that we will work on increasing five committees. We will continue to do that, but the letter that I had was that the committee report wanted us to get really aggressive and set up five committees this year. In order to do that I am submitting to you that if we don’t want to keep on failing, because lots of Members were here, we recommended that these committees be set up. Without putting resources in there and putting honorarium, putting program money in there, it ain’t going to work. I’m asking you to give me two or three months to put this into the business plan review. For you to say it should be easy for you to just move $1.5 million, I don’t know how anyone gets that. It’s not that I don’t want to do it.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Abernethy):** Thank you, Ms. Lee. Your time is up. I can put you back on the list if you want but I’m going to go to the next person on the list. Ms. Bisaro.

**MS. BISARO:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Hard to know where to start here. I listened to the Minister answer Mr. Abernethy’s questions with regard to the business plan and what we thought was there and what apparently is not there anymore. The Minister just mentioned, and I am reading from page 42 of the Health and Social Services business plan, and it says work with communities to establish child and family service committees and at least five more communities in this business year. That’s from the business plan which Social Programs committee spent a great deal of time discussing, debating, getting information on in September of 2010. I have to ask the Minister, if that phrase is in the business plan, what does it mean to her in terms of money?

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Abernethy):** Thank you, Ms. Bisaro. Ms. Lee.

**HON. SANDY LEE:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I clarified that in my letter to the committee and all the Members on February...actually, this morning. The five committees that we’re talking about in the business plan is to do it the way we’ve been doing it, which is to have no money in it. That’s not new. There have been no monies to set up children and family services committees. Okay? So we will continue to do that. But we have seen very poor results out of that.

I want to say, the CFSA standing committee report said that you would like us to get a lot more aggressive and have a more robust program. You want us to set this up, five committees, and make it work. What I’m proposing to you, to make it work, it will take some money, and I don’t have new money in the budget.

**MS. BISARO:** I guess it’s an issue of how we interpret words. To me, establish child and family service committees means that you will work to establish those committees. The word “work” is in there. The verb is in there. To me there’s an action involved in that. The Minister states that they intended to do things as they have done it in the past. Well, that’s no action at all. One child and family service committee was organized in Fort McPherson. It fell apart. It’s maybe gotten back together again. I fail to see how this statement, an action to work with communities to establish committees, doesn’t indicate that there will be some work on the part of the department. Work on the part of the department translates into money. Time is money. Staff would have to be doing something. I really fail to understand how the Minister can say that this action is here but it’s not going to cost any money. In my view that has been done in the last five or 10 years and it has translated into zero. If you’re not doing anything, absolutely you’re not going to get any results.

I really am distressed that we approved the business plan as a committee. I certainly did, as a member of the committee, based on what was on the business plan. I, unfortunately, believed what was on the paper. I don’t know if the Minister is suggesting that business plans don’t matter, that what’s on the paper can change so don’t worry about it. Maybe we don’t even need to bother to read business plans, because the department can turn around and interpret the words on the paper almost any way they want. Because that’s what I’m hearing right now. I’m really quite disturbed.

The other part that the Minister has referenced is that the Child and Family Services Act review report suggests a really robust action to set up these child and family service committees. I guess it’s a matter of defining “robust.” I’m reading from the report and it says “amend the act to require the director to provide funds, salary for a committee coordinator, per diems for members’ training, and support to child and family service committees.” I think that’s the same as “work to set up committees; (b) allow flexibility of mandate and function for the committees so that the communities can create a model appropriate to their culture and situation, and (c) allow and encourage child and family service committee members to participate in the process and develop the supporting policy.” That’s not very robust in my mind. I guess if you interpret work to set up committees as spending no money, then, yes, this recommendation is pretty robust because it says spend some money.

I have to say that the Minister in her communications to committee relative to the issues that we’ve got and the lack of funding have taken the most expensive assessment of what we’re looking for. A number of times in the report I believe we referenced child and family service committees which needed to be flexible, which could be combined with other organizations within the communities that are already established. The community justice committees was one that was mentioned. There are interagency committees in a number of communities. They certainly could belong to that. There’s a huge amount of flexibility in how the child and family service committees could be set up. They don’t need to be funded to the tune of the amount of money that’s in the letter that we got from the Minister.

I didn’t hear the Minister answer the question from Mr. Beaulieu. She suggests that child protection workers need to be trained to the tune of $125,000 a year. I really have to question, if we have child protection workers that need that kind of training, they shouldn’t be in the business of child protection I don’t think. In my mind, a child protection worker is a trained social worker and I really am not understanding what kind of training they need to work with a child and family service committee. It’s a matter of being able to communicate and if social workers can’t communicate, we’re in big trouble. I guess I’d like to ask the Minister again why we have to spend $125,000 to train child protection workers for child and family service committees.

**HON. SANDY LEE:** I just want to say that… And I am answering the Member’s question. The business plan speaks of not just the dollar amounts but some of the action items that the department wants to do. Dollars aren’t exactly always attached to some of those action items. It’s a business plan, it’s a blueprint where the department’s going to go, any department’s going to go for next year.

Like I stated before, I think this is about the third time I’m saying it, yes, in the business plan we said we will work to set up children and family services committees, like we have always done before. I am here admitting to you that we have not had success doing that. There were no specific dollars attached to doing that. We said we will continue to work on those. The way we’ve been doing it is we have, from the headquarters, asked the authorities to go out into the communities and work with the communities. The only community that has shown interest so far is Fort McPherson and that’s been going on for about five years. We’re still at a very delicate stage of getting it going. What we have heard on the ground from the people who want it, people who are really involved in Fort McPherson, is that they need more resources and support to do that. They would like some training to be able to work on that. Everyone would like honorarium because they know that in other committees they get money to attend these meetings. We’re just simply identifying that if the Assembly and the department really want to get this on the ground, I need to go before the next budget cycle and ask for some real money to do that.

I think it’s in the interest, actually, of the committee to make sure that to have your recommendation implemented, there has to be some money behind that. There are no contradictions between business plan and what we are saying here. We have always planned and we do continue to work on setting these up. But I believe in order to do that right, we need to spend the money.

I’m going to ask Paddy, the deputy minister, on what we mean by training the child protection workers. Sorry. Dana.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Abernethy):** Thank you, Ms. Lee. Mr. Heide.

**MR. HEIDE:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The $125,000 that we have currently allocated for training, when child protection workers are currently trained they’re trained to work within a court system. They’re trained to work within a legal justice system. To change that practice to now move to more of a community system, to work with community committees takes a significant amount of changing practice. Just to bring workers in to train one round of social worker training throughout the North is $45,000 just for travel and per diems only. So there’s a need to change practice. There’s a need to train workers to support committees and to change the way they deal with children. It’s not a simple matter of saying we need to talk to communities and bring a child in front of the community. It’s changing court practice and changing how we deal with children. So there’s a significant amount of change practice that needs to take place.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Abernethy):** Thank you, Mr. Heide. Ms. Bisaro.

**MS. BISARO:** I can squeeze this question in here. Mr. Heide just said it’s $4,000 to $5,000 to train one worker.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Abernethy):** Minister Lee.

**HON. SANDY LEE:** No, $45,000.

**MS. BISARO:** Oh, $45,000. Okay. That’s fine. So you’re suggesting that we might train one worker three times in a year. Is that correct?

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Abernethy):** Thank you, Ms. Bisaro. Mr. Heide.

**MR. HEIDE:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. To clarify, to bring in workers for one round of training, a full room of workers is approximately $45,000. Not one worker; one training.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Abernethy):** Thank you, Mr. Heide. Ms. Bisaro, your time is up. I’m going to go to the next person on the list. If you want back on the list, let me know. The next person on the list is Mr. Krutko.

**MR. KRUTKO:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Sitting here, flashback for the last 16 years. I think I’ve heard the same excuses from this department. To find a way to avoid doing what you’re legally obligated to do. Right now we went out of our way to have a public review of legislation that was brought into place back in the 13th Assembly. Four Assemblies later we’re still talking about the same issue.

We have some 600 children in care -- 600 -- at a cost of over $12 million a year to keep them in that system. I think it’s critical to realize that we have to find a way of breaking that cultural style of dealing with children. We have to find a way to reunite those children with their birth parents and find a way to get them to remain in our communities, not be taken away, and make the appropriate investments on prevention.

I heard all the Members talk about prevention is key. Preventing the system from getting there in the first place. Intervening early enough that you intervene with the families that you know are having social challenges. That you’re dealing with the fabric of what those families are going through, whether it’s substance abuse, poverty, addiction. That is the core problem we are having with a lot of these families. The key to that is to have a system in place that’s transparent and includes communities solving the problems at the community level. That’s why it’s critical that these committees be activated, implemented and given the adequate resources to do it.

I mean, we’re spending $12 million. If you can even take 60 of those children out of the system and reunite them with their families, just think that you’re saving yourself 10 percent. That’s $1.2 million. That’s the money you’re looking for. The achievement is 10 percent of what we have right now. Is there a way that we can decrease those numbers by 10 percent in this fiscal year and also going forward? Can we achieve that under the system that we have?

I have to disagree with the Minister saying don’t worry about it, we’ll work it into the next budget. Excuse me, but this is the last budget of the 16th Assembly. This is it. This is what we have to work out of to see any major changes going forward.

I’d just like to ask the Minister about re-profiling the dollars that we already have in the system, the $12 million we’re already spending on children services, and also looking at the resources we’re spending on structures such as boards and agencies. I need to illustrate again that the Beaufort-Delta health board has a budget of I think $41 million with an increase of I think about $6 million from the previous year. It’s $12 million. There’s an increase from last year to this year for $4 million, but again, you don’t have a board. It’s the public trustee that oversees the board, so that money that’s there for the board that’s not being used for the board, can those dollars be used to establish these types of committees? That’s an option that I’m putting to the Minister. There’s money identified for board type of activities such as the health board in Inuvik that does not exist. It’s in the budget. Can you move those dollars to establish those types of committees in the Beaufort-Delta region?

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Abernethy):** Thank you, Mr. Krutko. Minister Lee.

**HON. SANDY LEE:** Mr. Chair, I think the challenge we have here is a timing issue, because the standing committee report came out in October. By then we had gone through the business plan review, the budget was wrapped up in January and presented to the House in February. There was not enough time or space in the budget to incorporate as much as the Members thought that we should. We did accept many of the recommendations but there are pending resources.

The second thing is why don’t you just take 60 kids out of the system and use that money. I’d have to say if any of those 60 kids could be taken out, they shouldn’t be in there in the first place.

I say again what I said to MLA Beaulieu, that I agree with you that we need to make some decision to put the money up front. Children and family service committees in the long run, if well resourced and well run, would work with the communities and within the communities with the community leadership and the community people to take on the responsibilities about how to address child protection issues so that they don’t get into the foster care system. Okay. That is a long-term goal that I agree with. To do that properly I’m saying that we need to at least follow the models that we have that work, like the community justice committees and such.

I know some of the Members say why don’t you just lump up with them, but there are some rules and structures in place that we need to change. We’re talking about changing the way we do child protection, which I agree with, but it is not as easy to just say, okay, just take that money, take the kids out, reduce the foster care payments or any of the residential care and just use that money. I have to tell you that would have a consequence.

And the board money, I have to tell you that we are under a system deficit, so there is not money for me to take out to do this. Thank you.

**MR. KRUTKO:** Mr. Chair, I’m not too sure where the Minister is coming from by taking 60 kids out of the system, that basically it’s not going to solve the problem for me. There are probably 60 kids in the system that technically shouldn’t be there in the first place. It’s because the process did not allow for transparency and a program to be in place to prevent them from being there in the first place. I don’t think you can ask any kid that’s in foster care do you want to be there. I don’t think they want to be there. I think the issue has to be how can we as government live up to the obligations we have under legislation, called the child and family service legislation, and live up to the obligations that are in that legislation.

We as a committee went out and spent months on the road on this issue, we heard loud and clear from people right across the Northwest Territories, and they all were saying the same thing: we have to prevent the system to happen in regard to the children that are now finding themselves in the system regardless if it’s foster care, youth justice, and more importantly, what is going to happen after the residential school nightmare we’ve all gone through. This is nothing different. We’re doing something that basically has happened in the past that we’re trying to do using a different method, but again, we’re ending up with the same results.

I’d just like to ask the Minister, like, Fort McPherson, using numbers, just rough numbers, they’re spending about $30,000 a month on kids in care in Fort McPherson; a month. That’s almost $400,000 a year in one community. If you were able to establish a committee to work with the families in that community, get those kids reunited with their parents and also take them out of the system where they should be, again, I’d like to know how can we, as a government, bring down the cost of delivering this system in our communities, get the number of kids that are in that system, find a way to work with the child and family services committee, which is key, find community prevention to community problems and allow the communities to work it through using these committees. I know for, like myself and the Minister and meeting with the child and family services committee in Fort McPherson and also with the deputy, these people mean well. They’ll do it practically for nothing as long as they can help the families in their community.

I’d just like to ask seriously is there a way of reprofiling that $7.4 million or $7.6 million in regard to foster care in regard to prevention programs to find a way to work the system so that we can try to pull the kids out of that system of being institutionalized, regardless if it’s foster care and taken away from their communities, their families, because I think the legal costs in the long run and also the cost to the system is going to be a lot more than a $200,000 investment now in regard to preventing and also finding ways of working in the system. Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Abernethy):** Thank you, Mr. Krutko. Your time is up but I’ll go to the Minister for a response. Minister Lee.

**HON. SANDY LEE:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. We do continue to work with Fort McPherson to set up that committee there and part of what I would like to see happen there is to have less children in care in McPherson. I agree with the Member that Fort McPherson has one of the highest number of children in care. So that is a long-term goal and we will continue to do that. I want to make that clear. We will continue to work on setting up more children and family services committees.

In the communication I had when I met with the committee on the recommendations of the CFSA review it was made clear to me that you wanted immediate action and a lot more aggressive strategy to do that. This is why I’ve said, when we reviewed how do we jump start and get ahead on what we’ve been doing until now, the missing variable is we need to resource this.

I think we should be careful when we speak about children in care, because there are lots of children who are in care who are there because they were neglected or they were sexually abused. They are suffering. While we can talk about preventing and helping families so that children don’t get to that neglect and abuse, the fact of the matter is a lot of children in our care have been abused and neglected.

The long-term work of children and family service committees is to have a community presence, a committee of leaders and concerned citizens who are supported and resourced and who will take on the task of working with families, helping them, working with child protection workers, working with health and social services, working with any other people in the community so that the families are supported, children are supported so that they don’t get into the system. This will take a lot of concerted effort.

Mr. Chairman, I want to say I am committed to doing that. I think Fort McPherson has the best chance of getting ahead of this than any other community, but to do it with five committees, because so far we’ve been relying on our staff and management in the authorities to do it as part of their work. I think we need to create a position that’s tasked to doing this or else it’s not going to happen as quickly and as well as the committee wanted it to happen. Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Abernethy):** Thank you, Minister Lee. Next on my list, Mr. Beaulieu.

**MR. BEAULIEU:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I just wanted to get back to my earlier questions about the cost and some of the responses that we are hearing from the Minister. This cost is too high; there is no question about it. This also assumes a 12-month fully functional committee, five fully functional committees from April 1st to March 31st, 2011-12, at this cost. We heard that, yes, it costs $45,000 to train a child protection worker to switch from a court system to working with a committee. Well, if that is the case, and that probably is the case, then we are training five of them at once in order to set up this committee.

I am still not understanding the half a million dollars worth of training that would be required in order to get these committees running. That is still not connecting with me. We have $45,000 to train all five of them to come in as a group to work with committees versus courts. Okay, that is good, but the budget is $500,000, so there is quite a discrepancy there.

Again, we also are looking at this budget here in children and family services. We are looking at a 12-month budget again. That is assuming that these committees are not up and running and there is no impact whatsoever. What we are saying is the committee is, if we get these committees up and running at a lesser cost than this and they are functional and they have an impact, which we are suggesting it will have a positive impact on the budget here, we should be able to do it. I don’t know what our next moves will be, but I am really curious about why this number is here. Why would the department present a number to us at, say, a quarter of a million dollars to set up one committee, more importantly, half a million dollars just to train five community protection workers to be able to come out of the court system? That is 125 times five communities, right? I guess it is $625,000 worth of training that the department is proposing in their responses to train five people to work out of the court system into a committee. These are people that are social workers that have the degrees in social work, is my assumption, but the department is suggesting that it is going to cost $625,000 to train these guys as one. That is the most glaring. The rest is not too bad. That is the most glaring one of the costs that were provided.

I would like the Minister just to explain that cost to me in that context, five people, $625,000 worth of training required within this time period in order to get these committees functional. Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Abernethy):** Thank you, Mr. Beaulieu. Minister Lee.

**HON. SANDY LEE:** Mr. Chairman, I just wanted to reiterate that if the committee is happy or it is acceptable to them, that we continue working on setting up these committees as the way we have been and do our utmost to get them set up, I am happy to accept that and we will continue to work on that. We will be obviously using existing resources to do that, but I was under the assumption that the committee wanted us to get more aggressive about it. This is why we came up with a plan. I would like to ask Dana to give you details on how we arrived at these numbers. Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Abernethy):** Thank you, Minister Lee. Mr. Heide.

**MR. HEIDE:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. For clarity, the training isn’t about training one worker per community. It is training all the workers in the community to work with that, not only the community child and family services committee, but it also is around building community capacity, working with the leadership in that community, changing the way the community treats children, changing the way we as a community treat children that either are in jeopardy of harm or require intervention.

For clarity, I have done presentations in communities on child and family services committees. I have worked with communities around developing these committees. That takes a tremendous amount of care and feeding of those committees to continue that progress. People drop out when they feel that they are not quite suited for it, when the community is not quite ready. It is about developing communities to be able to step up and take this forward.

The $125,000 is a number worth shaking heads at and looking at, but when we bring people in for training, we have to bear all the transportation costs, all the replacement costs, all the training material cost as well as changing practice. So it is not just a matter of bringing someone in and saying you will do this differently tomorrow. It is around building that capacity in the worker to do it differently.

As was referenced earlier, this is the only jurisdiction that has this type of system. So even though workers may work somewhere else or be trained at whatever university or come from a community, the practice to date has not been working with children within a child and family services committee. That is why the expensive training. The training is one time and we move on and that training will be ongoing as we move to different regions and different communities, but it is a one start-up cost. We have to remember that start-up costs for any type of changing behaviour, changing activities in a community is expensive. It is worth the investment.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Abernethy):** Thank you, Mr. Heide. Mr. Beaulieu.

**MR. BEAULIEU:** Mr. Chairman, that is fine.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Abernethy):** Thank you, Mr. Beaulieu. Next on my list is Mr. Ramsay.

**MR. RAMSAY:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I just wanted to say I appreciate the Standing Committee on Social Programs’ belief that they wanted more answers on the review of the Child Family Services Act. They wanted some money. They wanted some commitments from the Department of Health and Social Services. They wrote to the Minister and the department three weeks ago. From where I sit, I see this is the last week we have to approve the budget. The timing of this is very suspect. To bring a response back to the committee in the last week at the 11th hour when we know our backs are up against the wall, there is little room for concessions, there is little room for negotiations. It leaves a lot to be desired.

I think that the Standing Committee on Social Programs is owed a better way of doing things than what has transpired here. To take three weeks to get back to them, we have been through this process before. The Minister has been here a long time. We know how things work around here. We know we get bogged down. We know we don’t have a lot of time left, so what is the department’s answer? We will hit them with this response. We know it is not what they want, but we will hit them with it on a Monday during the last week of budget session. Well, to me, that is not good enough.

I think you should have been back to the Standing Committee on Social Programs much earlier. There should have been more time to talk. There should have been more time to negotiate. Your budget has been deferred. Who knows what is going to happen from here, Mr. Chairman? You have to answer questions and you have to compromise and you have to work with the standing committee. I don’t see a lot of flexibility left in this process right now. There is some frustration here.

Again, I think if responses were given back to standing committee in a more appropriate time frame, I think we could have avoided this. I am supporting my colleagues on the Standing Committee on Social Programs to get some more information and to get addressed what issues they wanted in that letter. Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Abernethy):** Thank you, Mr. Ramsay. I didn’t hear a question, but I will go to the Minister in case she wants to make some sort of response. Minister Lee.

**HON. SANDY LEE:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I don’t have anything to add to that. I don’t agree with him, but those are his comments.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Abernethy):** Thank you, Minister Lee. Next on my list is Mr. Krutko.

**MR. KRUTKO:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Again, I am hoping that the Minister will try to give a little bit here because I think that is what is going to take to get us out of this challenging problem realizing that we are dealing with a budget which basically has major capital expenditures but also we have to realize that there are flexibilities in regards to re-profiling the dollars in regards to community health programs. We have some $69 million in that area. We have money for mental health addictions. We have dollars in regards to dealing with the NGOs in our communities and I think somebody touched on it earlier, but we have interagency committees in our communities that meet every month. We have mental health and addiction workers, we have social workers. There’s got to be a way somehow that they can sit down and formulate either through a committee structure or working in conjunction with each other.

You know we had a very interesting presentation from the Minister of Justice today of trying to find ways of dealing with the justice system and basically you’re preventing people to work out situations, especially when it comes to family matters and avoiding using the court time and the court processes, but committing to an intervention program that works with the Department of Justice. They’re doing that and I was glad for the presentation, but again, the department is doing it with their resources in house. They’re not asking for money outwards.

So it’s using the expertise. I know that in regard to the cost of having people fly back and forth, the technology is there today. In every health centre we have telemedicine, we have systems in regard to the Internet. We have boardrooms set up for teleconference through conference centres. These are already in place. You can avoid the cost of travel nowadays because of the technology that we’re using. So that cost savings that you’re talking about could be used to integrate these systems.

I’d just like to ask the Minister in regard to the resources that we’re expending in the budget, and again, I think the health boards are the key. The health boards are the ones that hold the resources, we block fund them, but if those dollars aren’t being expended where they’re supposed to be going, then we have to find a way to either redirect those funds so they go directly to the areas, such as the establishment of the child and family services boards in the different communities.

I have to follow up on Mr. Beaulieu’s point. We should be focusing on where we have the highest number of children in the system. Focus in those communities and try to find ways of preventing and bringing down those numbers in those communities with high numbers. If we do that, I think the savings we’re looking at will pay for this initiative tenfold.

So I’d like to ask the Minister, can you consider those alternatives and options realizing that we have to find a way around this. We can’t keep blaming each other. I think by doing nothing, we know what’s going to happen. We have to do something here. Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Abernethy):** Thank you, Mr. Krutko. Minister Lee.

**HON. SANDY LEE:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I’m not familiar in detail with what Justice has proposed. I’ve had a look at it, but I don’t know exactly how it’s funded, so I’m not able to compare.

But I’d like to just reiterate that the department is and has always been committed to working to set up these committees and the one that we are closest to getting some results is Fort McPherson. If the Member’s wish is that we continue to work in that and use whatever resources we have within and the staff we have, the management and the authorities to do that, then we will continue to do that because that’s part of our mandate and nothing will change, nothing has changed from that. I just thought that the committee wanted us to be a lot more aggressive and including honorarium and doing it differently, because as I said to you, and I’ll be the first to admit, that we have not seen as much results as I think the committee recommendations would like us to see. So if it works for the committee that the department continues to work on this within the existing resources but still continue work on presenting this as a new initiative and go for allocated resources, I could do both.

So I think for some reason somehow the communication was that we are not interested in setting up committees and that’s not what we meant to say. We are committed to setting this up as we see it. To see some real concrete results we do need investments into that initiative. So we will proceed to do that for the next business plan, but if the Member is saying, and I think that’s what he’s saying, is that you should continue to see what resources you can use to see what we can do, sure, of course, we will continue to do that and I have no problem doing that.

I don’t think I need to say to anybody here that almost all programs under Health and Social Services are a bit stretched, whether it’s mental health or anything. But we will use our existing resources to see how we can move forward. Thank you.

**MR. KRUTKO:** Just to remind the Minister and also Members of the House that in order for these committees to be established, they have to basically request it. Right now there’s only one board that has requested the establishment of child and family services. So technically under the legislation you have to receive a request from a particular community to carry this out. So it’s not saying we’ll get five out there today. It’s sort of an application-based format that you have to go through under the legislation. By the legislation where you basically have to request of the Minister that you accommodate your community’s wishes by establishing of those committees. So all we’re asking is that you consider a possibility of achieving five communities in this fiscal budget cycle. Again, those communities have to request the establishment of these committees. Once you have them established or the community requests them, then you can basically address the dollars as the requests come in.

So my understanding of the legislation is that in order to establish these things, you have to get a formal request from a community to establish these child and family service committees. So we’re looking at that process to take place, but the direction we should aim for is trying to accomplish five of those within the next fiscal year. So that’s acceptable to the Minister that we try to form like that and I have to agree, let’s focus on working with those communities that have high numbers, get them applying for establishment of those types of committees and then look at the resources it will take to implement them. Thank you.

**HON. SANDY LEE:** I can accept what the Member is saying because that is basically what we are doing, which is continuing to work on setting up five committees within the resources we have and using our existing staff. We won’t be able to do honorarium and other things that we would like to do, but using our existing resources to do that. The Member is right; I’m not sure that the legislation requires that the community request it, but certainly we couldn’t get this started without having the interest and participation of community leaders and some focused energy on it. I would like to just ask Dana to give you some information on what our experiences have been in consulting with the communities.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Abernethy):** Thank you, Minister Lee. Mr. Heide.

**MR. HEIDE:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The MLA is quite right, that to formally establish the committees takes a request of a community. However, for us to begin working with the committee and working with the community, all it takes is a phone call. We have written all of the communities over the past year and tried to sell our services, tried to encourage the community to become part of an ongoing dialogue of how these get created. When we get a request, we go into the community and we’ll meet with the leadership and other interested parties and do presentations. I myself have done a couple of presentations over the last while, but the formal, under the legislation, the formalizing of a committee under legislation takes a request for the communities, but actually starting that dialogue all it takes is for someone to talk to somebody. Whether that’s a community social worker, talking with the band council, whether that’s a CEO on their trips into the communities to talk about programming that’s available. We are open for business and we try to make that clear with communities. We will travel and we will work with communities to develop these committees. The stumbling block is always supporting them through training, through the development of the community and through supporting them through honorarium and other monies.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Abernethy):** Thank you, Mr. Heide. Mr. Krutko, your time is expired. I have nobody else on my list. We’re on page 8-29 with Health and Social Services, activity summary. Mr. Bromley.

## COMMITTEE MOTION 39-16(5): DEFER CONSIDERATION OF HEALTH AND SOCIAL SERVICES DEPARTMENT SUMMARY, CARRIED

**MR. BROMLEY:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I move that this committee defer consideration of the department summary for the Department of Health and Social Services.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Abernethy):** Thank you, Mr. Bromley. A motion is on the floor and is being distributed.

A motion is on the floor. A motion has been distributed. The motion is non-debatable. Non-debatable, according to the Clerk. Non-debatable.

---Carried

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Abernethy):** We will defer further consideration of the Department of Health and Social Services. What is the wish of committee? Mrs. Groenewegen.

**MRS. GROENEWEGEN:** I’d like to carry on with the Department of Justice, please.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Abernethy):** Is committee agreed?

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Abernethy):** Ms. Lee, if I could get you to please thank your staff and, Sergeant-at-Arms, if could please get you to escort the witnesses out of the Chamber.

Next step is to go to the Department of Justice. Once the witnesses have left the chamber I’ll go to the Minister for some opening remarks. Mr. Lafferty.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley):** Okay, committee. I think we’re all set to roll. Is committee agreed that we can proceed with the Department of Justice?

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley):** I’ll ask the Minister if he would like to give opening remarks.

**HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Yes. I’m pleased to present the Department of Justice main estimates for the fiscal year 2011-2012.

The 2011-2012 budget was developed to carry on with a number of priority initiatives identified by the 16th Assembly. The department’s operations and maintenance budget of $106.206 million represents an increase of 4.8 percent over the 2010-2011 main estimates. This increase consists primarily of forced growth in supporting the core operations of policing and corrections, and collective bargaining increases. It also reflects modest strategic investments in several areas.

Throughout the life of this government, the department has worked to develop and deliver effective services and programs to the people of the Northwest Territories to build a system of justice that is open, accessible and responsive to individual and community needs, and to support the administration of our courts. Front-line staff work with individuals and families in times of personal crisis. This could be a youth in trouble with the law, a victim who has been assaulted, parents who need help working through separation or divorce, people who need lawyers, or an offender who needs the right supports to make better choices once released from jail. We also recognize the absolute necessity of working with other social program departments to support the Assembly’s vision of “strong individuals, families and communities sharing the benefits and responsibilities of a unified, environmentally sustainable and prosperous Northwest Territories.”

Mr. Chair, the justice portfolio is a challenging one, but it is also very rewarding. Our programs address important issues facing families and our communities. During the 16th Assembly, I received input from standing committees that helped us all make the best possible decisions to meet the needs of NWT residents. Some decisions have been very difficult, and the current fiscal reality requires that we continue to use our resources wisely so that we can continue to deliver our core programs and services.

Mr. Chair, our focus is on meeting the needs of our residents. The department provides an array of core programs and services mandated by federal and territorial statutes. Justice has made it a priority to ensure these programs and services have the appropriate funding to provide effective and efficient programs. That is why we see an increase in forced growth funding in the amount of $8.9 million, which includes $1.7 million in collective bargaining increases and a further $1.7 million for increased RCMP human resource costs and for radio replacements for the RCMP. This budget also includes a total of $4.7 million for corrections to fund additional probation and facility positions so that there are greater supports for offenders as they work towards their rehabilitation.

In addition to managing our core operational costs, Justice also proposes investments in a number of areas that support the strategic themes of Building Our Future, Managing This Land and Refocusing Government. For example:

* $150,000 is proposed to create an office of the children’s lawyer to give a greater, more effective voice to children in legal proceedings;
* $100,000 is identified for the development of a comprehensive long-term Community Safety Strategy, an initiative that includes working with communities on local issues and strengths so that community-based approaches are identified and implemented;
* $118,000 is proposed to fund a FASD consultant position to provide knowledge, expertise and best practices research to the department, front-line workers, community partners and key stakeholders on how to best provide supports and services to those with FASD and other cognitive disorders;
* $109,000 is identified to enhance advice and support to GNWT departments and other public bodies on matters relating to privacy of, and access to, information; and
* $350,000 is proposed to establish a two-person consultation unit that will provide GNWT staff with training and access to policy and legal advice regarding effective consultation with Aboriginal governments.

Mr. Chair, these investments represent ways in which Justice is working to fulfil its mandate, further its goal of developing an open, accessible, responsive system of justice, and advance the overall strategic initiatives, priorities and goals of the 16th Assembly. I look forward to our remaining months in office to continue our work with Members to make a difference to the people we serve.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko):** Thank you, Mr. Lafferty. With that, I’d like to ask the Minister if he will be bringing in witnesses.

**HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY:** Yes, Mr. Chairman.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko):** Is the committee agreed that the Minister can bring in his witnesses?

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko):** Sergeant-at-Arms, escort the witnesses in.

Mr. Lafferty, for the record, could you introduce your witnesses?

**HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY:** Yes, Mr. Chairman. I have with me to my left Bronwyn Watters, deputy minister of Justice. To my right is Kim Schofield, director of finance for the Justice department.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko):** Thank you, Mr. Lafferty. Welcome, witnesses. General comments on the Department of Justice. Mr. Ramsay.

**MR. RAMSAY:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I just wanted to provide a few opening comments on the Department of Justice.

First off, I really do appreciate all the good work that the department does do. I know I’ve been critical in the past on, you know, especially the area of rehabilitation and programming. I want to make sure that we are providing the best rehabilitation services and programs. I look forward to seeing, you know, we talked a little bit earlier today about an action plan being developed out of the 18 recommendations contained in the review of the programs back in 2008. I really think there’s a lot of good recommendations there. All 18 of them are good in their own right but there are some of them that I think we need to act on much sooner than later.

Services in the area of mental health I think is a big one. We have to take a serious look at how we deal with folks that are incarcerated that have cognitive disorders of some type and treat them accordingly. I find it really hard to believe we’ve gone two and a half years since that program review was done without a clinical psychologist at our largest corrections facility. I continue to be amazed at how that happens. Considering the increases in violent crime, considering the repeat offenders, considering the rate of incarceration in our Territory being the highest in the country, why we don’t have a clinical psychologist on staff boggles my mind. If you look at the South Mackenzie Correctional Centre where they have an inmate population of I think it’s 51 or 60, somewhere in that neighbourhood, they have a clinical psychologist on staff there. I think they should, I’m not saying they shouldn’t, but they should. Then you look at North Slave Correctional Centre with an inmate population sometimes getting close to 200, I think currently it’s probably running about 165 inmates, without one. We really... Again, I think the Minister knows that. He’s also committed to trying to address that need at that facility. I wish him well on that.

Seeing as we have Justice here, I just wanted to make a few comments, too, about some of the things I’ve been saying. I understand the role of the judiciary. Some of the remarks I’ve made are in no way to disparage the good work of the courts. The judges, the lawyers in our Territory, I think they do a great job for us. I’ve talked about light sentences and when I talk about light sentences I think that’s just part of the equation. I’ve been standing up here trying to provide the department with some suggestions on how we can improve things. I understand sentences are not the only component of how we deal with inmates, their rehabilitation, and the issue of public safety at the end of the day is paramount. I think that’s really important and we can’t underestimate that. We do make the laws here. The judges enforce those laws. That’s our role. I understand my role completely. When I might have made reference to how our Minister could influence things, when I make reference to influencing things, I’m making reference to our Minister of Justice working with his federal counterpart in Ottawa on how we can get tough on crime. That is going to be a concerted effort by politicians who make the laws in this country to get tough on crime. I’m a firm believer that jail isn’t the answer for everybody and those folks who can be rehabilitated, we should have every opportunity to rehabilitate them.

What I’m talking about is the repeat violent offenders that we have in our Territory and the fact that I don’t understand why if somebody has 15, 16 or even 20 violent offences against people, an application is not made by the Crown to go after them under the dangerous offender clause or status. To me if we don’t do that, we’re not protecting society. I know there’s so much that goes into that application to look at dangerous offender status. I’ve read through it myself and I just don’t understand how many times it takes. That’s the only thing I’m trying to get at. How many times does somebody have to hurt somebody else, inflict pain and suffering on somebody else, not just the victim but their families, and continually be institutionalized, not get rehabilitated and get back out and the cycle just continues to repeat itself.

Of course, as I’ve mentioned many times, there are root causes to all of this and I think the government really needs to continue to chip away at what ails and plagues our communities, like addictions and poverty, homelessness, all these things. We’re not going to solve all of this overnight, but certainly the numbers could be getting better and I think we have to start measuring. That’s another one of the recommendations that’s contained in your program review a few years back. We should be measuring ourselves off of something. When a government comes in in year one, violent crime at the end of the four years should go down. Suicide rates should go down. High school graduations should go up. I mean, those are things that a government should and can be measuring itself by, and I don’t think we do that often enough.

I think we continue to just throw money at things and not really have a plan or a way to measure the success or the failure of what we’re doing. That’s something I always had a concern with, because, as I mentioned, we spend close to $700 million as a government between the three departments, Justice, ECE and Health and Social Services, and really, are things getting much better. Well, arguably, they’re not. I think we need to be moving in the right direction.

I attended a briefing with the Minister and staff and I caught the tail end of it this morning. I wanted to say I appreciate the work that the Minister and the staff are putting into the area of family courts and mediation services for people going through family breakup. I think a lot of good work is being done in that area. I continue to say that equal-shared parenting is the way to go. The default has to be to equal-shared parenting. Both parents have to have a role in the child’s upbringing. I look forward to us moving towards that and continuing to work on getting towards that.

The issue of family breakup, too, I think we underestimate. The feeling it gives people especially in a small community where there might not be all the services that there is available for folks going through a family breakup in Yellowknife or Hay River. If you’re out in a small community and your family is breaking up, you have absolutely nowhere to turn sometimes. Maybe some family members, maybe not. Maybe you don’t have any family there, but that takes an undue toll on families in small communities when families do break up. I think any services we can get into the smaller communities in dealing with family breakup and mediation and helping people through what oftentimes is one of the most difficult times in a person’s life is when they break up and you have children involved. It’s a very emotional, stressful time in a person’s life so people need all the help they can get.

Again, Mr. Chairman, I appreciate the Minister’s time and I do know that he and his staff are moving us in the right direction. It might not be as fast as I’d like to see us moving but, again, I think it’s in the right direction and I know the department’s heart is in the right place and I know that they’re trying to do the right things there and I wish them well. Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko):** Since there’s quite a bit there, I will allow the Minister to respond to Mr. Ramsay.

**HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY:** Mahsi, Mr. Chair. Most of the discussion that the Member addressed I agree with. The 18 recommendations that are being brought forward, the implementation should be sooner than later. I agree with him. Those are the areas that we are pursuing and we will follow through with those recommendations.

The clinical psychologist, we’ve dealt with that in the House. As I stated in the House, we will have a trained individual within a month or so from now and we’re looking forward to that individual coming on board as a fully fledged clinical psychologist. That’s in the works.

The life sentence versus the heavier sentence. This is a national issue, Mr. Chair, but what we can do at our end and what we had done is also focusing a lot on the preventive measurement. Currently we’re finalizing the review of the Community Justice Program because one of the focuses we want to elaborate or enhance more is preventive measurement. These are the areas that we continue to stress, we continue to heavily invest in, because we firmly believe that if we prevent things from happening, then lack of dealing with sentencing in the long run.

Also just enhancing our rehabilitation programs. Over and over that has been brought up and definitely those are the areas that we need to increase our focus on. We will continue, as we’ve done in the past, to push the federal government to be tough on crime. Mr. Chair, for the repeat violent offenders, this is an area that it’s a serious issue at the national stage even with our Northwest Territories Department of Justice. We will do what we can with our Crown, as well, here in the Northwest Territories, even at the federal level too. We’re not going to stop here. We’ll continue pressuring our colleagues at the federal level.

Another area that was touched on was that violent crime should go down. I totally agree with that statement and even the statement that was made by Judge Vertes on Northbeat that it is our responsibility. The Northwest Territories politicians and the general public need to do their part. It’s not just our department or the GNWT, but as whole. Government of the Northwest Territories, Aboriginal governments, the general public at large, we have to do this together.

The programs on the family breakup, we did a presentation this morning to the standing committee. We’ve highlighted various programs. That’s just the beginning of what we offer but we’ll continue to develop more programs along the way. Again, this is part of supporting those individuals that may be in a breakup situation. There is a mediation program. There are different programs that we offer, but we’ll continue to explore on how we can enhance those programs, Mr. Chair. Mahsi.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko):** Thank you, Mr. Minister. Next I have Mr. Menicoche and Mr. Jacobson. Mr. Menicoche.

**MR. MENICOCHE:** Thank you very much, Mr. Chair. I just want to begin with the community of Wrigley. I think we spoke with the Minister about this before and in the House, is that striving towards a full-time detachment in the community of Wrigley is still a goal of our government and it’s something I support and the community supports. So as we work towards getting a full-time detachment, I’d just like to ask the Minister once again to raise it with his federal colleagues. It’s still a priority of our GNWT and I understood that it may still be in the federal capital plan but a couple years down the road. Any way we can advance that will sure go a long ways.

I think one of the opportunities, too, is that when they’re talking about the socio-economic fund for the pipeline. I think some of it was actually supposed to be used for those services and in health and justice, so a huge opportunity to mention it to the federal counterparts or else if they start up the… I forget the name of the pipeline coordinating group that’s going to oversee how that money is distributed throughout the Northwest Territories. I think another huge opportunity to advance a capital project such as that. It will only enhance the programs and services in the community and it’s hoped at that time, too, that that pipeline fund will be used for nursing in our communities as well.

I just wanted to mention to the Minister a new subject there that was brought to my attention that two former constituents actually applied on a job in corrections, I think it was a case worker position or something like that. They are Aboriginals, experienced. In fact, there were three Aboriginals that applied for that position, Mr. Chairman. I do want to say that, yes, I spoke in the House about how strong my support was for our policy of hiring Aboriginals, our Affirmative Action Policy, and the person that got hired is not even Aboriginal, nor even from the North, Mr. Chairman, so I was really taken aback by that situation.

There is a reason we have an Affirmative Action Policy. That is exactly it. We want to keep jobs for Northerners and I know that the Minister of Justice is a firm believer in it as well. How could the situation like this happen? I am not too sure, but I think the focus for me as MLA is that if I don’t say anything about what happened, then I am actually agreeing to it.

At this point, it is a concern that this happened in Yellowknife, but people are watching. Other departments are watching. If they get away with it here, they will get away with it in other areas. That has to stop now, especially for the fact that we are not a representative workforce and all MLAs throughout this whole budget session raised it time and time again, yet here we are raising an Affirmative Action Policy and they are not hiring a P1 Cabinet, so that is a really strange kind of behaviour. If you are saying one thing and you are doing another, that is not very consistent. In our government, we have to be consistent, Mr. Chairman. I just wanted to raise that issue at this point.

Also, I will just raise the issue that one of my colleagues, Mr. Yakeleya, has raised about corrections and on-the-land programs. That is something I certainly would like to see pursued. It is probably not in the budget now, but sometime in the future we are going to have to work towards that. When we did have it, it did work well. I certainly would like to see it in the communities, if at all possible, and opportunities for regional communities to at least try that, Mr. Chairman.

With that, I will just close those comments. Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko):** Thank you, Mr. Menicoche. Minister Lafferty.

**HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY:** Mr. Chairman, there is Wrigley and also, of course, Gameti. They are still priorities for GNWT and the Justice department. We have invested resources to make that happen. Now we are just waiting for the federal government to do their part as infrastructure.

I can assure the Member and also the Members, that at every provincial/territorial/federal Ministers meeting this has been addressed at every table, Wrigley and Gameti. They are fully aware of it. Our understanding is that federal infrastructure is still part of the plan, but it has been backdated from what we have heard. We are looking at other options as well. We call it mobile cell units. Those are just some of the key initiatives that we are pursuing with the chief commanding officer of the Northwest Territories RCMP, Wade Blake. He is exploring and it is much cheaper than the regular detachment. We did present the idea to the federal Minister back in December 2010. Part of my plan is to see the federal Minister, Minister Toews, possibly some time in March to follow up and see what the status is on those two detachments. We will continue to address those matters because it is important to us as a department. We want to see that happen. We put RCMP officers in Fort Simpson to serve Wrigley. We have done our part. We have committed. We will continue to provide those resources. We will continue to again pressure the federal government to do their part.

Mr. Chairman, the other matter on the two workers that applied, I think we need to deal with these matters when they arise. Let’s say these complaints or concerns are brought forward and it usually goes through the MLA’s office and the MLAs usually send it to our department so we can follow through what happened. How come those individuals weren’t hired? Of course, there is a due process, but I did commit in this House that we are developing and we have started on a Northern Development Program for within our Justice department focusing on the Aboriginal workforce. We want to increase the Aboriginal workforce, especially in the corrections area. I hear the Member’s concern. I want to address it as well. These are the areas that we are going to tackle in the area of correction institution. Mr. Chairman, these are the two areas that have been addressed and we will continue to work with those individuals. I commend those individuals for applying. I hope they will continue applying, because we want to make some changes as well. They may have gone through some hoops in the past, but we want to develop and enforce this Northern Development Program within our Justice department. Mahsi, Mr. Chairman.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko):** Thank you, Minister. Mr. Jacobson.

**MR. JACOBSON:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I will start off, again, on air charters. I still see and I know the Minister told me last year that the court circuit, when they are travelling to the communities, it is up to the judge whether he is going to hold his aircraft or he could let the plane go for the day or stay in the community. I think, if the Minister could see if he could talk to the judges, I guess, to see if he could stop doing that in holding the aircraft in the communities, because they are tying up a lot of aircraft. I don’t think that is right.

In regards to the next one is the court workers. It is good to see that we still have our court workers in the long term. They are really needed in the communities because the court circuits, when they do come in, it is good to have the people, innocent until proven guilty, briefed in what is going on and on their case. It is good to see that their contribution under the delivery program is still there for the long term.

Also, the community justice committees that are under-subsidized, they are not getting enough money. I have people in the communities, elders’ committee, that sits on the justice committees that need more funding. We just need to do something about it. We brought this up a couple of times, that we never saw any changes yet. We have to keep pushing towards that. Victims assistance support services needs to be really taken care of in our small communities. When something happens in the communities, people need somewhere to go to receive help. We should be trying to utilize that more. Our elders program which allows the inmates to come in from corrections to come in to help elders in the communities, I think that is a good idea. More funding should be given to that. I see that. I don’t think that is going to be enough money to try to utilize that program in a positive way. I think you get one or two people out and then it has to be utilized more.

With the wilderness camps, the funding that we are providing for the operators to operate I think it is a really good program. My colleague Mr. Menicoche said that we should be utilizing the wilderness camps more for the prisoners. They are just leaving them down in the corrections here.

The office space in Tuktoyaktuk, it is good to see any kind of expenditures from the department in communities. It is always good. Crime prevention, we should be getting RCMP detachment commanders letting members go into the schools under their program if that is possible to more utilize the DARE program in the communities. It’s a really good program. I think in the newspaper last week we have Sergeant Norris back up in Inuvik, which is a good thing. He’s a role model for all students in the community and it’s good to see one of our own policing our own.

I just really want to stress with the Minister that we must get more funding for the community justice programs and the deferral. Deferrals that we could try to work with the people who are going up against court instead of just putting them in the regular court circuit. I think these justice committees are underutilized and underfunded. They have to start getting more funding into them so they can do it properly, like having assistants and being able to get the mail and just the funding needs to be there. I can’t stress more need for that to keep going on.

My last one is the emergency financial assistance funds for victims of crime. I think that should be really looked at again. It’s a pretty low number. Just imagine if we could stop one of those planes from being held 24 hours, probably could give double that.

I’d like to thank the chair and the Minister for his remarks. I look forward to page by page.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko):** Mr. Lafferty.

**HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY:** Mahsi, Mr. Chairman. We’ll try to continue to spend more money in the Member’s riding as much as we can. Court circuit of course is at the discretion of the judge. At the same time, there’s got to be a cost effective of how they travel. Sometimes the court is done early so the plane waits on them and then a couple of hours later they fly back as opposed to the plane going back and coming back again. That would almost double or triple the cost. Those are just cost factors that the judges take into consideration.

The court workers, we’ve expanded their role. We’re trying to utilize their service even more at the community level, because they are an asset to our organization in the communities.

The victim support services, I agree we need to do more in those areas. There are initiatives on the way with victim notification services and other areas of support that we’ll continue to put more emphasis on at the community level and regional level.

The wilderness camp, on-the-land program has been brought up on numerous occasions that there should be more resources and funds invested. I can’t agree more. Those are areas that we always push through our shop, Justice, with the communities. We want to see more into the communities and we need to work with the communities and regions on who wants to take advantage of that. We’ll continue to push that venue.

RCMP members go to the schools. I can’t agree more on that as well. We highly encourage that with RCMP “G” Division and we do see them in some schools. It would be nice to see them in all schools over a year period. This will be brought up with the RCMP “G” Division chief superintendent, because we do meet and discuss various issues that are being brought to my attention.

Community justice programming, we are at the final stages of going through the recommendations and review. Obviously any changes that occur will cost additional funds and this is what the Member is referring to, that maybe more additional investment should be geared towards community justice because it is part of the preventive measurement and I agree with that. This will be before us and before the standing committee. I’m looking forward to meeting with the standing committee in due time.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko):** Thank you, Mr. Lafferty. General comments. Detail?

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko):** Okay. So maybe we can bring our attention to page 9-7, Justice, department summary, go past that and get into the whole budget. Page 9-8, Justice, department summary, information item, infrastructure investment summary.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko):** Page 9-9, Justice, department summary, information item, revenue summary.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko):** Page 9-10, Justice, department summary, information item, active position summary.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko):** Page 9-13, Justice, activity summary, services to government, operations expenditure summary. Ms. Bisaro.

**MS. BISARO:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I did want to ask a question here with regard to the money we’re spending for access to information and privacy... I forget the whole title. Protection of privacy. We’ve been receiving a lot of requests, I gather, over the last couple of years relative to residential school investigations and so on, and I understand that there’s an increase in funding for ATIPP. I think if I remember rightly, there is an extra position in this budget. Could I get an explanation as to if that’s correct and why we need to increase. Are we still getting residential school inquiries or is this for another reason that we need to expand our ATIPP staff?

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko):** Ms. Schofield.

**MS. SCHOFIELD:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Yes, there is an additional position for access to information and privacy. We had a two-year term position half-year funding that sunsets this year, sunsets in 2011-2012. This provides the full-year funding for the position. The increased workload or the additional work that’s happening is centred around more the overall government-wide coordination of access to information and privacy, working with departments, providing training, working in establishing a continuity of service across government.

**MS. BISARO:** Thanks for that explanation. I did want to ask as well about the Aboriginal consultation unit. I can’t remember if that’s a new unit or not. If it is a new unit then my question is mute. Could I get a report on how that unit is going or, if it isn’t yet established, when it will be operational?

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko):** Minister of Justice.

**HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY:** Mahsi, Mr. Chairman. This is a new unit. My understanding is it should be up and running around September, this fall.

**MS. BISARO:** Thank you. Just one last question. What is the work going to be of the Aboriginal consultation unit?

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko):** Deputy Minister Watters.

**MS. WATTERS:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The role of this unit is to provide support, training and the necessary education for staff across government to do consultations. This unit will not be necessarily doing the consultations, in fact they won’t be, but they are to provide the legal advice, to develop resources, to provide training to ensure that there is a consistent and appropriate quality of consultation across government.

**MS. BISARO:** Thanks for the explanation. I believe that the GNWT has a consultation framework, so will Justice be working kind of across government either to amend or adjust or help people implement the consultation framework that the government has?

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko):** Minister of Justice.

**HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY:** Mahsi, Mr. Chairman. That would be part of the ongoing work that we’ll continue to have with the Interdepartmental Working Relations and ensuring that this consultation framework remains current and consistent with the evolving laws and best practices across the board. Also communicating changes and updates to the framework to GNWT departments on a timely basis. Those are just some of the areas that we’ll continue to work with departments.

**MS. BISARO:** Thanks to the Minister and his staff. I’m done.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko):** Thank you. With that, we’ll take a short break.

---SHORT RECESS

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko):** I’d like to call the Committee of the Whole back to order. Prior to the break we were on page 9-13, services to government, operations expenditure summary. Mr. Bromley.

**MR. BROMLEY:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. I want to just reiterate some of my colleagues’ concerns and I suppose it’s really just a comment. I’d be happy to have any remarks from the Minister, but I disagree with this Aboriginal consultation unit. My goodness grief, I mean, we have been dealing with Aboriginal people, we are Aboriginal people, our society is Aboriginal. I think we have to start drawing a limit here. There are so many competing demands, as we’ve heard repeatedly today, for these dollars and for this department, which already has the legal expertise to start creating positions like this and using these valuable dollars is just not appropriate, in my mind. I’ll leave it at that as a comment.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko):** Minister of Justice.

**HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY:** Mahsi, Mr. Chair. This is, again, across the board consulting with various departments. It’s a GNWT consultation unit so this is before us and we need to work with this initiative. We feel that it’s a valuable tool that we need to move forward with, so that’s where we’ve engaged the GNWT departments’ engagement in this area. Mahsi.

**MR. BROMLEY:** I guess the Minister has elevated my concern if this is happening across all departments. I mean, again, I say good grief. We have so much experience in this area. I mean, I just can’t feature it. This is a waste of valuable resources. We have so many competing demands. We’re talking about kids’ lives here today and we have to start getting real here. Thank you.

**HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY:** Mr. Chair, this is the only unit that we have that deals with across the departmental discussion. I take the Member’s concerns and issues that are being brought forward, but this has been in the works for quite some time now and we feel that it’s needed and it’s part of our consultation process. Mahsi.

**MR. BROMLEY:** I guess I don’t buy that, Mr. Chair. I think the department’s been doing a good job and I think they’ve got lots of good programs going with a lot of Aboriginal people and I think that’s only going to enhance their already obvious capability of consulting with Aboriginal people. Thank you.

**HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY:** I’m not sure what else to add but it’s a government-wide initiative and it’s a unit that deals with Aboriginal organizations on projects and initiatives that will affect various spectrums of issues that may be brought forward. Mahsi.

**MR. BROMLEY:** Again, that just elevates my concern. Aboriginal Affairs and Intergovernmental Relations spends hundreds of thousands on this. I mean, that’s our lead. They’re there to provide advice, I learned yesterday, and that’s who should be doing this work. We just have so many competing demands that I totally disagree with this new decision to spend yet more hundreds of thousands of dollars in every department on Aboriginal consultation units when we are Aboriginal people, we deal with Aboriginal people every day, we hire Aboriginal people, our staff are Aboriginal people, we are Aboriginal people, a lot of us. I think we have decades of experience as the field has changed and the legal situations have developed to set rules. We have extensive experience in this area. I disagree with this in terms of the many competing demands for these dollars. As I mentioned, we’re talking about very important other priorities that need dollars.

**HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY:** Mr. Chairman, this is an area that is part of the specialized unit across the board dealing with the Aboriginal organizations. It has been established with expertise when it comes to lawyers in different areas. We do have lawyers but they are dedicated to their own respective roles as well. This is specifically in a target area. I will get my deputy to elaborate a bit more on that process. Mahsi.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko):** Ms. Watters.

**MS. WATTERS:** Mr. Chairman, this unit is actually created. It is a government-wide initiative. This was not an initiative of the Department of Justice alone. The need was identified because of the increase in the need for the consultation around economic and resource development, around conservation and the environmental issues, that has become very apparent that the need for consultation was certainly going to increase. It was not going away. The investment in this unit I think is actually much less than the investment that would be required should we fail just once to consult appropriately.

This unit was established. The decision to have it in the Department of Justice was made so rather than having just one lawyer who would be assigned the file, there would be access to a bank of lawyers with expertise. It didn’t have to be in the Department of Justice, but it was felt that that was the most appropriate place for it. It is very definitely to provide services to all departments to ensure that the framework is maintained, to ensure that people are appropriately trained and training has been going on and to maintain that level of training to enhance the training and to provide support, to provide policy and legal direction. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko):** Mr. Bromley.

**MR. BROMLEY:** Mr. Chairman, I guess I will just add I was saying I think this and I think that, but I have to say that it was an Aboriginal person that brought this concern to me. I will leave it at that. Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko):** Thank you. We are on page 9-13, activity summary, services to government, operations expenditure summary, $10.459 million. Agreed?

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko):** We are moving on to page 9-14, activity summary, services to government, grants and contributions, grants, $49,000.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko):** We are moving on to page 9-15, information item, services to government, active positions.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko):** We are moving on to page 9-17, activity summary, law enforcement, operations expenditure summary, $35.120 million.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko):** We are moving on to page 9-19, activity summary, legal aid services, operations expenditure summary. Ms. Bisaro.

**MS. BISARO:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I wanted to ask a few questions here with regards to legal aid services and the needs that we have with legal aid. When we travelled with the Child and Family Services Act review, one of the things that was made very evident to us as committee members was the difficulties that people have particularly in the small communities accessing legal aid services in terms of child apprehensions and so on. I think there is an increase. I think we are hiring another lawyer for legal aid services in this next year’s budget, but I would like confirmation on that. I would also like to know in terms of the longer term view, what the department’s plans are to deal with the lack of access to legal aid for our clients who are residents who need it. Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko):** Ms. Schofield.

**MS. SCHOFIELD:** Mr. Chairman, yes, there is an additional legal aid staff lawyer as part of the second year of funding for the establishment of a new clinic. I’m sorry; I missed the second part of that question. Thank you.

**MS. BISARO:** Mr. Chairman, going forward, I guess, I need to know from the department what the plans are to try and deal with the lack of access to legal aid services that exists in our communities. Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko):** Minister Lafferty.

**HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY:** Mr. Chairman, this particular area that the Member is addressing we are fully aware of it. We are planning for, as the Member alluded to, as we move forward, we want to identify what is required at the community level, especially those smaller communities that we represent. This is part of the plan. We have identified a lawyer for this new initiative. The following year we want to highlight what is required and push within our department part of the business planning process. Mahsi.

**MS. BISARO:** Mr. Chairman, thanks to the Minister. That is all well and good, but there are people now in our communities that run into difficulties whether it be because they are the victim or they are the person that is creating the disturbance or they are the parent who is having a child apprehended. All of those things. They need access to a lawyer and to legal aid. They don’t have it. There is lots of opportunity for use of technology I would think. I didn’t hear anything in the Minister’s answer that they are looking beyond just hiring more lawyers. They generally happen to be in Yellowknife. If I happen to be living in Fort Resolution, that doesn’t help me much to get a lawyer because they are all in Yellowknife and my problem happens to be in Fort Res. I would like to ask the Minister if he could expound a bit on whether or not the department is forward thinking. Do they have plans to try and create access to legal aid and to lawyers outside of our larger centres? Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko):** Ms. Watters.

**MS. WATTERS:** Mr. Chairman, this certainly is a concern for the Department of Justice. Access to justice is one of our sort of critical issues and one of the things we are working towards. A couple of things that we are doing to try to enhance services, short of in addition to hiring lawyers that we need, is to expand the role of court workers so they can provide more services in the communities to people, short of when they do need the lawyer. That may often reduce the need for a lawyer. We have a poverty lawyer on staff now. We are looking at expanding the role of that person and moving towards having them actually go into communities to work with people and help them with their legal issues.

We are moving. Maybe we are not moving as fast as we would like, but we are very aware of the need to get services to the communities and to make all legal services more accessible. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**MS. BISARO:** Mr. Chairman, thanks to the deputy minister for that explanation. Yes, I realize that it is a big job and it is not an easy job. I am glad to hear that it is on the radar and it is being looked at.

The last concern that I wanted to raise here, and this, again, came up at least once during the Child and Family Services Act review when we were on our tour, and that is the number of hours that people get from legal aid for their concern or for their issue. Several times we heard people say that they had a lawyer. They were dealing with a lawyer and they were basically told I have used up all of my hours and I can’t help you anymore. I wonder if the Minister or the deputy minister can comment on that. Thank you.

**MS. WATTERS:** Mr. Chairman, if the issue does require more hours, then it is certainly possible to apply to us for them and to have them granted. It is very difficult to know without knowing the circumstances of any particular case. Certainly, there is that option available. It is quite often used. Thank you.

**MS. BISARO:** Mr. Chairman, I guess just a comment here. I appreciate that specific situations have specific results, but I think there is sort of an educational aspect to this particular issue that needs to be addressed. I don’t think a lot of the people that mentioned this difficulty to us that the number of hours for their lawyer ran out, I don’t think a lot of those people understood that they could ask for an extension. It probably wasn’t offered to them. So I think there’s an education aspect on the part of the victims or the users of the system and there’s an aspect of education on the part of the lawyers as well. I think it’s something that maybe the department could try and address, as well as maybe looking or having the Legal Services Board look at the hours that are assigned for particular matters and maybe loosening their guidelines a little bit, because it sounded from the people that we heard from and what constituents tell me when they have difficulties is that it’s pretty much hard and fast and they say, well, we need a little bit more time and the answer comes back and, no, I’m sorry, you can’t have it. So just a comment. Thanks, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko):** Comment. Minister, if you want to respond.

**HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY:** Mahsi, Mr. Chair. I agree with the Member that we definitely need to do more reaching out to the communities so they’re aware of the hours that they’re entitled to and that they can access some additional hours if need be. Just additional information that is required, we’ll definitely do our part to deliver those key messages. Mahsi.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko):** Thank you, Mr. Minister. Next I have Mr. Bromley.

**MR. BROMLEY:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. I notice our spending on legal aid staff lawyers is going down. Now I suspect they haven’t volunteered to take a cut in pay. So I’m wondering what that’s all about. I guess I’d like to ask what that’s all about and is the new legal aid office that was in the business plans going ahead as profiled in the business plans.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko):** Ms. Schofield

**MS. SCHOFIELD:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. Yes, we’ve identified on page 9-19 the Somba K’e Legal Aid Clinic is the new clinic and that will be fully funded in the ‘11-12 budget. I don’t think the legal aid staff lawyer costs have gone down. There might have been a reshuffling between clinics just on determining that we have the right number of lawyer makeup in each clinic between family and criminal law. The compensation and benefits section is actually increased from ‘10-11 to ‘11-12. Thank you.

**MR. BROMLEY:** Is it my understanding is that the Somba K’e Legal Aid Clinic will have one lawyer or more than one lawyer? Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko):** Minister of Justice.

**HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY:** Mahsi, Mr. Chair. My understanding is that the clinic will have three lawyers and a support staff as well. Mahsi.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko):** Mr. Bromley. Page 9-19, activity summary, legal aid services, operations expenditure summary, $5.905 million.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko):** Agreed. Moving on to page 9-20, information item, legal aid services, active positions.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko):** Agreed. Moving on to page 9-23, activity summary, court services, operations expenditure summary, $11.316 million.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko):** Page 9-24, information item, court services, active positions.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko):** Agreed. Moving on to page 9-27, activity summary, community justice and corrections, operations expenditure summary, $38.683 million.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko):** Moving on to page 9-28, activity summary, community justice and corrections, grants and contributions, contributions, $2.377 million.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko):** Moving on to page 9-29, information item, community justice and corrections, active positions.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko):** Moving on to page 9-31, activity summary, services to public, operations expenditure summary. Ms. Bisaro.

**MS. BISARO:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. I wanted to just state here in terms of the family law initiatives, which we heard about this morning at our briefing, I think the department is absolutely on the right track and the success, obviously, the initial evaluations that they’ve done so far in a number of their programs indicates that the programs are working very well and they’re a success. So I’d like to commend the department for the work that they’ve done there, and I missed the page, but the domestic violence court option is also another area which I think is going to prove to be quite successful.

I wanted to ask about the Family Violence Action Plan, I think we’re on phase 3 now and I wondered where the department is at with this particular action plan. Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko):** Deputy Minister Watters.

**MS. WATTERS:** Thank you very much, Mr. Chair. The Department of Justice’s involvement with the Family Violence Action Plan is the development of the program for offenders and we’re getting close to the development of this program. The program is still in the development stage and we hope to be able to move forward with implementing it I think towards the end of this coming fiscal year, ‘11-12.

**MS. BISARO:** Thanks for the information. I look forward to when that plan is actually developed and in place. I think it will be a good step forward and I think we then have to look at other aspects of abusers. I know it’s been mentioned we have a program for men who abuse, but there also are women who abuse and I think it is something that we probably have to look at in the future.

I wondered if the department could confirm or dispel a rumour that I heard a little while ago. I know the coroner’s office falls under this particular section and I heard a rumour that the coroner’s office is going to be transformed into a medical examiner office, that we’re going to go from a coroner system to a medical examiner system. Could I get confirmation or denial of that? Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko):** Minister of Justice.

**HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY:** Mahsi, Mr. Chair. It would be a rumour, but it’s not happening. Mahsi.

**MS. BISARO:** Thanks to the Minister. I’m really glad to hear that, because I really don’t think for a jurisdiction our size that we could afford and/or we could manage a medical examiner system. So thank you very much.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko):** Next I have Mr. Beaulieu.

**MR. BEAULIEU:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Just a couple of questions for the Minister to see if he could maybe provide me some advice in this area. In the maintenance enforcement we have the situation of their maintenance enforcement change. So like individuals that used to pay maintenance enforcement and then end up with the children, but the requirement is still there for them to continue to make maintenance enforcement payments until they go back to court or file something with the courts to indicate that they now have custody of the children. I’m wondering if there’s another way that they can just work through the maintenance enforcement office instead of going back to court, because these people end up falling so far behind that their money is being garnisheed and they can’t afford a lawyer so they get caught in a catch-22 essentially. So they’re getting their money taken away, they’re keeping the kids at the same time, they can’t afford to go back to court. So can the Minister offer some solution for that? Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko):** Minister of Justice, Mr. Lafferty.

**HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY:** Mahsi, Mr. Chair. This is an area that we have explored for quite some time now, on how we can get around the system, because there has been a few cases where they want to be reassessed and the only way to do that is through the court venue and, of course, it costs money to go through the process. So through our research in different areas, we are still doing some additional research, but I’m hoping that at the end of March we should have a program in place that we’re hoping deals with the child support payment recalculation services. This is an area that will very much, I guess, cover off or offset what the Member is referring to. We are exploring that option and we will be before the standing committee once the program is ready to roll.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko):** Page 9-31, Justice, activity summary, services to public, operations expenditure summary, $4.723 million.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko):** Page 9-32. Mr. Bromley.

**MR. BROMLEY:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I just note that the contribution to the YWCA for their role as designate under the Protection Against Family Violence Act seems stuck in a rut there and I’m wondering how many years it’s been pegged at $105,000.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko):** Minister of Justice.

**HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY:** As far as I know, and we need to get confirmation, this number has been the same for quite some time now. But we will confirm the length of time it’s been like that. We’ll get back to Members on that.

**MR. BROMLEY:** I’d appreciate learning that. I appreciate the Minister’s commitment there. Let’s just stick with what we’ve got in front of our noses here. How much has the Department of Justice budget increased since 2009-2010 proposed for 2011-2012?

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko):** Ms. Schofield.

**MS. SCHOFIELD:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The actuals for the Protection Against Family Violence Act in 2009-2010 was $202,000. The budget for 2011-2012 is $424,000.

**MR. BROMLEY:** I think my colleague captured it there. It’s shocking. I heard another Minister say you can’t get blood from a stone. That’s exactly what’s being asked here, only this is just one example of this. We’ve tried to raise this with Cabinet, with the Premier, with the Ministers individually. Does the Minister agree that this is a travesty of justice?

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko):** Minister of Justice.

**HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY:** Mahsi, Mr. Chairman. I agree that this is an important matter that’s before us and we continue to press our entire department to focus on these areas. When we talk about protection against family violence it covers broad sections of different programming. We can touch on the program that we currently deliver and the new initiatives that would be undergoing. We presented to the standing committee this morning and various initiatives are undergoing. Yes, this is important for our department along with other programming that’s before us too. There are other pressing matters. Like with this Protection Against Family Violence Act is also a pressing matter along with others. We’ll continue to push within our department that focus on this specific area as well.

**MR. BROMLEY:** I appreciate the Minister’s comments. I know the Minister would agree that these organizations have forced growth too. The price of gas doesn’t choose to go up just for the Minister and not for the executive director of this organization. I’m asking the Minister to commit to, during the course of this year, increase the funding to the YWCA of Yellowknife for the duty that they’re expected to perform. Find the money and get it done sometime this year. I appreciate that’s the Minister’s interest in doing that. I’m asking for his commitment. Forced growth.

**HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY:** The funding that we provide, the $105,000 to YWCA, to my understanding there hasn’t been a request for an increase, but we can definitely look at this area. If there’s forced growth within the organization, then that’s an area we can look at as the Member is referring to. I can commit to looking at this area and how we can move forward. What we have now is the $105,000 that’s before us with the budget time frame. We’re moving ahead with this but I can commit to the Members that this is an area that we need to look at as we move forward.

**MR. BROMLEY:** That’s fair. I appreciate that commitment from the Minister. I will commit to checking with this organization and see if they’d like to communicate with you on their perspectives on that.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko):** Page 9-32, Justice, activity summary, services to public, grants and contributions, contributions, $105,000.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko):** Page 9-33, Justice, activity summary, information item, services to public, active positions.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko):** Page 9-34, Justice, information item, lease commitments – infrastructure.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko):** Page 9-35, Justice, information item, work performed on behalf of others.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko):** Page 9-36, Justice, information item, work performed on behalf of others.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko):** Page 9-37, Justice, information item, work performed on behalf of others.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko):** Page 9-38, Justice, information item, work performed on behalf of others.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko):** We can turn back to the department summary on page 9-7. Page 9-7, Justice, department summary, operations expenditure summary, $106.206 million.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko):** Does committee agree that we’ve concluded the Department of Justice?

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko):** Thank you. With that, Mr. Lafferty, witnesses, Sergeant-at-Arms, could you escort the witnesses out?

As agreed, the next department we’re dealing with is the Legislative Assembly.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko):** Bill as a whole? Mr. Speaker, would you like to make some opening comments regarding the Legislative Assembly?

**HON. PAUL DELOREY:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I am pleased to present the 2011-2012 main estimates for the Legislative Assembly.

The upcoming fiscal year is perhaps the most unique in the four-year cycle of the Legislative Assembly. It will be marked by the last five months of the 16th Assembly and the first six months of the 17th Assembly.

This year the Assembly is requesting operational funding to the tune of $18.9 million. This constitutes an increase of just over 9.7 percent compared to last year’s budget of $17.22 million. This year’s increases are the result of several important initiatives.

By far the most substantial reason for the increase is the requirement to fund a general election in the fall of this year. The cost of conducting a general election in the Northwest Territories is approximately $1 million. I am pleased to advise Members that the positions of both Chief Electoral Officer and Deputy Chief Electoral Officer have been filled and that preparations for the vote are well underway. Returning officers have been appointed in all ridings and pre-election training has been scheduled. All we need now is the approval of the federal Cabinet to dissolve the 16th Legislative Assembly on September 4, 2011, to allow for an October 3rd election.

Costs related to the transition from the 16th to the 17th Legislative Assembly are also included in next year’s budget.

Although Members have yet to debate the recommendations of the 16th Legislative Assembly’s Independent Commission to Review Members’ Compensation and Benefits, the Assembly has budgeted additional funds to ensure that Members who represent ridings with multiple small communities are able to hold at least three constituency meetings in each community annually. This additional funding reflects the unique costs that Members representing small communities must incur, most notably translation and interpretation services.

The 2011-2012 draft main estimates include an increase to the budget for the office of the Commissioner of Official Languages in the amount of $100,000. The Languages Commissioner has outlined a set of exciting initiatives she wishes to undertake in future years. This funding will assist her in fulfilling her critical mandate.

This year’s budget also reflects the completion of the terms of reference for the Standing Committee on Social Programs’ review of the Child and Family Services Act. Other sunsets include funding for the work of the Independent Commission to Review Members’ Compensation and Benefits, and interest payments on the capital lease of the Legislative Assembly building. Members will recall that in approximately two years the capital lease for this building will be paid in full.

Last year witnessed the successful implementation of a number of important initiatives at the Legislative Assembly. Outreach efforts were continued with a highly successful Mace tour to the communities of Fort Simpson, Nahanni Butte and Trout Lake. The first Elders’ Parliament was hosted by the Assembly and was, by all accounts, a resounding success. As stated, the terms of reference for a major review of the Child and Family Services Act were fulfilled by the Social Programs committee. Finally, the Assembly successfully installed a biomass heating system last fall. This initiative is, as we speak, handling more than 50 percent of our peak heating needs and, in so doing, saving money on fuel costs and reducing the Assembly’s environmental footprint.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide opening comments and I welcome any questions Members may have.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko):** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I’d like to know if you will be bringing in witnesses.

**HON. PAUL DELOREY:** Yes, I will.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko):** Does committee agree he can bring in his witnesses?

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko):** Sergeant-at-Arms, could you escort the witnesses in?

For the record, Mr. Speaker, could you introduce your witnesses?

**HON. PAUL DELOREY:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I have on my left Mr. Olin Lovely, director of corporate services, and to my right is Tim Mercer, Clerk of the Assembly.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko):** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Welcome witnesses. General comments for the Legislative Assembly. Mr. Hawkins.

**MR. HAWKINS:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The Speaker mentioned on page 3 of his opening comments that there was an additional amount granted to the Commissioner of Official Languages, $100,000. I’m just curious if the Speaker could outline what type of work or new initiatives the Commissioner will be taking on. Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko):** Mr. Speaker.

**HON. PAUL DELOREY:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The Official Languages Commissioner had requested a budget for around $300,000 for a number of initiatives that she wanted to get going. We looked at some of the initiatives that she had. Some of them were maybe outside of her mandate. We intend to meet with her shortly after the budget is approved to go over some of the projects that she has lined up. Basically, there has not been a lot of complaints activity in that office and some of the initiatives that we’re encouraging her to do and that she wants to take on are more informing the public of what the role is and, hopefully, to get a lot more business going. We’re going to be going over some of the initiatives that she wants to pursue and make sure that they’re fitting within her mandate.

**MR. HAWKINS:** Am I understanding the Speaker correctly when he says that this is still being assessed against her mandate? Thank you.

**HON. PAUL DELOREY:** Yes. We’re going to go over with her the list of initiatives that she had proposed and maybe try and give her a hand in identifying which ones fit within her mandate and encouraging her to take on a lot of initiatives that promote her office and what she can do for official languages that fit within her mandate.

**MR. HAWKINS:** Mr. Chairman, wouldn’t it seem reasonable, if I may ask, that she would know what her mandate is and be asking for money that would fall within it first rather than coming to the Assembly and asking for money and figuring out how it fits later. Wouldn’t that seem reasonable? Thank you.

**HON. PAUL DELOREY:** We’re working with her. She was hired as an independent Commissioner of the Assembly, but we’re going to work with her and we want to give her the funds to be able to do the work that she should be doing as the Commissioner of Official Languages. We’re going to be working with her; however, it’s her role to take on her own mandate because she’s an independent Commissioner, so we can’t tell her what to do but we want to work with her.

**MR. HAWKINS:** I’m just trying to understand this. I’m listening to the Speaker’s answers carefully and I guess I can appreciate that there’s an expansion of accessibility information component in this, accessibility about her role that she needs to promote. It sounds like the money is being asked without a plan, that’s all. Perhaps maybe if the Speaker can paint a sense of assurance that it isn’t just can I have more money. That there will be plan attached to this type of money sounds a little better. I mean, it really sounds like she’s asked for money and will figure it out later. I’m sorry if I’m hearing it incorrectly. It’s not intended to be heard incorrectly, but that’s what it sounds like. I mean, why did the Speaker not suggest coming up with a business plan and then we’ll assess it against the money? I mean, wouldn’t we do that against the departments through an FMB process? Thank you.

**HON. PAUL DELOREY:** We looked at her whole budget request and identified some areas where we thought that the request that she was wanting to initiate was maybe outside of her mandate, so some of the initiatives that she had -- and I don’t have a list of them right in front of me here -- the initiatives that she had proposed to want to take on, some of them fit clearly within her mandate, so that’s what we want to do, is help her out with the ones that are identified as fitting within her mandate and giving her the money to do it. We had lots of supports from Members that want to give her more money so that she can promote her office and work within the official languages and the other languages board. It’s kind of a definition of where her role fits in with the other language boards in the Territories.

**MR. HAWKINS:** That’s fine. Will that information be passed on to Members in that particular case to find out what the money is attributed to? Thank you.

**HON. PAUL DELOREY:** I missed that last question that the honourable Member had.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko):** Mr. Hawkins, can you repeat your question?

**MR. HAWKINS:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. That’s fine. I’ll just repeat it. Will Members be informed as to what the business plan, sort of, attachment of activities would be attributed to the $100,000 and, if so, when? Thank you.

**HON. PAUL DELOREY:**  Thank you. The Official Languages Commissioner will report to the Assembly, of course, but we can do that once we meet with the Languages Commissioner.

I might just mention that the budget for the Official Languages Commissioner used to be a lot higher but that office was very quiet for a lot of years and we have somebody now in that office that’s really wanting to promote official languages and her role in it. So when she requested the funding, we were more than happy to give her some more money to promote that office and we’d like to see the Languages Commissioner do a lot more with official languages. I will commit, once we get the plan and the initiatives that she’s willing to move forward, to report back to Members.

**MR. HAWKINS:** If I understood the Speaker correctly when he said he’d get back to Members, I assume that won’t be in the next annual report. I assume that will be in a timely way once that clarification is made.

Mr. Chairman, one other thing worth of note, and again, it just jumped off the page listening to the request for additional money, although I don’t have the report in front of me here, it’s in my office, I do recall off memory, in some manner or form, that the latest Languages Commissioner’s report is painting a picture of lack of interest in the traditional language and she points that out. We haven’t had a chance to question her before committee to find out exactly what she’s done, but she did state quite clearly in her report that the state of languages, there seems to be a low interest when she attends the assemblies and puts the questions to that about traditional languages. After reading that section a couple weeks ago, it’s sort of sitting here in a weird position now that they’re asking for more money. On the one hand she’s saying there seems to be no interest in official languages but we need more money. I mean, this might not be the right forum to deal with it, it just seems odd. I just wanted to make sure I said that, but if the Speaker can reaffirm that we’ll get the commitment on the $100,000 business plan and clarification as to what that is when it’s done in a timely way, I’d appreciate that. Thank you.

**HON. PAUL DELOREY:** Yes, we can look at doing that. When we met with the Official Languages Commissioner, in presenting her budget there was also concern raised of why there’s a lack of interest. I think that she made it quite clear that she thinks that there’s a lot of room for education and educating the public about what the role of the Official Languages Commissioner is and how the public can issue complaints and that sort of thing. We buy fully into her thoughts about the ability to be able to promote her office and educate the public, maybe, as to what her office can do for them. But we will commit to getting back to the Member on the plan going forward.

**MR. HAWKINS:** I’ll accept that. I just want to lastly say that it’s sad. I wish they were linked. Although it’s a sad case and we have to make sure that as it isn’t, we have to define it that way, but the Languages Commissioner isn’t in the education business of language. I can’t figure out why. It’s just the way it’s written, but I look forward to seeing the detail the Speaker has said he’d send. Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko):** Thank you, Mr. Hawkins. General comments on the Legislative Assembly.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Detail.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko):** Detail. Page 1-7, department summary, refer to the next pages, on page 1-8, information item, infrastructure investment summary.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko):** Page 1-9, information item, revenue summary.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko):** Page 1-10, information item, active position summary.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko):** Moving on to page 1-13, activity summary, Office of the Clerk, operations expenditure summary, $7.895 million.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko):** Page 1-14, information item, Office of the Clerk, active positions.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko):** Page 1-17, activity summary, Office of the Speaker, operations expenditure summary, $325,000.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko):** Page 1-18, information item, Office of the Speaker, active positions.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko):** Moving on to page 1-21, activity summary, expenditures on behalf of Members, operations expenditure summary, $7.476 million.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko):** Agreed. Moving on to page 1-23, activity summary, Office of the Chief Electoral Officer, operations expenditure summary, $1.595 million.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko):** Page 1-24, information item, Office of the Chief Electoral Officer, active positions.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko):** Page 1-27, activity summary, statutory officers, operations expenditure summary, $1.626 million.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko):** Page 1-28, activity summary, statutory officers, grants and contributions, contributions, $250,000. Agreed?

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko):** Page 1-29, information item, statutory officers, active positions. Agreed?

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko):** Turn back to page 1-7, department summary, Legislative Assembly, department summary, operations expenditure summary, $18.917 million.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko):** Agreed. Does the committee agree that we’ve concluded the Legislative Assembly?

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko):** Agreed. So with that, I’d like to thank the Speaker, thank the witnesses. Sergeant-at-Arms, escort the witnesses out. I’d like to ask what’s the wish of the committee. Mr. Beaulieu.

**MR. BEAULIEU:** Mr. Chairman, we’d like to go back to the Department of Health and Social Services.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko):** Does committee agree?

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko):** Minister Lee, will you be bringing in any witnesses?

**HON. SANDY LEE:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. No, I’m not going to bring in any witnesses.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko):** Okay, turn back to the Department of Health and Social Services. I believe when we left off we were on page 8-7, department summary, operations expenditure summary. It’s good we’ve got good help around here. Okay, we’re on 8-29, community health programs, operations expenditure summary. Ms. Lee.

**HON. SANDY LEE:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. On this program, I just want to say that based on the Members’ priorities related to the Child and Family Services Act, we have earlier agreed to begin work on the completion of new public information material and a new up-to-date policy and standards manual during the 2011-12 fiscal year. I also understand Members’ further concerns regarding child and family services committees and I commit to returning to committee in May with options to begin implementation of child and family services committees in 2011-12. Thank you.

---Applause

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko):** Okay, we’re on page 8-29, activity summary, community health programs, operations expenditure summary, $87.631 million.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko):** Okay, if we can go back to page 8-7, Health and Social Services, department summary, operations expenditure summary, $344,505.Okay, let’s do this again, $344.505 million. Agreed?

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko):** Does the committee agree we’ve concluded the Department of Health and Social Services?

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko):** Does committee agree that Tabled Document 133-16(5) has been concluded?

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko):** Agreed. Mrs. Groenewegen.

## COMMITTEE MOTION 40-16(5): CONCURRENCE OF TABLED DOCUMENT 133-16(5), NWT MAIN ESTIMATES, 2011-2012, CARRIED

**MRS. GROENEWEGEN:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I move that consideration of Tabled Document 133-16(5), Main Estimates, 2011-12, be now concluded and that Tabled Document 133-16(5) be reported and recommended as ready for further consideration in formal session through the forum of an appropriation bill. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko):** The motion is in order. The motion is being circulated. To the motion.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Question.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko):** Question is being called.

---Carried

What’s the wish of committee? Mrs. Groenewegen.

**MRS. GROENEWEGEN:** Mr. Chairman, I believe it’s the wish of the committee to continue with the supplementary appropriations. Carry on.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko):** Does committee agree to deal with the supps?

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko):** Minister of Finance, do you have opening comments?

**HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I am here to present Supplementary Estimates (Operations Expenditures), No. 3, 2010-2011. This document outlines a net increase of $8.437 million in operations expenditures for the 2010-2011 fiscal year.

The major items in the supplementary estimates include:

1. $4.370 million for the Department of Health and Social Services to fund the cost of insured services to non-NWT residents, which will be fully offset by recoveries from other jurisdictions for services for their residents.
2. $1.766 million for the Department of Education, Culture and Employment to fund the projected shortfall in the Income Assistance Program for the 2010-2011 fiscal year.
3. $1.170 million for the NWT Housing Corporation to fund increases in the costs for power in public housing.

The supplementary estimates also include a negative supplementary appropriation totalling $1.45 million to reflect changes to the previously approved funding for projects in support of the GNWT’s Energy Priorities Investment Plan.

I am prepared to review the details of the supplementary appropriation document.

**MR. ABERNETHY:** Which document are you guys looking at? We’re looking at 5.

**HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER:** Oh. I just read 3.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko):** He read 3.

**HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER:** I am also here to present Supplementary Estimates (Infrastructure Expenditures), No. 5, 2010-2011. This document outlines a net increase of $800,000 for capital investment expenditures in the 2010-2011 fiscal year.

There are two items in the supplementary estimates:

1. A negative supplementary appropriation of $150,000 which represents the transfer of capital investment expenditures funding to operations expenditures funding for the maintenance costs associated with the NWT Laboratory Information System.
2. $950,000 for the reconstruction of a section of the Inuvik Airport taxiway. The net impact on government operations is nil as the reconstruction of the taxiway will be funded by the Department of National Defence.

I am also prepared to review the details of this supplementary appropriation document as well.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko):** Okay. At this time I’ll ask the Minister if he’ll be bringing any witnesses. Mr. Miltenberger.

**HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER:** Yes, Mr. Chairman.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko):** Is it okay if the Minister brings in his witnesses?

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko):** Sergeant-at-Arms, escort the witnesses in.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Abernethy):** Thank you, Mr. Miltenberger. Could I get you to introduce your witnesses for the record, please?

**HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Sandy Kalgutkar, deputy secretary to the FMB; and Charles Tolley, director of budgeting.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Abernethy):** Thank you, Mr. Miltenberger. In front of us is Supplementary Estimates, No. 5, 2010-2011. Are there any general comments? No general comments. Is committee agreed that we’ve concluded general comments?

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Abernethy):** Detail?

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Abernethy):** Thank you, committee. We’re going to stand down pages 1, 2, 3, 4 and we’re going to move along to page 5. Is committee agreed?

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Abernethy):** Page 5, Supplementary Estimates (Infrastructure Expenditures), No. 5, 2010-2011, Health and Social Services, capital investment expenditures, health services programs, not previously authorized, negative $150,000.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Abernethy):** Total department, not previously authorized, negative $150,000.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Abernethy):** Is committee agreed that we’ve concluded page 5?

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Abernethy):** Let’s move along to page 6, Supplementary Estimates (Infrastructure Expenditures), No. 5, 2010-2011, Transportation, capital investment expenditures, airports, not previously authorized, $950,000.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Abernethy):** Total department, not previously authorized, $950,000.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Abernethy):** Now that we’ve done the detail we’ll go back to the department summary on page 1. The summary of appropriations, Schedule 1, Operations Expenditures, operations expenditures appropriation.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Abernethy):** Page 2, summary of appropriations, Schedule 2, Capital Investment Expenditures, total appropriations, $800,000.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Abernethy):** Page 3, summary of appropriations, total operations expenditure, $72.844 million.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Abernethy):** Page 4, summary of appropriations, total voted appropriations, $527.435 million.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Abernethy):** Is committee agreed that we’ve concluded consideration of Supplementary Estimates, No. 5, 2010-2011?

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Abernethy):** Mrs. Groenewegen.

## COMMITTEE MOTION 41-16(5): CONCURRENCE OF TABLED DOCUMENT 156-16(5), SUPPLEMENTARY ESTIMATES (infrastructure expenditures), NO. 5, 2010-2011, CARRIED

**MRS. GROENEWEGEN:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I move that consideration of Tabled Document 156-16(5), Supplementary Estimates (Infrastructure Expenditures), No. 5, 2010-2011, be now concluded and that Tabled Document 156-16(5) be reported and recommended as ready for further consideration in formal session through the form of an appropriation bill.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Abernethy):** Thank you, Mrs. Groenewegen. A motion is on the floor. The motion is being distributed. Patience. Patience. I’m going to wait until Ms. Bisaro gets her copy this time. Thank you, committee. A motion is on the floor. The motion has been distributed. To the motion.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Question.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Abernethy):** Question has been called.

---Carried

Is committee agreed that we move on to Supplementary Estimates (Operations Expenditures), No. 3, 2010-2011?

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Abernethy):** As with the previous, we’ll stand down pages 1 and 2 and go to the detail. Is committee agreed?

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Abernethy):** Detail begins on page 3, supplementary estimates, Legislative Assembly, Office of... Hold on a second. I got it under control now. Page 3, supplementary estimates, Office of the Chief Electoral Office, not previously authorized, $175,000.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Abernethy):** Statutory officers, not previously authorized, $48,000.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Abernethy):** Total department, $223,000.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Abernethy):** Page 4, supplementary estimates, Human Resources, employee services, not previously authorized, $618,000.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Abernethy):** Total department, $618,000.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Abernethy):** We’ve concluded Department of Human Resources.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Abernethy):** Page 5, supplementary estimates, Department of Finance, deputy minister’s office, not previously authorized, $1.17 million. Mr. Bromley.

**MR. BROMLEY:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I understand that this is for contribution funding to the local housing organization for increased power. My understanding was that power rates had declined. I’m wondering if the Minister could give an explanation of this cost.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Abernethy):** Thank you, Mr. Bromley. Mr. Miltenberger.

**HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The Housing Corporation pays the government rate which is not the same as the subsidized rate. It’s the full cost of power.

**MR. BROMLEY:** This is quite an increase. Does this mean that the rates have gone up for the government?

**HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER:** This is the first increase to base funding for electricity since 2006-2007.

**MR. BROMLEY:** I appreciate that information. I wondered if the rates have gone up for the government.

**HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER:** I don’t believe so. I’d have to commit to get that clarified.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Abernethy):** Thank you, Mr. Miltenberger. Mr. Kalgutkar.

**MR. KALGUTKAR:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The 2010-2011 rates which the supp is based on are about 22 to 23 percent higher than what the Housing Corporation is currently budgeted for.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Abernethy):** Thank you, Mr. Kalgutkar. Mr. Bromley.

**MR. BROMLEY:** I guess I’ll assume that’s a yes, unless I get corrected. That’s all I had. Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Abernethy):** Thank you, Mr. Bromley. Just a comment. Page 5, supplementary estimates, Finance, operations expenditures, deputy minister’s office, not previously authorized, $1.17 million.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Abernethy):** Total department, $1.17 million.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Abernethy):** Does committee agree that we’ve concluded the Department of Finance?

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Abernethy):** Page 6, supplementary estimates, Municipal and Community Affairs, operations expenditures, regional operations, not previously authorized, $614,000.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Abernethy):** Total department, $614,000.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Abernethy):** Does committee agree that we have concluded consideration of Municipal and Community Affairs?

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Abernethy):** Page 7, supplementary estimates, Health and Social Services, operations expenditures, program delivery support, not previously authorized, $150,000.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Abernethy):** Page 7, supplementary estimates, Health and Social Services, operations expenditures, health services programs, not previously authorized, $4.37 million.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Abernethy):** Total department, $4.52 million.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Abernethy):** Does committee agree that we have concluded consideration of Health and Social Services?

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Abernethy):** Page 8, supplementary estimates, Justice, operations expenditures, law enforcement, not previously authorized, $687,000.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Abernethy):** Page 8, supplementary estimates, Justice, operations expenditures, legal aid services, not previously authorized, $19,000.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Abernethy):** Page 8, supplementary estimates, Justice, operations expenditures, court services, not previously authorized, $153,000.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Abernethy):** Page 8, supplementary estimates, Justice, operations expenditures, community justice and corrections, not previously authorized, $46,000.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Abernethy):** Total department, $905,000.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Abernethy):** Is committee agreed that we have concluded the Department of Justice?

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Abernethy):** Page 9, supplementary estimates, Education, Culture and Employment, operations expenditures, income security, not previously authorized, $1.766 million. Ms. Bisaro.

**MS. BISARO:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I do have to express some consternation here. We’ve got $1.766 million additional money required for income assistance and the explanation is because it’s increased utilization of income assistance programs. I do have to say that I’m a little surprised that this wasn’t in the 2010-2011 budget, that the department had to come back for a supp for this amount of money. I know that it’s being explained because of the economic downturn, but a year ago at this time when we were going through the 2010-2011 budget I think we were in the throes of the economic downturn and I don’t believe that, well I do believe that the department ought to have known that they were going to incur increased demand for income assistance. I just have to express my disappointment that the estimates weren’t better done a year ago at this time. I think that the department really ought to have known better. That’s about all I have to say. Really no question there. Just a comment.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Abernethy):** Thank you, Ms. Bisaro. No question but a comment. I’ll go to the Minister for a response or comment.

**HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. We will carry on under the heavy burden of the Member’s disappointment and we’ll make sure that the Minister of Education is listening carefully to the concern so that next year we can, hopefully, be labouring forward with her approval with a lighter step and a happier heart. Thank you.

**MS. BISARO:** How can I respond to that, Mr. Chair, except to say that I think the Minister’s blowing me off and I don’t like it much. Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Abernethy):** Once again, no question. We’ll go back to page 9, supplementary estimates, Education, Culture and Employment, income security, not previously authorized, $1.766 million.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Abernethy):** Total department, $1.766 million.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Abernethy):** Is committee agreed that we’ve concluded our consideration of Education, Culture and Employment?

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Abernethy):** Let’s move along to page 10, supplementary estimates, Industry, Tourism and Investment, energy, not previously authorized, negative $800,000.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Abernethy):** Economic diversification and business support, $71,000.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Abernethy):** Total department, negative $729,000.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Abernethy):** Is committee agreed that we’ve concluded our consideration of Industry, Tourism and Investment?

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Abernethy):** Let’s move along to our next department on page 11, supplementary estimates for Environment and Natural Resources, environment, not previously authorized, negative $650,000. Mr. Bromley.

**MR. BROMLEY:** I just want to find out from the Minister what’s happening with the wind project to cause this delay in expenditure. I assume that this expenditure will be brought forward. Maybe we can get a quick update on what’s happening here. Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Abernethy):** Thank you, Mr. Bromley. Mr. Kalgutkar.

**MR. KALGUTKAR:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. The project has experienced several delays in a number of areas, including clear community support. In September 2010, the Tuk Development Corp ended its joint venture with Dowling Contracting, but there are still some discussions going on with the community. There is still some money in the 2010-11 budget to conclude those assessments. Thank you.

**MR. BROMLEY:** Has anything happened on the ground? Do we have a wind generator in Tuk, on the way to Tuk, on order? Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Abernethy):** Thank you, Mr. Bromley. Minister Miltenberger.

**HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. There’s been active involvement by the Member for Nunakput as well to make sure this project says live and on the rails. The intention is to be looking at establishing a tower this coming construction season and move this project forward, once again with the assistance of the Member for Nunakput to make sure we can have the community support needed to bring this project to fruition. Thank you.

**MR. BROMLEY:** Thanks for that information. Is that, like, the first of three? Is there still three, sort of, modest-sized turbines being planned there? Thank you.

**HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER:** We’re anticipating to start with the one and we’re still working on partnership arrangements with the federal government to get us up to three. Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Abernethy):** Thank you, Minister Miltenberger. We’re on page 11, supplementary estimates, the Department of Environment and Natural Resources, environment, negative $650,000.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Abernethy):** Total department, negative $650,000.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Abernethy):** Is committee agreed that we’ve concluded consideration of Environment and Natural Resources?

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Abernethy):** Is committee agreed that we’ve concluded our consideration of the detail?

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Abernethy):** Committee, let’s move back to page 1, summary of appropriations, operations expenditure appropriation, $8.437 million.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Abernethy):** We’re on page 2, summary appropriations, total operations expenditures, $1,322,288,000.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Abernethy):** Is committee agreed that we’ve concluded consideration of Supplementary Estimates (Operations Expenditures), No. 3, 2010-2011?

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Abernethy):** Mrs. Groenewegen.

## COMMITTEE MOTION 42-16(5): CONCURRENCE OF TABLED DOCUMENT 157-16(5), SUPPLEMENTARY ESTIMATES (Operations Expenditures), NO. 3, 2010-2011, CARRIED

**MRS. GROENEWEGEN:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I move that consideration of Tabled Document 157-16(5), Supplementary Estimates (Operations Expenditures), No. 3, 2010-2011, be now concluded and that Tabled Document 157-16(5) be reported and recommended as ready for further consideration in formal session through the form of an appropriation bill. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Abernethy):** Thank you, Mrs. Groenewegen. A motion is on the floor and is being circulated. Mr. Minister, if I could get you to thank your witnesses, we’ll get the Sergeant-at-Arms to escort them out so that they don’t have to sit in the bottle of water. Thank you.

The motion has been circulated. To the motion.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Question.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Abernethy):** Question has been called.

---Carried

What is the wish of committee? Mrs. Groenewegen.

**MRS. GROENEWEGEN:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I move that we report progress.

---Carried

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Abernethy):** I will now rise and report progress.

# Report of Committee of the Whole

**MR. SPEAKER:** Can I have the report of Committee of the Whole, please, Mr. Abernethy.

**MR. ABERNETHY:** Mr. Speaker, your committee has been considering Tabled Document 133-16(5), Northwest Territories Main Estimates, 2011-2012; Tabled Document 156-16(5), Supplementary Estimates (Infrastructure Expenditures), No. 5, 2010-2011; and Tabled Document 157-16(5), Supplementary Estimates (Operations Expenditures), No. 3, 2010-2011, and would like to report progress with four motions being adopted and that consideration of Tabled Document 133-16(5), Tabled Document 156-16(5) and Tabled Document 157-16(5) are concluded and that the House concur in those estimates and that an appropriation bills to be based thereon be introduced without delay. Mr. Speaker, I move that the report of Committee of the Whole be concurred with.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Abernethy. Motion is on the floor. Do we have a seconder? The honourable Member for Range Lake, Ms. Lee.

---Carried

Item 22, third reading of bills. Mr. Clerk, orders of the day.

# Orders of the Day

**CLERK OF THE HOUSE (Mr. Mercer):** Mr. Speaker, orders of the day for Wednesday, March 2, 2011, at 1:30 p.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

* Motion 40-16(5), Elders Teaching in Schools

1. First Reading of Bills
2. Second Reading of Bills
3. Consideration in Committee of the Whole of Bills and Other Matters

* Tabled Document 4-16(5), Executive Summary of the Report of the Joint Review Panel for the Mackenzie Gas Project
* Tabled Document 30-16(5), 2010 Review of Members’ Compensation and Benefits
* Tabled Document 38-16(5), Supplementary Health Benefits - What We Heard
* Tabled Document 62-16(5), Northern Voices, Northern Waters: NWT Water Stewardship Strategy
* Tabled Document 75-16(5), Response to the Joint Review Panel for the Mackenzie Gas Project on the Federal and Territorial Governments’ Interim Response to “Foundation for a Sustainable Northern Future”
* Tabled Document 103-16(5), GNWT Contracts over $5,000 Report, Year Ending March 31, 2010
* Tabled Document 135-16(5), GNWT Response to CR 3-16(5): Report on the Review of the Child and Family Services Act
* Bill 4, An Act to Amend the Social Assistance Act
* Bill 14, An Act to Amend the Conflict of Interest Act
* Bill 15, An Act to Amend the Fire Prevention Act
* Bill 16, An Act to Amend the Dog Act
* Bill 17, An Act to Amend the Income Tax Act
* Bill 18, An Act to Repeal the Settlements Act
* Bill 19, Municipal Statutes Amendment Act
* Bill 20, An Act to Amend the Evidence Act
* Minister’s Statement 65-16(5), Devolution Agreement-in-Principle, Impact on Land Claims and Protection of Aboriginal Rights
* Minister’s Statement 88-16(5), Sessional Statement

1. Report of Committee of the Whole
2. Third Reading of Bills
3. Orders of the Day

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Clerk. Accordingly, this House stands adjourned until Wednesday, March 2, 2011, at 1:30 p.m.

---ADJOURNMENT

The House adjourned at 7:54 p.m.