



NORTHWEST TERRITORIES LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

6th Session

Day 6

16th Assembly

HANSARD

Thursday, May 12, 2011

Pages 6547 - 6588

The Honourable Paul Delorey, Speaker

Legislative Assembly of the Northwest Territories

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Published under the authority of the Speaker of the Legislative Assembly of the Northwest Territories

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YELLOWKNIFE, NORTHWEST TERRITORIES

Thursday, May 12, 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. Bob McLeod, Hon. Michael McLeod, Hon. Robert McLeod, Mr. Menicoche, Hon. Michael Miltenberger, Mr. Ramsay, Mr. Yakeleya

The House met at 1:35 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 11-16(6):
LABOUR FORCE DEVELOPMENT
FRAMEWORK AND SYMPOSIUM

HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY: Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. Improving skills for living and working is one of the ways the Government of the Northwest Territories is working to maximize opportunities for our residents and pursue the Legislative Assembly's goal of a diversified economy. The Department of Education, Culture and Employment makes significant investments in skills training and employment development to ensure that northern residents can meet the demand of northern employers.

The Northwest Territories Labour Force Development Framework -- People, Partnerships, Possibilities -- is the result of northern partners coming together to find common ground to ensure our people and our economy are strong now and in the future. The framework is the territory's new tool for working together towards improved labour market outcomes.

Although our labour market conditions remain fairly strong during the global recession, there were a number of challenges ensuring employment opportunities were available for Northerners. Much has happened over the past four years to overcome these challenges:

- enhancement of the Northwest Territories Literacy Strategy, especially in the areas of youth and labour market literacy;
- strengthened apprenticeship programs including supports to women and Aboriginal

people to successfully complete trades programs;

- Aurora College expanded community-based delivery of programs in areas such as teacher education, labour market and industrial training and student wellness;
- a new NWT Nominee Program to support employers in meeting skills gaps; and
- targeted supports for community and economic development in our rural and remote communities.

Mr. Speaker, on May 25 and May 26, 2011, the Department of Education, Culture and Employment will host a labour force symposium for key NWT stakeholders. At the symposium, ECE will launch a new Labour Force Development Framework and stakeholders will have the opportunity to:

- share labour market information linked to programs, services and supports;
- highlight the connection between skills development and regional economic development activities and projects; and
- discuss potential structures for, and functions of, a territorial coordinating body to champion the new framework.

Mr. Speaker, all levels of government must continue to invest in and support this framework so we can achieve the shared vision. Together we can build a productive future for our people, our communities and our economy. Mahsi, Mr. Speaker.

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

MINISTER'S STATEMENT 12-16(6):
VOLUNTEERISM

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. A strong volunteer sector contributes directly to sustainable, vibrant and safe communities, one of the priorities of this Legislative Assembly. I would like to speak today about the Department of Municipal and Community Affairs' work to support the volunteer sector in the Northwest Territories and about the importance of volunteers to our communities.

MACA offers a number of programs intended to support residents in their volunteer efforts. Through the Volunteer Organization Development Contribution Program, MACA provides cost-shared opportunities for volunteers to seek training or gain knowledge. Funding under this contribution program was increased in 2009-2010 to provide financial assistance to a greater number of organizations. Amongst other items, funding supports registration cost for volunteer workshops, training and courses, instruction and consultation fees, and travel costs directly related to attending or hosting and volunteer organization development event.

Another volunteer program delivered by MACA is the Youth Ambassadors Program. This program has provided a guided and structured volunteer experience for youth since it was first piloted during the 2007 Canada Winter Games. Most recently, four youth ambassadors traveled to Los Angeles where they demonstrated traditional northern games during the LA Times Travel and Adventure Show as part of Industry, Tourism and Investment's Spectacular NWT program that promotes the NWT's potential visitors.

Through the Youth Ambassador's Program, MACA is helping youth to develop life and job skills, and to build confidence through public interaction, mentorship, and the assumption of responsibilities.

In addition to these programs, MACA hosts the annual Outstanding Volunteer Awards to recognize and promote volunteers in our communities. This year's awards ceremony is scheduled for June 10th during the Northwest Territories Association of Communities Annual General Meeting here in Yellowknife. While the 2011 awards will be presented to three individuals and one group, the Northwest Territories is home to many volunteers, each of whom deserves recognition for their hard work and dedication.

Volunteers provide an essential service to our communities. They are the volunteer firefighters who keep our communities safe; the neighbours who help the elderly with groceries, shovelling snow or chopping wood; and the coaches, referees and mentors who help us stay healthy through sport and physical activities. I encourage my colleagues and everyone across the NWT to volunteer by supporting a local community group, coaching a local sports team, or helping an elderly neighbour. Give back to your community and give back to volunteers. If you know someone who donates their time in your community, nominate them for an outstanding volunteer award or thank them for their hard work.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. McLeod. Item 3, Members' statements. The honourable Member for Mackenzie Delta, Mr. Krutko.

Members' Statements

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON PROPOSED AMENDMENTS TO THE MACKENZIE VALLEY RESOURCE MANAGEMENT ACT

MR. KRUTKO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It has come to our attention that the amendments to the Mackenzie Valley Resource Management Act concludes the consultative process tomorrow, which again shows the lack of respect for the Aboriginal claimant groups in the Northwest Territories for the land claims and the people of the Northwest Territories to have the decision-making process in the Northwest Territories for the people of the Northwest Territories, and simply leaving the decision-making process up to the governments, whether it's the federal government or a panel of so-called specialists. We've been talking about the McCrank Report or talking about the reports done previously.

I think it's important for this government to declare where we stand on the list of outstanding issues and the items that were being discussed between the Government of the Northwest Territories and the federal government about Indian and Northern Affairs. What exactly was the list of items? How will those items affect the regulatory system in the Northwest Territories and those groups that do have land claims?

The Mackenzie Valley Resource Management Act came into force and effect to ensure that we implemented those land claim obligations into a regulatory system that meets their requirements, and ensure that the Tlicho Government and their land claim agreements are also enacted.

I think it's important for the Government of the Northwest Territories to come clean and say where exactly we stand as a government when it comes to making those major revisions to the Mackenzie Valley Resource Management Act in regard to the regulatory system in the Northwest Territories. Do we support regional boards or don't we? Do we want to have one system of regulation in the Northwest Territories by a centralized board? Do we accept the land use planning provisions that are in those arrangements? Do we allow for the environmental assessment to have an independent process so that it's independent from government, it's independent from industry, and it does give us the decisions that are there for the benefit of the public, the people of the Northwest Territories and communities?

At the appropriate time I will ask questions of the Minister of Environment on where this government stands when it comes to the changes to the Mackenzie Valley Resource Management Act.

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

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON
ABORIGINAL EMPLOYMENT IN EDUCATION

MR. BROMLEY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As a society we need to cultivate and promote our strong northern candidates for positions of leadership in education. Through its Aboriginal Student Achievement Initiative, ECE is placing top priority on improving the academic performance of Aboriginal students, and rightly so. Grade standings, competencies, and graduation rates among Aboriginal students remain unacceptably low in comparison with non-Aboriginal students across the NWT. Here in Yellowknife 50 percent of our students are Aboriginal.

Regional consultations note that strong teaching and program administration is key. Looking closely at our biggest success stories, it's the teachers and school administrators with long northern experience that are making the biggest difference. In Weledeh, Kalemi Dene School exemplifies this. Checking the staff list you see teachers with decades of service improving and refining culturally relevant, locally knowledgeable programming. Leadership has been critical.

Kalemi Dene's principal is well known for her 18 years-plus of Aboriginal teaching experience, her master's in education, the recognition of her excellence through national awards and national Aboriginal mentorship programs, and above all, her inspirational leadership and commitment. Given her credentials, numerous Aboriginal students in the district and lack of Aboriginal personnel in upper management positions, many were shocked when the recent staff position for a Yellowknife education district assistant superintendent position passed over such an exemplary candidate in favour of a southern hire, especially in the case of an assistant superintendent. Others and I saw this as a missed opportunity for progressive leadership and succession planning.

Northern students and their teachers need strong role models. Northern hiring practices need to place great weight upon the value of long northern service and accomplishment. Staffing policy at the education boards is a matter of board policy. Yet, incredibly, no affirmative action, northern hire, or appeal policies are in place in at least one board. However, this government contributes about 80 percent of the funding to boards and can rightly take a strong role in urging policy.

I've raised this issue with the board and the Minister. We need to learn from this experience, work with our partners, develop and promote the excellence of our local candidates. Mr. Speaker, let's get it done. Mahsi.

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

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON
NATIONAL NURSING WEEK

MR. ABERNETHY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. This week, May 9 to 13th, is National Nursing Week, and today is International Nurses Day. I would like to take this opportunity today to highlight the valuable services that nurses provide to all residents of the Northwest Territories. This year's theme of the National Nursing Week is "Nursing – The Health of our Nation."

According to the Registered Nurses Association of the Northwest Territories and Nunavut, there are 434 nurses registered to practice in the Northwest Territories. Their work helps to improve the health of our territory in substantial and meaningful ways. Whether it is new graduates from the Nursing Program here at Aurora College or veteran nurses with many years of experience, these people are activists, advocates, caregivers, innovators, and researchers who seek holistic ways to build healthier communities. On a day-to-day basis they do this with the use of skill sets gathered and maintained through education and practice that are governed by a rigorous code of ethics. We have nurses with many different diplomas, degrees, certifications and specializations who work in a range of locations. This includes hospitals, clinics, nursing homes, public and community health centres and nursing homes. Some may work with patients and the public directly in our homes or public offices, while others have practices that involve management, administration, and work with other professionals.

There are occasions for nursing care throughout all ages and stages of our lives. These are often periods of our greatest transitions. Many of us can recall examples of when nurses have played vital roles in meaningful moments of our lives or the lives of friends and family members. This week is an opportunity for us to stop and think of those moments, to consider the many ways the nursing profession benefits us, and appreciate it.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to take this opportunity to thank the nurses throughout the Northwest Territories for their dedication and commitment to all of the residents of this great territory. To each and every one of you nurses working and living in our cities, towns and small remote communities, thank you for your contributions. They are truly appreciated. Thank you.

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

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON
ENBRIDGE OIL SPILL

MR. MENICOCHÉ: Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. The words "oil spill," which we've heard far too often lately, strike fear into the hearts of residents, and for good reason. An oil spill always provokes concern for our water, our animals, and the safety of the public.

Just this Monday, Enbridge Pipelines confirmed the spill of approximately four barrels of oil near Willowlake River north of Fort Simpson. The leak was reported by Chief Timothy Lennie of Wrigley, who had discovered it. Unfortunately, Chief Lennie's exposure to the oil has affected his health. He has reported that his eyes are burning and that his throat is sore. In addition to the effects that Chief Lennie is now suffering, we don't know how many animals will be affected either by direct contact with oil or by drinking any contaminated water. The chief has also reported that he had found one duck soaked in oil. Although four barrels seems minor compared to the 28,000 barrel leak in Alberta last week, it is important that we take any leak very seriously.

Mr. Speaker, Chief Lennie has met with officials from Enbridge Pipelines, but has not heard from our GNWT or the federal government. We have oil spill emergency plans, and I'm sure it involves meeting with leaders and communities to advise what steps we as regulatory bodies are taking to monitor the leak.

Chief Lennie has many concerns and questions, but no one is taking the time to contact him or his community. I think it is disrespectful as the leak is in his backyard and he has band members living in the immediate vicinity. He has health, environmental and safety concerns that are not being addressed by our government. His band has limited resources and capacities to deal with this situation and requires our help, yet there's no one talking to him. He also wishes to investigate possible compensation issues, but he does not have the resources to even begin this type of discussion.

We simply must, as a regulatory agency, be proactive and be involved in this incident, Mr. Speaker.

I will be asking questions of the appropriate Minister at the appropriate time. Mahsi cho.

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

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON
IMPACTS OF FEDERAL ELECTION RESULTS

MR. RAMSAY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to speak today about the recent federal election. I'd like to congratulate Mr. Dennis Bevington on his re-election as Member of Parliament for the Western

Arctic. I'd also like to thank the other candidates who so greatly put their names forward to run: two former colleagues of many of us here today, the Conservative candidate, Ms. Sandy Lee, and Liberal candidate, Mr. Joe Handley; Mr. Eli Purchase of the Green Party, and Ms. Bonnie Dawson of the Animal Alliance Party.

What an election does, Mr. Speaker, is it gives the candidates an opportunity to debate the many issues that face this territory, and I would like to thank them for their efforts in that. Canadians now have a majority Conservative government in Ottawa.

I'd like to congratulate Prime Minister Harper on his successful campaign. As a territorial government, we are heavily reliant on the federal government to provide us with the financial resources to deliver the day-to-day programs and services we provide to the residents here in the Northwest Territories. That's roughly \$900 million on an annual basis, Mr. Speaker. Having a majority government, in my opinion, will be an opportunity to foster and grow our relationship with the federal government. Finally there is stability back in Ottawa. We know who we will need to work with over the next four years, and this is great news for our government to have that type of stability.

Three elections in six years was not conducive to us advancing major files in Ottawa. The residents of this territory have elected Mr. Bevington, a New Democrat, who will now be sitting in opposition, and hopefully Mr. Jack Layton, the leader of the New Democrats and leader of the official opposition, will allow our veteran Member of Parliament to play a prominent role in that opposition.

The reality is the Northwest Territories is the only province or territory in this country today without an MP in the governing party. That means, Mr. Speaker, that we must work that much harder as a government to get our issues and concerns addressed in the nation's capital.

We have many big issues to deal with, such as the Mackenzie Gas Project, the Mackenzie Valley Highway, ensuring the \$150 million commitment to the Tuktoyaktuk-Inuvik road gets done, devolution, and finding help for the urgent infrastructure needs for the residents of Northland Trailer Park here in Yellowknife. As soon as the federal Cabinet is sworn in, we need to ensure as a government that we're able and ready to advance our concern and our issues with the federal government. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON
SPECIAL NEEDS LONG-TERM CARE FACILITIES
IN THE NORTH

MRS. GROENEWEGEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Today I would like to take this opportunity to thank Minister Miltenberger, the Minister for Health and Social Services, for attending the grand opening of a long-anticipated facility in Hay River that's been under construction. On April 28th we had the grand opening of the Hay River Supported Living Day Program Centre. Prior to that, Mr. Speaker, we had the official opening of the campus, the rooms, the homes where the clients reside.

I would like to just say that since the campus opened two years ago, it has helped people with disabilities live productive, independent, and meaningful lives within the community and our territory. It is equipped to house up to 12 residents, including two beds for respite care.

With the opening of the Day Program Centre, programs will now be offered to both residents and clients from the surrounding area of Hay River. The centre will provide residents with an opportunity for personal growth, life skills, and peer and social supports.

The opening of this facility in Hay River is about repatriating Northerners to the North, something that we've talked about for a long time. It is important for many reasons. The jobs of the caregivers are jobs which are provided to northern residents. The economy associated with those jobs and those activities stays in the North. Most importantly, the clients who we were before referring to southern institutions now have an opportunity to stay in the North.

I believe we need to look at every opportunity, not just talk about it but let's do it, talk about it, and observe and respond to every opportunity where we have as the Government of the Northwest Territories to care for our people and residents with special needs here in the Northwest Territories.

I would like to thank the government. I know the Minister has only been in this position for a short while, but this entire government played a large role in seeing this facility built in Hay River. It is fully functioning now and I believe it is serving the intended purpose and I believe it is a very good day for Hay River and the North.

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

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON
NEED FOR REHABILITATION CENTRES FOR
SUBSTANCE ABUSE IN YELLOWKNIFE

MR. HAWKINS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. There is an incredible need for intense alcohol and drug treatment programs to be based here in

Yellowknife. Alcohol and drug abuse, as we've all seen, continues to have a profound impact on this city and the North in every single community. This problem, as we all know, is longstanding, but right now, wherever I look, people are united in wanting to take support and action on this particular issue. We have seen what easily could be defined as a rare and united consensus on taking action on this particular issue.

It is not often that a very respected Supreme Court justice advises this government that rehabilitation services are needed in the communities, such as John Vertes did in March. As well, the business community has been calling for action for some time. Our government needs to heed the advice the Yellowknife Chamber of Commerce has been offering, and I will remind the government that in April the executive director, Tim Doyle, told the media that in our capital city's downtown area alone, the human cost and the business cost are incredibly huge. He is correct in his assessment and comments.

In Yellowknife the burden of the downtown issues are many. However, substance abuse is the cornerstone of many of those problems. And if that's not enough, then there's the territory's chief coroner comments -- that's Cathy Menard -- and the jury's recommendations after the death of Raymond Eagle. The coroner's jury recommended a rehab centre for substance abuse in Yellowknife and a halfway house to help the people cope with alcohol and drug problems.

If that's still not enough, we have the good advice of the Members of this House. Even the Standing Committee on Social Programs recommended in its Report on the Review of the Child and Family Services Act that "alcohol and drug treatment be readily accessible and convenient to all communities." In response to that recommendation, this government has accepted that point. However, they shamelessly qualify their acceptance by saying "subject to the availability of resources." That is why I'm here today: to focus resources to help the people of the Northwest Territories. Because I, like many of us here in the building, am here to help those who cannot help themselves.

I can tell you from experience, when I worked years ago at the corrections centre as a corrections officer, that many good souls were lost to the ills of drugs and alcohol.

I seek unanimous consent to conclude my statement.

---Unanimous consent granted

MR. HAWKINS: What I found, working at the corrections centre, was that when many of these souls did dry up and cleaned up from their alcohol and drug problems, I would find that they rid themselves of those drug and alcohol demons and

they were truly decent people. Clearly there is a problem.

By now what I'm trying to say is this territory needs better options. We need a treatment centre in Yellowknife and it should be a program that includes treatment for crack, meth addiction, as well as prescription abuse. I remind the Health Minister that this is truly an important issue in the public that needs addressing.

Later today I will raise the particular issues of what experience has taught us, that we may not be able to build a centre immediately but we can commit today to a plan of action on addressing these particular issues that is significant not just here in Yellowknife but to the territory as a whole.

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

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON CORE HOUSING NEEDS IN TU NEDHE

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

Mr. Speaker, the NWT Housing Corporation has policies that guide them as they attempt to reduce the housing needs across the Northwest Territories. These policies are designed to address three areas of core need as identified in social housing across this country. Those areas of core need are: adequacy where families have structural, electrical, mechanical or architectural issues with their houses; suitability where families do not have enough bedrooms to accommodate their family sizes; and affordability, where more than 30 percent of the gross income is being used to house their families.

In Tu Nedhe the majority of the needs are adequacy. This means that the people in Tu Nedhe have adequacy issues with their homes and cannot afford to complete the repairs without the assistance of the NWT Housing Corporation.

I believe that the Housing Corporation must change its policies to allow them to address the issues of houses across the NWT that have adequacy issues. I do not feel that the Housing Corporation should continue to build any new homes in Tu Nedhe.

I think that the NWT Housing Corporation should begin the process of going from door to door using local program officers, and work towards addressing the greatest needs in Tu Nedhe according to the Housing Corporation's own document, the 2009 Needs Survey. I am very concerned, as are the constituents of Lutselk'e and Fort Resolution, that more new houses will be built for a few lucky people to get into those units when the majority of the people who are homeowners cannot afford repairs and watch their houses fall

into disrepair and eventually beyond economical repair.

I feel the first step towards addressing this serious issue is to decentralize NWT Housing Corporation staff so that they can begin to build files on these clients and take them through the process and avoid the potential of having huge deferred maintenance issues with the homeowners across the territory.

I urge the Minister of NWT Housing Corporation to shift resources from new construction to renovations of existing units, and expand those resources...

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

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

---Unanimous consent granted

MR. BEAULIEU: I urge the Minister of NWT Housing Corporation to shift resources from new construction to renovations of existing units, and expand those resources by using a decentralized model by putting program officers and project officers in the communities where they are delivering the programs.

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

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON FEDERAL RESOURCES FOR NWT HIGHWAY BETWEEN TUKTOYAKTUK AND INUVIK

MR. JACOBSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Several months ago the federal government tabled a budget that included \$150 million for the Tuk-Inuvik highway, not Highway No. 7, finally linking Canada coast to coast to coast. The result of many years of lobbying and hard work from the community, the leaders in the Beaufort-Delta, my office, and other organizations.

Unfortunately, with calling the election, the budget was not ratified in the House of Commons. However, the residents of Inuvik and Tuk and all over Nunakput are hopeful that the commitment with the first budget with this new federal government that this project will provide employment for the Beaufort-Delta, reduce the cost of living for the residents of Nunakput, and will be a vital piece of infrastructure for the industry in the region. Once the highway is built, many contractors and their employees will benefit from maintenance contracts to keep the road open and in good operating condition.

We're all facing a delicate situation here that needs to be coordinated in a focused approach, to ensure that the funding commitment from the federal government does not fall through the cracks. The Tuk-Inuvik highway is an important first step for

building the Mackenzie Valley Highway. It is important that we remain focused on the prize, and that it does not fracture along regional lines and confuse messaging to the federal government.

The Mackenzie Valley Pipeline is another important consideration that makes building the highway down the river more feasible for Canada to consider.

I'm urging the government to work with me, the leadership of the Beaufort-Delta and other organizations that work tirelessly for funding in this important project and important infrastructure for the whole territory. This will create jobs for everybody that we haven't had work in the Beaufort-Delta in the last four years. Everybody is finding there's a lot of struggling going on.

I will have questions for the Minister of Transportation at the appropriate time.

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

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON
CANADIAN FORUM ON WOMEN'S
HOMELESSNESS AND HEALTH ATTENDEES
ARLENE HACHE AND LYDA FULLER

MS. BISARO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Today I want to use my Member's statement to speak about two accomplished Yellowknife women. Arlene Hache and Lyda Fuller are both well-known non-government organization leaders at the Centre for Northern Families and at the YWCA. Both of these women work diligently and tirelessly on behalf of all NWT women and families who are in need. These talented ladies have just demonstrated their skills and commitment at a national conference: the first ever Canadian Forum on Housing and Safe Communities for Women. They were presenters at several sessions.

A few years ago both the Y and the Centre for Northern Families collaborated with the Yukon and Nunavut women's organizations to research women's homelessness in the North. That research was compiled into a valuable report entitled, *You Just Blink and It Can Happen: A Study of Women's Homelessness North of 60*. Ms. Hache and Ms. Fuller presented that research project at one of the conference breakout sessions this past Monday. In addition, Ms. Hache presented at another breakout session on Tuesday on Fetal Alcohol Syndrome Disorder and Women's Health, and she was a panellist for the closing plenary yesterday.

The NWT is blessed to have such accomplished, nationally recognized women working to provide better living situations for NWT women. Housing is a huge issue in all of our communities, and the work that these ladies and their organizations do on behalf of northern women provides the NWT with a

vital part of the continuum of housing that we need in the North.

Many women move here to the NWT capital and then become at risk. When they do, their saviours are the Centre for Northern Families and Ms. Hache, and the YWCA and Ms. Fuller. For Ms. Hache, a resident of Weledeh, and Ms. Fuller, a Frame Lake constituent, their goal is to provide the following for their clients. This is a quote from Susan Scott, who is the author of a book entitled, *All Our Sisters*, "Home is about safety. A home where they can sleep unmolested, where their children are safe and their treasures secure." I hope that this government agrees with that goal and that we will soon see that goal accomplished.

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

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON
SUMMER EMPLOYMENT FOR NWT
HIGH SCHOOL AND COLLEGE GRADUATES

MR. YAKELEYA: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's graduation season and many students are preparing to move onto the next phase of life. They will be entering into the workforce. Who will hire them and where should they apply?

This year in our Sahtu communities there will be 22 high school graduates and nine Aurora College graduates. All these graduates have one thing in common, it is the commitment, the commitment to start something and finish it. As the government, we need to show our students our commitment and our support for their achievement.

We have an aging workforce in the GNWT. The 2009 Public Service Annual Report tells us that 25 percent of the employees are expected to retire in the next 10 years. That translates to nearly 1,200 employees who will need to be replaced.

We have increased the graduation rates. We have made improvements to boost our education attendees. We have had regional education forums and heard from our own people about getting good academic education. So let's support our students with a job this summer. The ones who graduate from Aurora College, let's put them in a position to begin a career in line with their training. For the high school graduates, let's reward them with jobs so that they can have money for colleges or universities next year.

Mr. Speaker, we have to show our students that it pays to get an education, and that if you are making a commitment, it means something. We need to instil the value of good, honest work. These students deserve the best from us and this government.

Mr. Speaker, our students are entering into the workforce. I trust it will not be as scary as they think it will be because they will know we are with them.

We are the leaders. Let's show our leadership today. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Yakeleya. Item 4, reports of standing and special committees. The honourable Member for Nahendeh, Mr. Menicoche.

Reports of Standing and Special Committees

COMMITTEE REPORT 1-16(6):
REPORT ON THE REVIEW OF THE REPORT OF
THE AUDITOR GENERAL ON NORTHWEST
TERRITORIES DEH CHO BRIDGE PROJECT -
2011, DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

MR. MENICOCHÉ: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Your Standing Committee on Government Operations is pleased to provide its Report on the Review of the Report of the Auditor General on the Northwest Territories Deh Cho Bridge Project – 2011, Department of Transportation, and commends it to the House.

The Standing Committee on Government Operations held its public review of the report of the Auditor General of the Northwest Territories Deh Cho Bridge Project – 2011, Department of Transportation, on April 19th and 20th, 2011. The committee thanks the Auditor General, Ms. Sheila Fraser, and her staff for their work in preparing the report and in assisting the committee with its review. The committee also thanks the deputy minister of Transportation and his staff for their participation, as well as officials from the Financial Management Board Secretariat and the Department of Justice.

General Comments

The committee's mandate includes reviewing reports of the Auditor General of Canada, and making recommendations to the Government of the Northwest Territories (GNWT). The committee wants to ensure that the GNWT demonstrates its accountability to the public.

The audit was undertaken at the request of the Legislative Assembly in March, 2010. It covered the period between September 2000 and October 2010. The Auditor General's work for this report, "Northwest Territories Deh Cho Bridge Project – 2011, Department of Transportation" was substantially completed by October 29, 2010. It was tabled on March 1, 2011, during the Fifth Session of the 16th Legislative Assembly.

Bridge construction was in progress throughout the audit and it remains under construction with a target completion date of November 2011.

Phase I refers to the period between 2000 and 2010 when the Deh Cho Bridge project was referred to as a public-private partnership (P3). Phase II began in April 2010 when the GNWT

formally assumed full responsibility for the project, including construction management.

The Auditor General found that the project was not a P3, in that no significant risks were shared with the private partner. The project's risks increased substantially when the GNWT authorized construction without a fully developed bridge design. After taking over the project, the Department of Transportation (the department) had a framework in place to manage the key risks, but the audit found weaknesses in the risk matrix. In the auditor's view, significant risks remain in the areas of scope, schedule and cost.

The focus of the audit was to determine whether the GNWT adequately managed the risks of entering into a P3; and, whether, since taking over the project, the department had established a framework to manage the key risks associated with the project's quality, schedule, scope and cost. The audit considered only the actions of the GNWT, not other aspects of the project such as the Deh Cho Bridge Corporation (DCBC) or contractors.

The audit report makes three recommendations related to the Deh Cho Bridge and future projects. The committee agrees with the recommendations and supports the department's response to them.

With that, Mr. Speaker, I'd like to return the rest of the reading of the report to my honourable colleague, Mr. Robert Hawkins.

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

MR. HAWKINS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and I'd like to thank our committee chair, Mr. Menicoche, as well.

Phase I

As the audit report explains, the purpose of a P3 is to shift a portion of the risks of a public project to a private sector partner who brings technical and financial capacities to the project. A P3 procurement strategy carries risks in that the public sector must establish a working relationship with a suitable partner and clearly negotiate each party's obligations to the project.

In the case of the Deh Cho Bridge, the audit found that the project was not a P3 because the private sector partner had no equity to invest in the project, and limited capacity to manage a project on that scale. The GNWT assumed more and more risk as the cost of the project increased, without shifting any significant risks to the private partner as anticipated in a conventional P3.

As a sidebar, the Auditor General's report presents an exhibit of the perspective of the community of Fort Providence and its relationship with the GNWT throughout the Deh Cho Bridge project. The committee does not want to preclude the possibility

of future partnerships between communities and the GNWT in the area of infrastructure projects, but stresses that an approved process must be followed, consistent with the Auditor General's recommendation that the GNWT establish a senior project oversight committee to provide advice on the steps required to develop a major project and act as a forum for discussing project objectives, risks, procurement and other relevant matters.

Recommendation 1

The Standing Committee on Government Operations recommends that the GNWT finalize a public-private partnership policy. This policy should include provisions to ensure that:

- the GNWT undertakes an analysis of its full financial exposure;
- the roles and responsibilities of the GNWT and its partner(s) are clearly defined;
- due diligence is carried out on the partner's capacity to fulfill its roles and obligations.
- risks and opportunities are proportionately shared; and
- the GNWT establishes a clear understanding of a community's objectives and abilities when entering a partnership with a community.

Cabinet should provide a timeline for the finalization of the public-private partnership policy within the life of the 16th Legislative Assembly.

Mr. Speaker, at this time now I'd like to pass the report on to Mr. Abernethy, my colleague from Great Slave.

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

MR. ABERNETHY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and I'd like to thank my colleagues Mr. Hawkins and Mr. Menicoche.

Members are pleased that the Department agreed to share the Process Convention for Review for alternatively financed projects with the committee, mentioned in the department's response to the Auditor General's first recommendation. This process convention forms the basis of a P3 policy.

The findings in Paragraph 33 of the Auditor General's report raised concern among some Members. In September 2007, the Contract of Indemnification Exemption Regulations was amended to allow for a specific indemnity in the Concession Agreement in favour of the Deh Cho Bridge Corporation. This amendment exempted the Minister of Finance from, among other statutory requirements, the requirement to give Members of the Legislative Assembly at least 14 days notice,

and enabled the GNWT to make a major financial commitment that now approaches \$200 million. Members noted that the Concession Agreement was signed and the amendment to the regulations made after the Legislature had been dissolved.

During the public meeting, the Auditor General's review team expressed the opinion that the Executive Council acted within its legal authority to make the amendment. The Financial Management Board Secretariat confirmed that the GNWT had used exemption regulations to enter into a contract or agreement on previous occasions.

The committee is pleased that, as indicated in the public meeting, the government is considering bringing forward changes to the Financial Administration Act that would modify the current process so that all indemnities would come before the Legislative Assembly.

Phase II

The committee is satisfied that the department has updated the information in its risk matrix in response to the Auditor General's second recommendation, that the department update the risk matrix and provide more complete information on mitigation measures responding to potential risks.

The department provided the committee a measure of confidence that it is closely monitoring the day-to-day progress of the bridge. Department officials identified plans for environmental remediation at the site, electrical work, and clean-up within the project's current budget and general environmental liabilities. The department has considered the cost of an ice bridge and ferry service should the bridge be delayed. The department has \$1 million in a separate budget for toll collection, which, it concedes, is small, but the amount is being discussed.

The department did not address lifecycle or additional remedial costs in its responses. The committee observes that paragraph 65 of the Auditor General's report includes mention of a catwalk as a necessary part of the design, however, in the public meeting, the department stated it has decided to build the bridge without one. The committee is at a loss to explain this discrepancy.

Recommendation 2

The Standing Committee on Government Operations recommends that the Department of Transportation thoroughly investigate the necessity and practicality of installing a catwalk, and report back to Members with other options for maintenance and inspection duly compared, within the scope of the Canadian Highway Bridge Design Code.

Mr. Speaker, I'd like to pass on the continued reading of this report to my colleague Mr. Yakeleya. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

MR. YAKELEYA: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and thank you honourable Members.

The Auditor General's final recommendation is that the department ensure that a single authority certifies that the design and construction of the bridge meet the Canadian Highway Bridge Design Code, and that certification be obtained before the bridge is open to traffic. The department assured the committee that it is seeking the most practical means to ensure that the bridge is signed off by an Engineer of Record.

Further quality testing will be required for a single Engineer of Record to sign off on the bridge, which will carry additional costs. If the GNWT's own engineer signs off as Engineer of Record, the GNWT will once again assume all the risk that entails.

Recommendation 3

The Standing Committee on Government Operations recommends that before the Deh Cho Bridge opens to traffic, the Department of Transportation ensure that a qualified authority certifies that the design and construction of the Deh Cho Bridge meet the Canadian Highway Bridge Design Code.

The committee is concerned that the department may bury or delay costs in an effort to remain within the current project budget. The committee noted that the Deh Cho Bridge Project includes many costs that are internal to the department and the GNWT as a whole. For example, the committee understands that legal action is being considered, but cost implications are unknown.

Recommendation 4

The Standing Committee on Government Operations recommends that the department keep all Members of the Legislative Assembly fully apprised of progress on the bridge and cost implications, and provide regular updates to the Standing Committee on Economic Development and Infrastructure. These updates should include details specifically related to project risks, schedule, toll collection and establishing an Engineer of Record.

The department should provide Members with a timeline and total cost for the completion of the Deh Cho Bridge project at the earliest possible date.

Recommendation 5

The Standing Committee on Government Operations recommends the department

should provide an all-in, total cost for the project when it is complete that clearly identifies internal costs to the Legislative Assembly and the public.

The committee understands that the department has yet to provide a formal action plan on how it will implement the Auditor General's recommendations.

Recommendation 6

The Standing Committee on Government Operations recommends that the Department of Transportation provide and make public a detailed action plan to implement the recommendations contained in the Auditor General's report on the Deh Cho Bridge Project, within 90 days.

Mr. Speaker, I now return the report back to the chairman, Mr. Menicoche.

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

Conclusion

MR. MENICOCHÉ: Members expressed varied levels of satisfaction that the department is working to implement the Auditor General's recommendations. Further work is needed to finalize a policy for alternatively financed projects, address inspection and maintenance requirements for the bridge, and ensure it is certified as an integrated unit by an appropriate authority. The committee is keenly aware that risks remain in the areas of the project's schedule, scope and cost, and expects to be kept fully apprised of the progress made toward the project's completion.

Recommendation 7

The Standing Committee on Government Operations recommends that the Government of the Northwest Territories provide a comprehensive response to this report within 90 days.

MOTION TO RECEIVE COMMITTEE REPORT 1-16(6) AND MOVE INTO COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE, CARRIED

Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the honourable Member for Yellowknife Centre, that Committee Report 1-16(6) be received by the Assembly and moved into Committee of the Whole for further consideration.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Menicoche. Motion is on the floor. Motion is in order. To the motion.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Question.

MR. SPEAKER: Question is being called.

---Carried

Committee Report 1-16(6) will be moved into Committee of the Whole for further consideration.

The honourable Member for Nahendeh, Mr. Menicoche.

COMMITTEE REPORT 2-16(6):
REPORT ON THE REVIEW OF THE
REPORT OF THE AUDITOR GENERAL
ON NORTHWEST TERRITORIES
HEALTH PROGRAMS AND SERVICES – 2011,
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND
SOCIAL SERVICES

MR. MENICOCHÉ: Mr. Speaker, your Standing Committee on Government Operations held its public review of the Report of the Auditor General on Northwest Territories Health Programs and Services – 2011, Department of Health and Social Services, and commends it to the House.

The Standing Committee on Government Operations held its public review of the Report of the Auditor General on Northwest Territories Health Programs and Services – 2011, Department of Health and Social Services, on April 19 and 20, 2011. The committee thanks the Auditor General, Ms. Sheila Fraser, and her staff for their work in preparing the report and in assisting the committee with its review. The committee also thanks the deputy minister of Health and Social Services and her staff for their participation.

General Comments

The committee's mandate includes reviewing reports of the Auditor General of Canada and making recommendations to the Government of the Northwest Territories. The committee wants to ensure that the Government of the Northwest Territories demonstrates its accountability to the public.

The Auditor General's work for this report, Northwest Territories Health Programs and Services – 2011, was substantially completed by September 30, 2010. It was tabled on March 1, 2011, during the Fifth Session of the 16th Legislative Assembly.

The committee is pleased to report that the Auditor General found that the Department of Health and Social Services (DHSS) is managing the health system adequately and setting clear direction for the future. However, new technology, rising costs, and national shortages of professional staff are driving systemic changes in the health system. The Auditor General found that the department's ability to achieve its priorities is limited by the absence of system-wide performance indicators, the lack of performance agreements with health authorities, and the fact that there is no service agreement with the Department of Human Resources, which has a key role in recruiting health professionals. The lack of performance indicators and agreements also

hampers reporting on the performance of the health system to both the public and the Legislative Assembly. This must change.

The Auditor General's review team focused on programs and services for diabetes, home care, long-term care, medical travel, and recruitment of professional staff. Social services were not reviewed. Authorities were not officially included, but three were visited and consulted in the context of the departmental review. Although the review did not and could not reasonably be expected to cover the entire health system, the committee is satisfied that the review was very thorough, reliable, and fair. Despite the limitations noted above, the review sheds considerable light on the state of our health system, particularly the department's ability to assess its effectiveness and plan accordingly.

The Auditor General made seven major recommendations to improve the administration and effectiveness of the NWT health system. All were accepted by the Department of Health and Social Services, and where relevant, by the Department of Human Resources, as well. The committee is pleased that the departments intend to implement the prescribed changes. The government should have a plan and timeline for doing so, and provide them to both Members of the Legislative Assembly and the public.

Recommendation 1

The Standing Committee on Government Operations recommends that the Government of the Northwest Territories develop a plan for implementing all the Auditor General's recommendations on health programs and services, and provide it to Members of the Legislative Assembly and the public.

The implementation plan should include a timeline and quarterly progress updates to the Standing Committee on Social Programs, beginning in June 2011.

Mr. Speaker, I turn the reading of the report over to my deputy chair, Mr. Robert Hawkins. Mahsi.

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

MR. HAWKINS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and thank you, Mr. Menicoche.

The committee agrees with the Auditor General that the department's capacity to achieve its priority of a sustainable, effective health system depends on the ability to monitor performance and health outcomes. As both are currently deficient, both must be improved. The government must support the department's efforts to do this, including appropriate funding through the annual budget process. It must be understood that data collection and performance monitoring are crucial to sound

planning, determining spending priorities, and shaping a client-focused health system.

The committee also recognizes that many factors affect the sustainability of the health system, some of which are beyond the department's control. Demand for health services and the general health of the population are also influenced by education, the availability of employment, housing conditions, addictions, and poverty. The government's overall priorities and strategy must address these problems at the same time as DHSS modernizes the health system as outlined in "A Foundation for Change."

Setting Direction for the Health Care System and Funding Health Authorities

The Auditor General found that DHSS has set clear goals, priorities and actions to improve the health system, and set them out clearly in "A Foundation for Change." Strategic plans of three health authorities were reviewed and found consistent with DHSS' priorities.

However, there are no performance agreements with the authorities, and the model for funding them is being overhauled to better align resources with patient flow and program delivery. Essentially, this will result in realistic budgets for each authority, reflecting the work that is done and the resources allocated to it. DHSS stresses that "right-sizing" budgets is a prerequisite for performance agreements with the authorities.

This is critically important work, as it is the job of the authorities to actually deliver health care services and programs to the people of the Northwest Territories. Therefore, the committee stresses that DHSS and the government must make it a particular priority to implement the Auditor General's recommendation in paragraph 31 during the 2012-13 fiscal year, as promised in DHSS' response.

Recommendation 2

The Standing Committee on Government Operations recommends that the Department of Health and Social Services follow through on commitments made in its strategic plan and action plan to:

- revise the model to allocate funding to Health and Social Services authorities, and
- develop performance agreements that include expected results for key programs and services, and corresponding reporting requirements.

Mr. Speaker, that now brings me to the point to pass the further reading of the report on to my colleague Mr. Yakeleya, MLA for Sahtu. Thank you.

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

Supporting Health Programs and Monitoring Delivery

MR. YAKELEYA: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In reviewing the diabetes, home care and long-term care, medical travel, and human resources recruitment programs, the Auditor General examined DHSS' support of program delivery and its monitoring of results.

A consistent theme emerged in the reviews of diabetes, home care and long-term care, and medical travel. In each, there is no mechanism for monitoring and evaluating the effectiveness and efficiency of the program. Insufficient data is collected to support evaluation of diabetes, home care and long-term care programs; a deficiency that must be corrected, as DHSS has pledged to do.

The department will not have a territory-wide strategy to prevent or manage diabetes until the completion of the Chronic Disease Management Model, which is due in 2012. Meeting this deadline should be a special priority, given the prevalence of diabetes and the impact of chronic conditions on the people of the Northwest Territories, as well as their health system.

The committee is especially concerned about the recruitment and retention of health care professionals, which is a joint responsibility of the Department of Health and Social Services, the authorities, and the Department of Human Resources. The Auditor General found that the Department of Health and Social Services has identified its human resource needs. However, vacancy rates are significant, and many experienced staff are expected to retire over the next 10 years. The Auditor General noted that staff shortages represent a serious risk to ensuring consistent and equitable access to quality health services across the NWT.

This risk is compounded by the uncertain success of the current joint recruitment system. The Auditor General advised that the lack of a comprehensive human resource recruitment plan, and the lack of a service level agreement between Human Resources, the Department of Health and Social Services, and the authorities, must be addressed. The committee strongly agrees. While the two departments agreed with the Auditor General's recommendations to remedy the situation, there must also be firm commitments with respect to timing.

Recommendation 3

The Standing Committee on Government Operations recommends that the Department of Health and Social Services, health authorities, and the Department of Human Resources develop a comprehensive system-wide recruitment and retention plan for health professionals, for implementation in 2012-13,

and monitor progress against the plan on an ongoing basis.

Recommendation 4

The Standing Committee on Government Operations recommends that the Department of Health and Social Services, health authorities, and the Department of Human Resources develop a service level agreement for recruitment and retention of health professionals that sets out roles, responsibilities, timelines, and services to be delivered. This agreement should be in place and functional by April 1, 2012.

Mr. Speaker, somebody else wants to talk. I turn it over now to the honourable Member Mr. Abernethy.

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

MR. ABERNETHY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to thank my colleague for letting me talk.

Mr. Speaker, the Department of Health and Social Services has also identified growing demand for home and community care staff, as well as training gaps for home support workers and resident care aides. While training of NWT residents for jobs in health care was not part of the Auditor General's review, it is a key element in the stability and quality of a workforce that will of necessity include many southern hires. The committee was pleased with the input received from DHSS on this topic.

Successful training of northern health workers requires solid collaboration between DHSS, the Department of Education, Culture and Employment (ECE), and Aurora College. Training and educational opportunities delivered by ECE and Aurora College must be flexible enough to meet the needs of the health system, and produce graduates who meet accepted standards. The committee strongly supports the development of homegrown health care workers who have the added advantage of knowing local people, traditions and communities. In this area, Department of Health and Social Services, Education, Culture and Employment and Aurora College should build a strong cooperative relationship that will advance the goals set out in "A Foundation for Change".

Measuring and Reporting on Performance

Only limited information is reported to the Legislative Assembly and the public on the performance of the NWT health care system. The Auditor General found the lack of system-wide performance indicators at the root of this problem.

There is still no agreement between the Department of Health and Social Services and health authorities on a set of performance indicators, yet these indicators are essential, along

with a risk management framework, to system-wide evaluation.

Department of Health and Social Services has not published a territorial Health Status Report since 2005, although a new one is in the works. Overall, there is no clear picture of how the health system is performing. Measurement and reporting must be improved. Given these facts, the committee emphasizes that Department of Health and Social Services must remedy this by 2012-13, as agreed in paragraph 81 of the Auditor General's report.

Recommendation 5

The Standing Committee on Government Operations recommends that the Department of Health and Social Services and the health authorities:

- develop a set of system-wide performance indicators and identify key data requirements;
- develop a program evaluation plan setting out areas it plans to evaluate; and
- regularly inform the Legislative Assembly and the public about the performance of the NWT health care system.

I'd like to pass the conclusion of this report on to my colleague Mr. Menicoche. Thank you.

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

Conclusion

MR. MENICOCHÉ: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The committee recognizes that the Department of Health and Social Services staff have faced tremendous challenges during the first years of the 16th Assembly. It is no small feat to overhaul the health system, incorporate new technology, and directly oversee three of the eight health authorities while supporting quality, day-to-day care under considerable fiscal pressure. Committee members heartily congratulate Department of Health and Social Services' and the authorities' staff for these achievements.

However, the Auditor General's review confirms there is still much work to be done. Committee members are confident that the Department of Health and Social Services, the health authorities, and the Department of Human Resources are up to the task, and will diligently implement the Auditor General's recommendations. The committee is also confident that the Standing Committee on Social Programs will assist in supporting that work.

Recommendation 6

In light of the time remaining to the 16th Legislative Assembly, the Standing Committee on Government Operations recommends that the Government of the Northwest Territories

provide a comprehensive response to this report within 90 days.

**MOTION TO RECEIVE
COMMITTEE REPORT 2-16(6) AND MOVE INTO
COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE,
CARRIED**

Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the honourable Member for Sahtu, that Committee Report 2-16(6) be received by the Assembly and moved into Committee of the Whole for further consideration. Mahsi cho.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Menicoche. Motion is on the floor. Motion is in order. To the motion.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Question.

MR. SPEAKER: Question is being called.

---Carried

Committee Report 2-16(6) will be moved into Committee of the Whole for further consideration.

The honourable Member for Nahendeh, Mr. Menicoche.

**COMMITTEE REPORT 3-16(6):
REPORT ON THE REVIEW OF THE 2009-2010
HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION
ANNUAL REPORT**

MR. MENICOCHÉ: Mr. Speaker your Standing Committee on Government Operations is pleased to provide its Report on the Review of the 2009-2010 Human Rights Commission Annual Report and comments it to the House.

Introduction

The Standing Committee on Government Operations has completed its review of the 2009-2010 Human Rights Commission Annual Report. This report covers the Human Rights Commission's sixth year. The committee would like to thank Ms. Mary Pat Short, chair of the Human Rights Commission, and Ms. Thérèse Boullard, director of human rights, for their appearance before the committee.

2009-2010 Annual Report

In 2009-2010, the NWT Human Rights Commission had a national presence as Ms. Short held the position of president, and Ms. Boullard, treasurer, of the Canadian Association of Statutory Human Rights Agencies (CASHRA). The committee congratulates both of these women on their leadership of the Canadian Association of Statutory Human Rights Agencies.

Rita Mueller from Behchoko, Yacub Adam from Yellowknife, and Tammy Rogers from Inuvik were the members of the Board of the Human Rights Commission. The members and chair deserve

recognition for their contribution to human rights in the Northwest Territories.

The annual report provides an overview of the NWT Human Rights Commission's activities. Over the year, commission staff responded to 280 inquiries and 26 new complaints. Two complaints were forwarded to the NWT Human Rights Adjudication Panel for hearing.

The commission provided information sessions and workshops to GNWT Human Resource staff, hamlet staff, secondary school students, and students at Aurora College learning centres. The commission visited Fort Smith, Fort Providence, Hay River, Deline, Tulita, Ulukhaktok, Dettah, and Yellowknife.

The commission also distributed a human rights handbook to all teachers for use in offering related educational activities in their classrooms. The committee recognizes the effort and accomplishments of the commission and how staff follows through with plans.

In partnership with the Yukon Human Rights Commission, the NWT Human Rights Commission published "Know Your Rights," a well-presented, plain language document that explains on what grounds a person is protected from discrimination in the NWT and the Yukon.

When the committee reviewed "Know Your Rights," it observed that the Yukon prohibits discrimination based on "unrelated" criminal convictions or criminal records, while the NWT does not. The committee asked Ms. Short to speak to its possible value in the NWT Human Rights Act. Ms. Short advised that its inclusion was recommended in the commission's 2004-2005 report. The Standing Committee on Accountability and Oversight brought the recommendation forward to government in its Report on the Review of the 2004-2005 Annual Report of the Human Rights Commission. At its meeting on December 3, 2010, the Standing Committee on Government Operations expressed interest in a review of this matter to ensure NWT residents receive proper protection from discrimination and because it may be in the best interest of people in the NWT to allow more people to have access to work that is presently unavailable to them.

Recommendation 1

The Standing Committee on Government Operations recommends that the Department of Justice review and assess the advisability of prohibiting discrimination based on "unrelated" criminal convictions or a criminal record.

Conclusion

The committee commends the commission's work and achievements to date and looks forward to continued progress in informing NWT residents of

their rights and responsibilities so that justice and fairness is strengthened.

Recommendation 2

The Standing Committee on Government Operations recommends the Government of the Northwest Territories provides a comprehensive response to this report within 120 days.

**MOTION TO RECEIVE
COMMITTEE REPORT 3-16(6) AND MOVE INTO
COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE,
CARRIED**

Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the honourable Member for Great Slave, that Committee Report 3-16(6) be received by the Assembly and moved into Committee of the Whole for further consideration.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Menicoche. Motion is on the floor. Motion is in order. To the motion.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Question.

MR. SPEAKER: Question is being called.

---Carried

Committee Report 3-16(6) will be moved into Committee of the Whole for further consideration.

The honourable Member for Nahendeh, Mr. Menicoche.

**COMMITTEE REPORT 4-16(6):
REPORT ON THE REVIEW OF THE
OFFICE OF THE NORTHWEST TERRITORIES
LANGUAGES COMMISSIONER
ANNUAL REPORT 2009-2010**

MR. MENICOCHÉ: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. If I can get the Assembly's attention one more time on a report.

Your committee on Government Operations is pleased to provide its Report on the Review of the Office of the Northwest Territories Languages Commissioner Annual Report 2009-2010 and commends it to the House.

Introduction

The Standing Committee on Government Operations (SCOGO) met on March 3, 2011, to review "The Office of the Northwest Territories Languages Commissioner Annual Report 2009-2010." The committee would like to thank the Languages Commissioner, Ms. Sarah Jerome, for presenting her report.

Commentary

The Office of the Languages Commissioner is accessible through its website, a toll-free phone line and an office in Inuvik. It is promoted through radio advertisements in all official languages, and by Ms. Jerome, in her frequent attendance at public

functions, and when she is interviewed by the media.

The committee notes that promotion of languages is not in the Official Languages Commissioner's purview. However, it is Ms. Jerome's role to promote the office of the Languages Commissioner, the rights, status and privileges of official language speakers pursuant to the Official Languages Act, and her availability to answer questions or investigate complaints.

The committee is also pleased with the approach taken by Ms. Jerome. As part of her regular practice, she attends summer assemblies and regional council meetings throughout the Northwest Territories. In 2009-2010 the Commissioner made more than a dozen presentations on official languages at these assemblies and other meetings and conferences. Ms. Jerome's presence and her sincere interest help to support community members involved in promotion, revitalization and enhancement of first languages.

When she is attending meetings, conferences and school functions, Ms. Jerome responds to many inquiries. She also investigates complaints. The committee respects and values Ms. Jerome's observations and good judgment. Ms. Jerome, subject to Article 20(2) of the Official Languages Act, may investigate any matter, not just complaints, on her own initiative. If Ms. Jerome deems an issue worthy of study, Members will welcome reading her findings and recommendations in future annual reports.

Conclusion

The Standing Committee on Government Operations would like to thank Ms. Jerome for her activities promoting the role of the Languages Commissioner. Her many community visits to make presentations and to listen to peoples' concerns give her a valuable perspective on language issues.

**MOTION TO RECEIVE
COMMITTEE REPORT 4-16(6) AND MOVE INTO
COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE,
CARRIED**

Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the honourable Member for Yellowknife Centre, that Committee Report 4-16(6) be received by the Assembly and moved into Committee of the Whole for further consideration. Mahsi cho.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Menicoche. Motion is on the floor. Motion is in order. To the motion.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Question.

MR. SPEAKER: Question is being called.

---Carried

Committee Report 4-16(6) will be moved into Committee of the Whole for further consideration.

Item 5, returns to oral questions. Item 6, recognition of visitors in the gallery. Item 7, acknowledgements. The honourable Member for Frame Lake, Ms. Bisaro.

Acknowledgements

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT 3-16(6): PASSING OF CODY DEMPSTER

MS. BISARO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to acknowledge the recent and untimely death of a young Frame Lake resident. Cody Dempster was just 16 years old, and as noted by his family, he leaves behind a life unfinished. My condolences and those of this House to Cody's parents and extended family and his friends. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Ms. Bisaro. Item 8, oral questions. The honourable Member for Weledeh, Mr. Bromley.

Oral Questions

QUESTION 56-16(6): COALITION AGAINST FAMILY VIOLENCE RECOMMENDATIONS

MR. BROMLEY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My questions today are following up on my Member's statement yesterday on the report from the Coalition Against Family Violence. They are for the Minister of Health and Social Services and Deputy Premier. Recent statistics, sadly, show that family violence continues to get worse. Two hundred and thirty-eight women and children came forward to violence shelters for the first time in 2010-11; that's new incidents. NWT women seek escape from violence and shelter at five times the national rate. Ninety-two percent of 27,000 people responding to the 2007 survey said more shelters are critically needed and, of course, phase 3 recommendations call for special initiative funds for family violence shelters outside of Yellowknife, to top up their funding so they can pay better wages, add hours, and meet O and M costs. Will the Minister start now to identify funds to meet this need? Mahsi.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Bromley. The honourable Minister of Health and Social Services, Mr. Miltenberger.

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The government is committed to all the obligations that are there for phase 2. To date, through the life of phase 2 we will have committed nearly \$4 million. This is an ongoing issue and as we move forward from phase 2 to phase 3, that work will go through the business planning process, and in this instance, while preparatory work will be

done, it will be a decision in the life of the 17th Assembly on how we will proceed further. Thank you.

MR. BROMLEY: I appreciate the commitment from the Minister. The 238 women and children last year, Mr. Speaker, the major coalition partners like the YWCA Yellowknife, the Centre for Northern Families, Inuvik, Hay River and Tuk shelters, NWT Seniors, Salvation Army and a host of others are our long-established and indispensable leaders and service providers in this area. So why is core funding for multi-year funding agreements for these groups even an issue? These partners are in for the long haul and shouldn't be made to flounder between annual funding agreements.

So I ask: will the Minister commit to partnering respectfully with these enduring organizations and move to multi-year agreements with core funding as a standard model? Mahsi.

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: I've always, as well, been an advocate of multi-year funding and I will be working with the Department of Health and Social Services to review the list to make sure that we can do multi-year funding in all the cases where it makes good sense.

The Member raises the enduring relationships we have with some of these ongoing programs, and that is one of the critical factors, in my mind. Thank you.

MR. BROMLEY: Thanks for the commitment from the Minister, once again. Mr. Speaker, last session I spoke of overlap and duplication and the development of programs for men who use violence with a GNWT program that had been developed without even the knowledge of all coalition partners. The coalition was created as a clearing house of this work and is recommending a three-year community-based pilot program to create a territorial program standard. Will the Minister commit to working with his Cabinet colleagues to support this program and ensure that the departments use the coalition forum as their partners as their focus of consultation and collaboration? Mahsi.

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: We will continue to work constructively with the Family Violence Coalition. We, as well, will look closely at the work that's been done in regard to the recommendations for phase 3. As well, we are doing, at this moment, an evaluation of how effective our commitment and involvement has been and the outcomes that have been generated through the work through phase 2. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Miltenberger. Your final, short supplementary, Mr. Bromley.

MR. BROMLEY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and thanks again for the Minister's comments. I guess I would just ask: will the Minister commit to keeping

the House apprised and committee apprised with as much faithfulness as I commit to bringing forward concerns that I hear from the coalition to the Minister? Thank you.

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I will ensure that we work closely with the Social Programs committee and keep them apprised of events as they progress, and work as it's done, and any milestone issues that would be in the interests of the committee to know about. Thank you.

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

QUESTION 57-16(6):
ENBRIDGE PIPELINE OIL SPILL

MR. MENICOCHÉ: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to ask my questions today to the Minister of Environment and Natural Resources. In my Member's statement I spoke about the Enbridge Pipeline Incorporated, the oil spill just south of Wrigley at the Willowlake River. I'd like to ask the Minister what is the role of the Department of ENR when there's an oil spill incident and an emergency of this nature. Thank you.

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

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In a spill of this nature, the immediate folks that are involved, of course, are the owners of the pipeline. The National Energy Board has the lead. Environment and Natural Resources has a support role in that process. If it's a significant spill, then it will trigger a broader group that will come into play, but in this case, given the size of the spill, it's those two parties that are initially involved.

We have been working, as the Member's aware, very closely with all government agencies as well as Enbridge and Imperial Oil in Norman Wells. In terms of the spill itself, we are being kept up to date and we are involved in making sure that the environmental concerns are going to be addressed. Thank you.

MR. MENICOCHÉ: I spoke with Chief Tim Lennie last night and he said that none of our regulatory bodies or even federal regulatory bodies contacted his community to offer assistance, to advise him about the nature of the incident or anything like that. In fact, the only person that reached out was, of course, the people that spilled the oil, which is Enbridge Pipeline. I'd like to know what our government's role is in contacting the community, offering assistance, advising them where they can go for health concerns, environmental concerns and safety concerns, Mr. Speaker. Thank you.

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: As the full extent and impact of the spill is determined, as the

cleanup proceeds, if there's further follow-up work that's needed, then we will be there in our support role. If there are health concerns, then Health will be involved. But clearly at this point we're working through and following the National Energy Board lead. At this point, the issue seems to be under control. If there are very specific community concerns from Wrigley, then I would be happy to talk to the Member about those. Thank you.

MR. MENICOCHÉ: I'd like to ask the Minister to work with the National Energy Board, because even though they did not make any contact with the chief or the residents of that community to advise of their role, how can they be of assistance to the community, because it is very significant to them. They are concerned about the environment and they're concerned about the water. They're concerned about public safety, but no one's reached out and tried to deal with them and try to answer their questions there, Mr. Speaker. With that, can our government do that? Can they contact and work with their federal counterparts, the National Energy Board, and reach out and talk to the community of Wrigley and the chief there? Thank you.

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: I'll commit to ensure that we encourage and push the federal agencies, in this case the National Energy Board, to become visible, to make sure that there's adequate information and that there's an opportunity, and if necessary, they have resources put by their people to deal with the affected communities like Wrigley. Thank you.

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

MR. MENICOCHÉ: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. There was also Chief Lennie, as I indicated in my Member's statement, who was impacted. His health was impacted. He has serious concerns. He would like to know when will the Department of Health and Social Services take a role in this incident, advise the community of the health concerns of potential H₂S and the effects of just the odours, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to get some certainty that even the Department of Health and Social Services can contact the community. Mahsi.

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I understand the spill is about 70 kilometres outside of Wrigley. If the chief has specific health concerns, then I would encourage him to contact the Deh Cho Health Authority through his community if he has those symptoms that the Member's talking about. If there are broader issues, as well, once again, we'll make note of those and I will ensure that the chair as well as the CEO of the Deh Cho Health and Social Services Authority is prepared to respond, if necessary. Thank you.

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

QUESTION 58-16(6):
IMPACT OF RECENT FEDERAL ELECTION
ON MAJOR NORTHERN
INFRASTRUCTURE PROJECTS

MR. RAMSAY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My questions today are for the Deputy Premier. In my Member's statement I spoke about the recent federal election. We here in the Northwest Territories only have four months left in the life of this government and we have some major files currently at play in Ottawa, like the Mackenzie gas project, the Mackenzie Valley Highway, the Tuk-Inuvik commitment for \$150 million for that road, the many other infrastructure needs around our territory. I mentioned earlier, too, Northland Trailer Park here in Yellowknife and the infrastructure to advance our needs there. I'd like to begin by asking the Deputy Premier what strategy does this government have to advance these many priorities with the federal government. Thank you.

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

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We should keep in mind the long list that the Member has laid out. We have active files on... We have many things on the go. All those, the pause button was hit, as it were, on the federal side as the election kicked into gear. The election is now over. As the Member said, we have now the good fortune of a majority government that will give us consistency over the next four years. We're still waiting to find out the line-up in terms of the Cabinet. We have all these files ready to re-engage, we have a Federal Engagement Strategy. The Ministers and the Members in this House know, for the most part, their counterparts know, but that may change and we'll have to allow that to happen, but we are ready to go with all the work that's already underway on those initiatives, keeping in mind, as the Member said, we have about four months left. Thank you.

MR. RAMSAY: I thank the Deputy Premier for that response. The new federal Cabinet will be sworn in soon. I'd like to ask the Deputy Premier if once that happens, are there any plans by this government to invite the Ministers, you know, in dealing with the many issues I mentioned earlier that we have here in the Northwest Territories, are there invitations that are going to go out to your federal counterparts in Ottawa to get them north to discuss these issues before the end of the life of this government? Thank you.

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Thank you. Yes, the letters are basically there. We're just waiting for the appropriate individual's name to be able to put in there, find out if there's any change in

key staff that we have to contact, but there will be basically a full court press on all those issues that we've talked about, and others, to move forward with all time constraints that we now face as a government. Thank you.

MR. RAMSAY: Thank you. Over the life of this government we've talked many times about engaging the federal government in a meaningful way and having a building up on that relationship that we do have with the federal government. I'd like to ask the Deputy Premier, in looking at relationship building with the federal government, will that be a key part of the transition document that this Cabinet is going to prepare for the next government which will be elected on October the 3rd? Thank you.

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Thank you. We have the benefit of a stable Cabinet here. We've been dealing with the Conservative government now for the last five years. In many cases there's been relationships developed among the various Ministers at the federal and territorial level. As we move forward, we do have to look at how do we nurture that relationship. How do we, as has already been stated, better work with our Member of Parliament? Another issue for this Legislature to consider is the role that we have in Ottawa, the presence that we have or should have in Ottawa, is that adequate? And if we are going to be seriously considered and be able to move our own agenda, should that be looked at so that it can be done more effectively on the ground? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Miltenberger. Final, short supplementary, Mr. Ramsay.

MR. RAMSAY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We've been fortunate to have good working relationships with our neighbours in the Yukon and in Nunavut, and considering, as I mentioned earlier, the Northwest Territories is the only jurisdiction in the country that doesn't have a Conservative Member of Parliament representing it, I'm wondering if there's going to be any effort by the Government of the Northwest Territories to ramp up our pan-territorial initiatives and work even closer with both our neighbours in the Yukon and in Nunavut? Thank you.

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: The Premier has made a great effort to nurture that relationship. He's put out common documents, pan-territorial documents. We've dealt with issues, health issues, on a pan-territorial basis. In fact, as we stand here today, the three territorial leaders, along with the Minister Aglukkaq, representing the Canadian government, is in Nuuk, Greenland, to talk about issues of great importance in the circumpolar world. So it's a relationship that there is common, there's strength in common effort that we are small in population, large in geography, but we have huge political ties and a vested interest in working

together. I believe that the Premier and this government are committed to that and I'm sure the 17th Assembly will carry that on. Thank you.

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

QUESTION 59-16(6):
ALTERNATIVE SCHOOL PROGRAM
IN HAY RIVER

MRS. GROENEWEGEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My questions are for the Minister of Education, Culture and Employment, the Honourable Jackson Lafferty. Mr. Speaker, a while back we'd raised concerns in this House regarding the potential closing of a storefront school facility in Hay River. The storefront had been extremely successful in accommodating students in acquiring credit, that had not thrived in the regular conventional school environment.

Mr. Speaker, I believe that subsequent to that the Minister and some of his officials have taken the opportunity to meet with the DEA in Hay River and I believe that some kind of a solution has been resolved, or has been arrived at. Mr. Speaker, I would like the Minister, if he could, apprise the House of what their findings were and what has been done to ensure that this important community asset continue. Thank you.

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

HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY: Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to thank the Member for asking that question, because this has been in the works for some time now.

The alternative school programming consists of Hay River, as well, and there have been several meetings between the school boards and my department. I did make a commitment to visit the schools as well, which I did when I was in Hay River for the Aboriginal Student Achievement Initiative. I went to see the students there. But what it came down to is as of March we decided to look at the tentative school programming and let's hire a consultant to have a thorough analysis of the programming in the community, which we did. So the recommendations that came out of that were regarding the funding that would allow for adequate funding for a successful program, which the Member has alluded to. It has been very successful, and the recommendations were considered, and a method of funding has been established, and we are working closely with the superintendants of DECs and DEAs to establish those working relations and the changes to the funding will be highlighted. Mahsi.

MRS. GROENEWEGEN: Thank you. So the changing to the funding, I'm going to assume, was increased funding so that the allocation that the DEA and DEC put towards the alternative schooling will continue. I'd just like to ask the Minister just for clarification then, has the issue essentially been resolved to everyone's satisfaction and we can look forward to, in the fall, this service continuing in Hay River? Thank you.

HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY: Mahsi. First of all, I'd just like to commend the DEA and DECs, and also the Members, for voicing their concerns about this particular programming. Yes, the program changes, there will be an increase in funding that's satisfactory to DEAs, DECs and our department. So that is in the works and it will be announced and the funding will be flowed through as of July 1st on the school year. So it's good news for the communities that we represent on the alternative school programming. Mahsi.

MRS. GROENEWEGEN: Thank you. I'd like to thank the Minister for his attention to this very important matter and for the resolution that's been brought to it. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mrs. Groenewegen. I didn't hear a question there. The honourable Member for Tu Nedhe, Mr. Beaulieu.

QUESTION 60-16(6):
HOUSING ISSUES IN TU NEDHE

MR. BEAULIEU: Mahsi cho, Mr. Speaker. During my Member's statement I spoke about housing and I'd like to ask the Minister responsible for the NWT Housing Corporation questions. Last year the Housing Corporation had \$8.5 million allocated in the area of house repairs. In the 2011-12 main estimates, the amount is reduced to \$5.6 million. I would like to ask the Minister if he could return the funding from \$5.6 million to \$8.5 million in this area. Thank you.

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

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The money that we'd allocated last year for home repair, if you recall, our last year's budget was \$75 million and that was the final year of the federal investment. This year our overall budget is \$27 million and a good portion of that is going towards repairs. If you base it on a percentage-wise, I think we're doing more towards repair this year. We've had some units that were proposed to go up, HELP units. We've taken those. I think we have four that are proposed to go up this year. We're taking the money from that and putting it into more home repair, because we do recognize that a significant investment has to continue to be made in home repair.

MR. BEAULIEU: From the information in the 2009 Housing Corporation Needs Survey, about 80, maybe a little higher, around 80 percent of the communities have adequacy issues as a main core need problem. This is the reason I'm asking for at least this amount to be returned, in spite of the fact that we have less money overall. Will the Minister direct his senior staff to address the needs in accordance with the NWT Housing Corporation 2009 Needs Survey?

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. We continue to have discussions as senior management on how we can allocate more funding into the home repair. There are opportunities to move some money around and put it into home repairs, and we're always open to that because we do recognize, as the Member does, that we do need to have a fairly good investment into the home repair, so that would deal with a lot of the adequacy issues we face in some of the small communities.

MR. BEAULIEU: It's my belief that part of the issues with the delivery of home repairs is communication. I feel that best communication is to the Housing Corporation to deliver programs through a decentralized model. Will the Minister examine the possibility of creating a decentralized model and put program officers and project officers in the communities where they're delivering programs?

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: In the past we had community liaison officers in some of the communities, but the funding for that was deleted in anticipation of the government service officers coming on board. I believe we have eight communities now that are piloting this particular program. The NWT Housing Corporation was working closely with the Executive as to what we see these folks doing on our behalf in the communities. I believe in one of the Member's communities there is a government services officer. So this is a pilot project right now. Once we're able to see the results of this, it may be something that is expanded in the future.

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

MR. BEAULIEU: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I agree that is a positive step, and a step in the right direction with the individuals working in the communities for the GNWT. However, the people in the communities are seeing the program officers and project officers as the key to delivering. No matter how well the corporation advertises, I still walk into elders' homes and they're still waiting for somebody to come visit them. I'm wondering if the Minister can direct the staff to ensure that the delivery staff and program officers are going door to door. If there's an individual there to work with the clients or the community officers in the communities

from the Executive and work with them to go door to door to visit the elders when they're delivering housing programs.

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: I have made commitments in this House in the past that we would try and get to as many folks in the communities, especially seniors, that would like to put in applications. I've made commitments to also have someone come along and interpret some of the programs so they're more understanding of the programs that we offer and they're able to fill out the applications a lot more accurately with the help of an interpreter. I have made those commitments.

As far as going door to door, that would require a great deal of time and resources. We prefer that those who feel that they need some work done or would like to fill out an application, contact us and then we will go to their units again, along with an interpreter if the need is there.

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

QUESTION 61-16(6):
PROPOSED AMENDMENTS TO THE
MACKENZIE VALLEY
RESOURCE MANAGEMENT ACT

MR. KRUTKO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My questions are directed to the Deputy Premier. With regard to the Mackenzie Valley Resource Management Act, apparently there's been a list of prescribed amendments that the federal government would like to meet which has been shared with this government. I'd like to ask the Deputy Premier what the government's position is when it comes to the amendments, the possibility of having a centralized board and having regional boards which presently are part of the land claims agreements. I'd like to ask the Deputy Premier what position this government is taking when it talks about restructuring the boards in the Northwest Territories.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Krutko. Deputy Premier, Mr. Miltenberger.

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. This is a very fundamental political issue. The reality is that Northerners should be making those decisions, that if we had the authority over land, water, and resource development, we wouldn't be having this discussion.

This is a federal initiative and it's one where what has been portrayed is that there is a need to reform the processes in the Northwest Territories.

It's our opinion that the system we have is fundamentally sound, that the gaps and delays that happen occur when decisions have been made in the North and go to Ottawa. We do not even have, at this late date of our political evolution, the

authority to appoint our own board members. That's why we signed the agreement-in-principle and are moving on devolution. We fundamentally believe that the system is sound, that our position has been clear since 2009. It's on our website that the system that's here should be properly funded, that the structure that's there should be maintained. That they should look at doing things to clarify, where there are policy issues that are grey, sort those out, properly fund the boards, and delegate simple authorities like making our own board appointments.

MR. KRUTKO: Again I'll try to get back to my question. Hopefully I can get an answer. I'd like to ask the Minister if there was a list of amendments being proposed to the Government of the Northwest Territories. My understanding is there is a working group that was established between the Government of the Northwest Territories and the federal government. I'd like to know what those items are on that list of amendments that they'd like to be made, and can we see that since the Government of the Northwest Territories is part of that working group.

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: I want to restate, as well, my answer. This is a federal government INAC process. It's their work. For the most part, they've treated the territorial governments and the other groups as stakeholders. The only thing that has now changed is the fact that we've signed an agreement-in-principle that indicates that within the next couple of years we're going to be taking over, as Northerners, jurisdiction and authority over land, water, and resource development and that we don't want any major surprises. We have our position clear on the website. I can commit to the Member that we can pull together a package of the work that's been done, the correspondence that's been shared back and forth, but we have to be very clear that this is not our process. We've laid out very clearly our position and the federal government has not fully engaged us on what they intend to do.

MR. KRUTKO: There was a letter submitted May 9th to the Premier of the Northwest Territories that recommended some 40 suggestions on the amendment process and things that need to be considered in light of the land claim agreements, the Tlicho land claim, and the whole element of independency of regulatory boards from the political arms of the Government of the Northwest Territories or the federal government. I'd like to know the government's positions on those amendment areas and have we responded to the letter from Alternatives North, who was working with the Gwich'in Tribal Council, Tlicho Government, and the Aboriginal governments, to recommend these suggestions prior to tomorrow's deadline.

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: The Government of the Northwest Territories has a position that is clear. We support the current structures. We have recommended against any changes. We are of the opinion that we are better served by the structure that is here, properly funded with proper policy clarity and adequate funding to represent our interests. The biggest point being we don't want any major upheaval since we are now in the process of taking over those authorities. If there are changes that need to be made, then Northerners will make those changes collectively after we take over those responsibilities. It's not appropriate at this point to have the federal government still insisting that they're going to reshape our world, because in Ottawa they think that there are problems here, when we haven't really been fully engaged.

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

MR. KRUTKO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to ask the Minister if he's willing to share the information that his department has, especially the list of items that were recommended for amendments to the Mackenzie Valley Resources Act. Also to share that with Members of this House and the Standing Committee on Economic Development so that we can also have input and get a better understanding of what's been suggested and what is being suggested for amendments.

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: I believe in my first question I already made that commitment.

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

QUESTION 62-16(6):
INDEPENDENT REVIEW OF
LEISHMAN INCIDENT AT
STANTON TERRITORIAL HOSPITAL

MR. ABERNETHY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Yesterday I asked the Minister of Health and Social Services about the Minister's response to the motion in the House passed earlier this year dealing with the review of the Leishman incident at Stanton Territorial Hospital. The Minister has responded by establishing an external review conducted by Dr. Douglas Perry from Alberta, which is, in my opinion, a good first step. However, I notice that this review will be conducted under the Evidence Act. Specifically, statements made by the hospital staff will have protection of the Evidence Act and will not be made public, nor will they be shared with the mother; who, by the way, e-mailed me this morning indicating frustration that this will not be more of a public review. Given the importance of learning from this incident, can the

Minister advise me as to why he chose not to have a more public review?

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

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The intent was to provide the information requested. There was a motion passed; a need to have a better understanding of what took place during the particular incident. The use of the Evidence Act is a way to allow people to come forward to be able to disclose with some certainty that they can speak frankly. That's why that process was chosen. We want to do this expeditiously. We want to do it. This initiative has been dragged on for some considerable time. We have a very qualified individual to do it and the intent is to do it in a timely way to make sure that all the information was there. We're not intending to re-open. We're looking at what has happened, what has been done, what has been pulled together so far, and review to see if in fact there are issues of concern.

MR. ABERNETHY: I'd like to thank the Minister for his response. When I reviewed the unedited Hansard from yesterday, the Minister said, "I've already committed to share the results of this review with the committee. We'll look at what those recommendations are, what they say and, as well, we'll be able to review what he proposes as a response." Does this mean that the Minister will share more than just the recommendations with committee and the mother, and that he will also share information upon which those recommendations are based, and if not, why?

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: I indicated that I would share with the committee the report and the recommendations and will do that on a confidential basis.

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

MR. ABERNETHY: I'm good, thank you.

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

QUESTION 63-16(6):

NEED FOR REHABILITATION CENTRE
FOR SUBSTANCE ABUSE IN YELLOWKNIFE

MR. HAWKINS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Sadly, as highlighted earlier today, our community has lost another youth and it's attributed to drug use. The thing is, I continue, as many other Members here continue, to cite the issue of we need a detox centre here in Yellowknife, and if not here in Yellowknife, then somewhere in the Northwest Territories. The Minister doesn't have to take my word for it, of course. There's always Justice Vertes or the YK Chamber, the NWT coroner or perhaps

even Stanton committee's position on the need for these types of facilities.

My question directly to the Minister of Health and Social Services is: what is his department doing to establish a very specific style of treatment, which is a detox centre, targeted to attack and help beat the drug addictions that are associated with things like crystal meth, such as prescription abuse, as well as alcohol abuse? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. This area has seen a considerable evolution over the last five or six years or so. There was initially a report done, called the State of Emergency, that decried the state of alcohol and drug services in the Northwest Territories, and there was tens of millions of dollars, and dozens of positions added, and significant restructuring done to improve the level of service. There was a subsequent follow-up report a number of years later called Staying the Course, which said that the path chosen was the right one, that they had to make some adjustments, but we have to keep going down the path that would lead to those final long-term improvements.

Since that time, things have continued to evolve. There have been other issues that have come to light, other concerns been brought, and now there is a subsequent review that's currently being considered and a response being worked on that's going to lay out what we think, as a government, as a department, as a way forward to deal with some of the broader issues that relate to mental health and addictions issues, including the Member's concern about further intuitional development and bricks and mortar facilities. Thank you.

MR. HAWKINS: Mr. Speaker, today I'm asking not just for bricks and mortar, because I think ultimately that is the long-term solution, but today I really need to hear the Minister commit to when will a plan be put forward to address this. I appreciate the review is looking back as to what was done, but I'm sorry to say that we have a number of experts, I would definitely define them as, who have all said the same thing, which is we need these types of resources available today rather than sitting and waiting.

I'm so passionate about this issue. It doesn't just have to be here in Yellowknife. We could establish a detox centre anywhere in the Northwest Territories, because as far as I'm concerned, if we're treating people, it doesn't matter where it is, as long as we are.

Mr. Speaker, the last point I want to emphasize on this issue is the state at play at this very moment is if you have a child who has a crack problem, you

have to be sent to one of the regular local programs and fail at that program before the Department of Health and Social Services will refer you to the appropriate targeted program in the South. Mr. Speaker, I believe we can establish this here anywhere in the North. I'm just happy to hear if we could get it done. Mr. Speaker, that's my question to the Minister of Health and Social Services, is when can we bring a plan to the table that really focuses in on real results. Thank you.

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Let me just set a quick context for the response. Yesterday I gave a fiscal update in this House that pointed to the extreme constraints that we, like just about every other government, are under in terms of managing our dollars and meeting our needs, and our ability to have new programs added on are minimal to none in the life of this government. We will have a plan in the life of this government that lays out what we recommend are steps to be taken in the coming years. With the addictions and mental health services, we will have a renewed strategic plan for Health and Social Services by the August Assembly that will lay out as a system how we intend to move forward, including that area, and that plan will be there. Everything we do, including things like this, midwifery services, the 101 other very good issues that we should be putting money to will be dependent on the resources we have available. Thank you.

MR. HAWKINS: Mr. Speaker, undeniably, I'll say that you could step out of this building and get away from the throes of what the impression of what the world really wants in this building to actually getting on the street to what the real citizens will tell you, and undoubtedly, I will tell you that they will say the Northwest Territories needs a detox centre.

Mr. Speaker, it's true that some types of demons in the drug and alcohol areas that they may require specific programming, and perhaps on-the-land programs are more appropriate for those types of problems, but, Mr. Speaker, jails aren't always the solution, and I think that's the issue Justice Vertes was trying to say. As he highlighted clearly, he said if it was the solution, America would be the safest place in the world, which it isn't, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, will these results, as highlighted by the Minister in his last answers, will they come with a commitment from this government to support them if it comes forward and says build a detox centre? Because we need to focus in on real results that deliver true results which are a priority of the citizens of the Northwest Territories. Thank you.

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: If we walk outside the confines of this building we will also find that we need thousands of housing units, that we need babies to be born healthy, that we need parents that are actively engaged in the upbringing

of their children, that we need employment. There are lots of issues.

This particular issue will be brought forward. There will be options laid out there and recommendations. It will be the job of the incoming 17th Assembly in the budget process for 2012-13 to decide how they want to move forward, what their priorities are, and what we can afford. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Miltenberger. Short supplementary, Mr. Hawkins.

MR. HAWKINS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I don't have to explain to the Minister how paralyzing drug and alcohol problems are to people of the North, but the reality here is this government could make that commitment today and not hope that the new Assembly will take care of what rightly is the responsibility of the legislators of today, which is to deal with this particular problem.

The last thing I'll say, Mr. Speaker, is forcing people to Stanton is not the appropriate place. Forcing people to jails is not the appropriate place. That's why I'm here today asking the Minister if he will commit. If this report says that we should build a detox centre, as all the other experts have highlighted earlier said we need, will this government get behind that, stand behind that and make the appropriate investment that speaks to that need? Thank you.

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: That's a lot of ifs with four months left and a clear decision by this Assembly that we're not going to make any major commitments in the last few days of an Assembly. We will do the work. The budget is set for this year and we will lay that out. We're doing transition planning.

The other thing we ought to keep in mind, Mr. Speaker, the Member keeps talking about a treatment centre. We can't lose sight of the fact that we still don't do enough on the prevention side. That if we just accept the fact that people are going to keep drinking and we're just going to keep building facilities to try to fix them once they're addicted, or put them in the hospital and give them dialysis and kidney transplants once they're so sick that there's no other alternative, then we will truly never have enough money. I can tell you that right now. I said that five years ago when I was Health Minister and I'll tell you again today, we don't have enough money to keep fixing things or people when they're broken or damaged. We have to get onto the prevention, because we do not have the money. Thank you.

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

QUESTION 64-16(6):

FEDERAL RESOURCES FOR NWT HIGHWAY
BETWEEN TUKTOYAKTUK AND INUVIK

MR. JACOBSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Today in my Member's statement I spoke about the need to work with the leadership in the Beaufort-Delta to ensure that the \$150 million commitment to building the Tuk-Inuvik highway appears on the upcoming federal budget. Mr. Speaker, can the Minister of Transportation update the Assembly on the steps that he and his officials are taking to make this a reality for the residents of the Beaufort-Delta? Thank you.

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

HON. MICHAEL MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The news for the \$150 million was very exciting indeed. I think it took a lot of work, and of course the work wasn't only carried out by myself. We had the mayors of Tuktoyaktuk and Inuvik very involved with presenting the case and building up the arguments why this road needed to be done. We had the Inuvialuit government onside. Of course, the MLAs raised the profile of this issue many times in this House. We had our Premier meeting with the Prime Minister and Cabinet Ministers across the floor here, or on this side of the House, that met with the different Cabinet Ministers to raise the issue. The Department of Transportation played a role and this resulted in some dollars being flagged. Unfortunately, this process was never completely ratified.

We certainly don't want to lose momentum on this initiative. We have already talked with the working group; as recently as this morning there was a meeting. We fully intend to engage with the federal Minister as soon as we know who the appointment will be. That's going to happen in the next little while, we understand, and the folks in Ottawa will be getting back together in June. We have our documents drafted. We want to indicate that this initiative should carry forward. We want to be able to meet with the new Minister. We will, of course, be extending an invitation to the Minister and we will look how we can fully engage, keep everybody involved, and keep this whole initiative moving forward. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. JACOBSON: The Minister almost answered all of my questions there. I understand we're still waiting for the Prime Minister to announce his Cabinet and there is some slippage in the engaging of the federal government. I'd like some assurances from the Minister that he and his officials are ready to hit the ground running to engage the new federal Minister of Transportation at the earliest opportunity. Thank you.

HON. MICHAEL MCLEOD: I think the Members of this House did a very good job over the last while

about raising the profile of our infrastructure needs across the Territories. We have a motion in this House indicating that the Mackenzie Valley Highway is very important to us, and we want to see that flagged as one of our top priorities. Our government has put together a Federal Engagement Strategy that lays out a number of areas where we'd like to see investment. The Mackenzie Valley Highway is very high on this list. We've shared that information with the federal government. We've had private meetings with the different Ministers. I've had the opportunity to talk with Mr. Lawrence Canon at the time when he was Transportation and Infrastructure Minister. We've talked with Chuck Strahl, John Baird, and we've had very good support from Minister Leona Aglukkaq over the last while and we expect we'll have good support from her ongoing.

We have drafted our documents, we have our letters ready. We just need to know who is the person that will be working with us on this as the new Minister, and I fully intend to engage as soon as possible. Thank you.

MR. JACOBSON: I also referenced the hard work that the leadership in the Beaufort-Delta has put in to ensuring that Canada's national highway system reaches coast to coast to coast. Can the Minister assure the Assembly that he will engage with the Beaufort-Delta leadership in advancing this project, which are a pivotal partner on the whole road itself, and bring them down to Ottawa to help talk to the federal government on this issue? Thank you.

HON. MICHAEL MCLEOD: We're very eager to travel to Ottawa. There are a lot of issues we want to talk about. There is still an application from the Northwest Territories to the Green Fund. The City of Yellowknife had a submission on behalf of the Northland Trailer Court. There was a hydro line applied for that we haven't received any response. There are many issues that we need to tackle. There are issues about infrastructure, ongoing stable funding for long-term investment, and there's also the Mackenzie Valley Highway, and more specifically now, the \$150 million that was flagged in the last budget. We want to carry that forward and we fully intend to travel to Ottawa.

Of course, if there's an opportunity to bring any additional delegates or additional people that are involved in this project with us, we'll do so. Having said that, at the end of the day, the Minister usually dictates who he is willing to meet with. However, we'll put in the request. Thank you.

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

MR. JACOBSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Listening to the Minister with all the projects that he mentioned, not all the projects, they're not going to be fully funded. The \$150 million was put in the federal budget by the federal government, but it

was not ratified. All of the other projects weren't in the budget. Mr. Speaker, we just want to make sure that the \$150 million gets allocated properly to the Tuk-Inuvik highway in making sure that the Minister goes down on that approach.

Mr. Speaker, will the Minister also consider taking some EDI members to Ottawa with him for this meeting? Thank you.

HON. MICHAEL MCLEOD: As the Minister I can't only focus on a certain part of the Northwest Territories. I have other responsibilities. I would not be doing justice if I didn't speak about long-term stable funding for infrastructure, and Mr. Menicoche would be very disappointed if I didn't raise Highway No. 7, Highway No. 6, other highways, the Bear River Bridge, the Peel River Bridge and those initiatives that need attention. I think we have to be able to address all the different needs across the Territories, and at the same time focusing on some of the areas that have moved forward.

It's been very exciting in the life of this government to be able to move discussions on the Mackenzie Valley Highway forward. We've managed to get the federal government to come onside and invest jointly with us on the work that needs to be done, the PDRs, and more specifically now, some indication that they're willing to put dollars up for construction. We need to know what the long-term plan is; we need to be able to work around it if it's going to be still an investment they're willing to move forward. So there's lots of work that has to be done, Mr. Speaker, and we certainly can commit that we'll continue to push it forward. Thank you.

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

QUESTION 65-16(6):
STATUS OF GNWT
HOMELESSNESS FRAMEWORK

MS. BISARO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My statement talked about women in Yellowknife who are working on behalf of NWT women and homelessness, and I'd like to ask some questions of the Minister responsible for Health and Social Services about the government's homelessness framework. I've been trying for some months, actually more than 12, to try and get some information on the updating of the homelessness framework, but I was recently advised that no update is in the works. So I'd like to ask the Minister if he can advise when this homelessness framework will be reviewed, revised and updated so that it is more suitable to our current needs. Thank you.

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

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. From what I understand, there's a homelessness interdepartmental government homelessness working group. As well, there's a strategy and framework that's led by the Homelessness Coalition in Yellowknife. So that work is underway, and I don't have a specific time that I could give the Member as to when that particular initiative will be concluded. Thank you.

MS. BISARO: Thanks to the Minister for that response. I'm a little surprised to hear that we have a Homelessness Coalition led by the City of Yellowknife, which basically works for facilities within the city of Yellowknife, that that is leading a strategy, which, if I understand the Minister correctly, is going to be GNWT strategy or policy. So I'd like to ask the Minister, if my understanding is correct, could he explain what he meant by the strategy is being developed by the Homelessness Coalition? Thank you.

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: This particular document will have application, we believe, outside of the city of Yellowknife. It's an issue in the city. We have our own interdepartmental working group, as well, that looks at concerns of homelessness outside of the city of Yellowknife. Thank you.

MS. BISARO: Thank you. I'm getting more and more confused all the time. So it now sounds like we have a strategy that's going to apply to the city of Yellowknife, which may be useful outside the city of Yellowknife for the rest of the Territories, but we have something else which is going to determine stuff outside Yellowknife. I really don't understand the answer.

The Minister mentioned an interdepartmental homelessness committee, which sounds rather like the committee doesn't have a home, but I believe they work on the issue of homelessness. I'd like to know from the Minister what their function is and how often they meet. Thank you.

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: They meet on an ongoing basis. They've fed their work into the business planning process. It includes departments like Health, MACA, Housing, to name some that have a role to play, and we look at funding for the City of Yellowknife, the shelters that are out there and homelessness in the smaller communities where there is no other capacity, and we try to deal with things on a one-by-one case basis. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Miltenberger. Your final, short supplementary, Ms. Bisaro.

MS. BISARO: Thanks, Mr. Speaker, and thanks to the Minister. I think, again, I'm not exactly sure that I understand what their function and role is. The Minister mentioned one of situations that this group deals with and I believe that's the Homelessness Assistance Fund, which is supposed to help people. As I read from a document, "the Homelessness

Assistance Fund supports and prevents individuals from becoming homeless in the NWT." If that's the case, I need to ask the Minister why in recent months a family of four was basically refused a minor amount of funding, \$600 I believe, which would have kept them from being tossed out of their current housing. Thank you.

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: I'm not in a position to answer such a broad question where there are no specifics. I don't know what the issue was. I don't know where it was. I don't know the background information. I can only assume that everything was done according to policy and procedure, but I'm not in a position to answer that type of question without some considerable more detail.

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

QUESTION 66-16(6):
STUDENT EMPLOYMENT

MR. YAKELEYA: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is to the Minister of Human Resources. I want to ask about the hiring of summer students this year. In the Sahtu the last three years we have graduated 50 high school students, not counting the Aurora College students. I want to ask the Minister if the government is on track for hiring summer students this year compared to previous years.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Yakeleya. The honourable Minister responsible for Human Resources, Mr. Bob McLeod.

HON. BOB MCLEOD: Our government continues to hire summer students. In comparison to previous years we are down approximately 25 percent in the numbers of summer students that we've been hiring to date.

MR. YAKELEYA: If there aren't enough positions in the Government of the Northwest Territories for our own students, is the government looking at subsidizing local Aboriginal governments, NGOs, and the private sector, to hire students?

HON. BOB MCLEOD: The Department of Human Resources is not providing such a program. At the advice of the Small and Rural committee, they recommended to the Department of Education to make such a fund available. I understand the Department of Education is making about \$400,000 a year available to the private sector to hire summer students.

MR. YAKELEYA: The Government of the Northwest Territories has the campaign Make Your Mark Campaign to attract southern workers to the Northwest Territories. This program was designed to bring people up north to live here and make their investment here. I want to ask the Minister if we could look at some of that work and look at some of the money that could maybe be re-profiled to

ensure that our own local talents also have job opportunities here in the Northwest Territories.

HON. BOB MCLEOD: The Come Make Your Mark program is a coalition of about 95 private businesses working with the government to promote the Northwest Territories. If the Assembly wants the government to hire more summer students, they just have to, when we go through the business planning process, support that and make recommendations to increase all of the departments' budgets to hire summer students. The departments are the ones that do the actual hiring of summer students.

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

MR. YAKELEYA: I guess we could also carve off some of the slack that's in government so we can hire some of these summer students to work for us. Will this government support the Aurora College students who are graduating with a career profession, such as education, teachers and such? I say this because we have an Aboriginal nurse graduating from the Nursing Program who couldn't even find a job in this government. This student here had to work at a gift shop. There are students out there that cannot find work within our own force who are graduating from our institutions. I'm asking if this government can make a commitment to hire our own students who finish in our own schools in the Northwest Territories.

HON. BOB MCLEOD: Our government already has a commitment to hire all of the graduates from the teachers program, the nurses program, and the Social Work Program. The caveat is that not everybody is going to get a job in Yellowknife or the larger centres. Some of these jobs are offered throughout the Northwest Territories. If you're not prepared to be mobile, then it's considered that once you're made a job offer and you turn it down, then that's considered as the government meeting its commitment.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. McLeod. The time for question period has expired. Item 9, written questions. The honourable Member for Yellowknife Centre, Mr. Hawkins.

Written Questions

WRITTEN QUESTION 6-16(6):
OFFICE OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS

MR. HAWKINS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My questions are for the Minister of Municipal and Community Affairs.

1. Please provide information, other than the MACA website, as to how the department publicly promotes the office of consumer affairs, along with the office's mandate.

2. How many complaints or inquiries has this office had over the past two years?
3. Please provide a summary of these complaints or inquiries for the past two years along with any recommendations and actions taken.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Hawkins. Item 10, returns to written questions. Item 11, replies to opening address. Item 12, petitions. Item 13, reports of committees on the review of bills. The honourable Member for Tu Nedhe, Mr. Beaulieu.

Reports of Committees on the Review of Bills

BILL 3: ELECTRONICS TRANSACTIONS ACT

MR. BEAULIEU: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I wish to report to the Assembly that the Standing Committee on Social Programs has reviewed Bill 3, Electronics Transactions Act, and that Bill 3 is ready for consideration in Committee of the Whole as amended and reprinted.

BILL 4: MISCELLANEOUS STATUTE LAW AMENDMENT ACT, 2011

Further, the Standing Committee on Social Programs has reviewed Bill 4, Miscellaneous Statute Law Amendment Act, 2011, and wishes to report that Bill 4 is ready for consideration in Committee of the Whole.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Beaulieu. Item 14, tabling of documents. The honourable Member for Yellowknife Centre, Mr. Hawkins.

Tabling of Documents

TABLED DOCUMENT 21-16(6): NWT TOURISM DRAFT ADVERTISEMENT

TABLED DOCUMENT 22-16(6): 2011 CELEBRITY AUCTION – MAD HATTER SPRING GALA POSTER

MR. HAWKINS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I have two items I'd like to table today. The first is a mock-up for a tourism initiative program that I'd like to talk about tomorrow, so I'd like to officially table the item today so that I can refer to it.

The second item I'd like to table today is the poster for the 2011 Celebrity Auction: Mad Hatter Spring Gala, which will be held on Friday, June 3, 2011, at the Ed Jeske Arena.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Hawkins. Item 15, notices of motion. 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 9-16(6), Supplementary Estimates (Operations Expenditures), No. 1, 2011-2012; Committee Report 2-16(6), Standing Committee on Government Operations Report on the Review of the Auditor General's Report on NWT Health Programs and Services, 2011; Committee Report 3-16(6), Standing Committee on Government Operations Report on the Review of the 2009-2010 Human Rights Commission Annual Report; Committee Report 4-16(6), Standing Committee on Government Operations Report on the Review of the NWT Languages Commissioner Annual Report 2009-2010; Bill 3, Electronic Transactions Act; and Bill 4, Miscellaneous Statutes Law Amendment Act, 2011, with Mr. Krutko in the chair.

Consideration in Committee of the Whole of Bills and Other Matters

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): I'd like to call Committee of the Whole to order. Consideration in Committee of the Whole of bills and other matters: Tabled Document 9-16(6), I'd like to ask what the wish of committee is. Mrs. Groenewegen.

MRS. GROENEWEGEN: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The committee today would like to deal with Tabled Document 9-16(6), Supplementary Estimates (Operations Expenditures), No. 1, 2011-2012.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Is committee agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

---SHORT RECESS

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Abernethy): I'd like to call Committee of the Whole back to order. Committee, prior to going on break we agreed to consider Tabled Document 9-16(6), which is Supplementary Estimates (Operations Expenditures), No. 1, 2011-2012. I would now like to ask the Minister responsible, the Honourable Mr. Miltenberger, to make opening comments on Tabled Document 9-16(6).

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: I am here to present Supplementary Estimates (Operations Expenditures), No. 1, 2011-2012. This document outlines an increase of \$11.002 million in operations expenditures for the 2011-2012 fiscal year.

The major items in the supplementary estimates include:

1. \$4.2 million for the Department of Finance for the costs associated with development phase activities on the Taltson Hydro Expansion Project incurred by the NWT Hydro Corporation.

2. A total of \$2.9 million for the departments of Executive and Justice for funding to support negotiations on the Devolution Agreement.
3. \$763,000 for the costs associated with revised Northern Allowance rates which are adjusted annually as required by the Collective Agreement between the Union of Northern Workers and the Government of the Northwest Territories.
4. \$466,000 for the Department of Health and Social Services to establish child and family services committees in five communities.

I am prepared to review the details of the supplementary appropriation document. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Abernethy): Thank you very much, Minister Miltenberger. Would the Minister like to bring witnesses into the House?

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Yes, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Abernethy): Is committee agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Abernethy): Sergeant-at-Arms, if I can please get you to escort the witnesses into the Chamber.

Minister Miltenberger, can I please get you to introduce your witnesses for the record.

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Margaret Melhorn, deputy minister of finance; Sandy Kalgutkar, deputy secretary to the Financial Management Board.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Abernethy): Thank you, Minister Miltenberger. I will now open the floor to general comments on Table Document 9-16(6), Supplementary Estimates (Operations Expenditures), No. 1, 2011-2012. Are there any general comments on the opening remarks? Is the committee agreed that there are no further general comments?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Abernethy): Does committee agree to proceed to the detail on the departments?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Abernethy): Detail begins on page 3. Supplementary Estimates (Operations Expenditures), No. 1, 2011-2012, Legislative Assembly, expenditures on behalf of Members, not previously authorized, \$4,000.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Abernethy): Total department, not previously authorized, \$4,000.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Abernethy): Move along to page 4, the Executive, operations expenditures. Mr. Bromley.

MR. BROMLEY: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Just on the issue of the funding for the devolution negotiations, I'm wondering if the dollars that have been identified for working with the partners... I believe there's about \$572,000 for working on negotiations related to resource revenue sharing. Does that include potential partners or is that identified for just the government working with the two Aboriginal groups that have signed onto the AIP? Thank you.

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

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Mr. Chair. It is for those parties that are signed on for the AIP.

MR. BROMLEY: I'm wondering, does that mean we would expect an additional supp if we have other Aboriginal partners that sign on during the course of this fiscal year?

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: The funding that is here is based on what was previously used to get us to this point and now it's specified for the use to move forward with those negotiations, so at this point it's anticipated that this money would be sufficient. Thank you.

MR. BROMLEY: I'm not sure what the Minister was saying there. Was he saying that in fact his first answer was being adjusted here, or was this \$572,000 identified just for meeting with the two Aboriginal partners towards resource revenue sharing? Thank you.

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: My understanding is that it's for the two Aboriginal partners that have signed the agreement to carry on the work to move us forward and that there will be funds. If further partners sign on, then we'll carry on with the funding, and if we need more, then that request would be made. Thank you.

MR. BROMLEY: I'll take that then as a yes to my second question. It's just I have a little less confidence in it.

On the bigger picture, a number of my colleagues and myself have been trying to really emphasize the need for the whole public -- and I'm not talking about the Aboriginal groups here, I'm not talking about people of any particular persuasion -- I'm talking about the entire Northwest Territories to be consulted, residents of the Northwest Territories to be consulted on what we mean when we say sustainable development. What do we mean when we say a responsible land and resource management regime as compared to the one that the federal government has implemented in the past and to which we've had so many difficulties? Yet, I still do not see a budget identified for that

consultation to inform these negotiations. This has been pointed out in the House and recognized at various times, although perhaps not consistently by the Premier, or by leadership; sorry, by Cabinet. It has been important, but I do not see it reflected in this budget.

Can the Minister tell me is that being identified elsewhere or why is that not here? Thank you.

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: The exact construction of the public engagement process that the Member has raised is not clear. What we have here is funding to move this process along with the public government, and the Aboriginal governments, and the federal government. There is opportunity to meet in the regions, to do the work, and we've been working, for example, in the Sahtu holding meetings to explain some of the issues they had questions about in an attempt to give them comfort enough to move forward. That type of commitment is still there and the funds that are here are geared for moving the process along with the parties that will be at the table. Thank you.

MR. BROMLEY: I'm not sure whether the Minister is avoiding the question here or just choosing to give unrelated answers, but I did point out very clearly that I'm not talking about meeting with Aboriginal groups. I see that that's well identified here. I'm talking about, if you want to call it, a necessary component of negotiations towards a final agreement that is delivered by consulting with the public and developing our common understanding amongst all NWT residents about what we mean when we negotiate for authority for sustainable resource development, resource and land management regimes, and this is a discussion we've never had with our public. We may have had it with groups of the Northwest Territories here and there, but we have not had that comprehensive discussion, and now we find ourselves at the negotiating table starting on a negotiation without having done that work despite the obvious repeated calls for that work to be done. This should appropriately be funded through this fund and it's not identified here.

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: I would point out that there is \$155,000 earmarked for communication activities, the kind of communication and connection we want to have with people to update them through mail-outs, newspaper ads, radio advertising and a social media strategy that will allow us to keep people informed as to what is happening as this process starts and makes its way forward. Thank you.

MR. BROMLEY: Again, I thank the Minister for that somewhat unrelated comment. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Abernethy): Thank you, Mr. Bromley. I didn't hear a question, so I'll go to the next person on my list. Mr. Krutko.

MR. KRUTKO: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Again, I believe that the way this money is being allocated is not fair, and also it does not take into consideration that we have a fiduciary obligation under land claims agreements to the Gwich'in, to the Sahtu, to the Tlicho, and their land claim agreements clearly states that they shall be involved in the development of a northern accord or basically what you call devolution. It clearly tells me that we do have an obligation to those organizations, especially in regards to the land claims, regardless if it's at the negotiating tables or even at a side table, but we do have an obligation to take into consideration of their views, regardless if it's in the written form, or else in regards to the whole overall process of inclusion and not exclusion simply because you didn't agree to sign a bad deal. I think that that is the issue that's still out there, and I think from the Aboriginal leadership throughout the Mackenzie Valley and all of the Dene leaders, that is the issue. The issue is that the Dene people cannot agree to the notion that someone else is going to take royalties and resources from Dene lands where they have treaty rights. They have modern day treaties, and Treaty 8, Treaty 11 rights in the Northwest Territories, but they're being excluded from a process that has been initialled off by groups that do not have an interest in the Mackenzie Valley where those treaty lands and those treaty rights pertain to the Mackenzie Valley.

So I'd like to ask the Minister why is it that you're identifying a majority of those resources for two groups who do not have an interest by way of lands interests, by ownership, or a land claim agreement, and yet we're allowing groups that don't have an interest on negotiating resource revenue sharing throughout the Mackenzie Valley, yet those people do not have an investment in those lands that you are willing to sit down and negotiate away without the Dene at the table?

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

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. This process fully respects land claim obligations, treaties. What is being talked about is public lands.

It's clear in the AIP what our commitment is, what the commitment of the federal government is, is to respecting land claims, settlements that are already there, treaties, and should land claims be settled subsequent to the signing and the conclusion of the AIP and whatever lands are chosen, we'll of course be fully within the provisions, but we'll meet the provisions and obligations of the federal government. What we are talking about is the management of public lands.

Mr. Chairman, as we sat here today concerned about the Mackenzie Valley Resource Management Act and what's being done to us because we're not

making decisions, this process is going to give us the authority so you don't always have to worry about what Ottawa is going to do in the North next when it comes to those types of processes. That's what is key here.

There's also money in here, I'd point out, to continue to have regional leaders' meetings. The Premier is committed to a process that he's honouring outside of this particular negotiation process so that we can continue to gather all the leaders at the table. Thank you.

MR. KRUTKO: Again, Mr. Chair, I have to disagree with that notion. I believe that this is a land grab by the Government of the Northwest Territories and the Inuvialuit and the Metis for lands throughout the Northwest Territories on the backs of Dene people and Dene treaties and land claim agreements that clearly stipulate that there are settlement regions in the Northwest Territories. There are regions in the Northwest Territories which are clearly defined in regards to maps, Treaty 8, Treaty 11, which have our historical treaties. But yet, as a government, we seem to be railroading ourselves into a system of taking over a land grab at the expense of Dene people.

I totally disagree with the way this process is going and I think as a government we have an obligation to ensure that we have a workable situation that we get the parties to the table and not go full speed ahead with two groups at the table, which is a minority interest and who do not have anything at stake in regard to those lands in the Gwich'in Settlement Region, the Sahtu Settlement Region, the Tlicho region, the Dehcho or the Akaitcho. I believe that is the issue that we're missing here, and I see that the majority of the money is going to go to two groups who have everything to gain and nothing to lose, and the Dene people have everything to lose and nothing to gain. To me that is the issue here.

I'd like to know how you can spend \$2.8 million and not allow a system to resolve this outstanding roadblock that we're at by having those dollars invested to getting the parties to the table and getting those issues on the table. If that means putting the devolution agreement aside, we'll find in those areas that we basically can agree to disagree and work with the federal government to say, look, the agreement is not acceptable to the majority of people in the Northwest Territories, especially the Dene people up and down the valley. You basically find a way to work around that.

What I'm hearing from you is that let's run a process where we speed up the devolution process. Let's try to get everything done within the year and forget the people that don't want to sign on. Whatever agreement we have, well, you can pick up the scraps or crumbs or whatever is left over. We'll basically allow those groups who don't

have a stake in the Mackenzie Valley to benefit from royalties and resources throughout the Mackenzie Valley, which they technically don't have an interest or don't have a legal leg to stand on when it comes to the distribution of those royalties through the Dene-Metis land claim.

I'd like to clarify if you would re-profile these dollars and establish a fair distribution to allow for all Aboriginal groups in the Northwest Territories to have the means and resources to be full, active members, regardless if it's on a side table or a table, to find a workable solution to this bypass.

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: It's my opinion that the majority of Northerners are represented at the table for the AIP and that we are fully committed to working with the other Aboriginal governments to hopefully get them to come on board. The time is far past where Northerners should have their fate in the hands of bureaucrats and politicians that live thousands of kilometres away and we will accept a second-class status as Canadians when 99.9 percent of this population of this country has the authority to control their destiny when it comes to land, water, and resource development. Yet we sit here mired down decade after decade where we have a government thousands of miles away running the key decision-making processes that we all complain about. That's the issue.

This process is clear. We have an opportunity to bring everybody on board. There's money that's still there to carry on the side table discussions that the Member is talking about. The expectation I believe of Northerners is that it is time for us to take control of our own destiny here, to make decisions about resource development.

Two-hundred million dollars we've left on the table, another \$60 million this year. We sit in this House day after day talking about all the resources we need to do things, to build treatment centres, to put in houses, to do all the other things. Yet we're content to sit here as an Assembly in the North, to keep turning our backs on the opportunity to have the resources and authority that other Canadians take for granted. That's not acceptable anymore, in my opinion. We're coming forward with the resources to move this process forward in a very careful, measured, inclusive way.

MR. KRUTKO: Again, I mean, for me the way that this thing is set up is you pay the people. You can call it a signing bonus. The people that signed on get a signing bonus. The people that didn't sign on don't get anything. The only way that you're going to get something is you have to sign onto a bad deal. For me that's exactly what's being projected here. The funds are based on both individuals who have signed on will get the funding. Those groups that haven't signed on, sorry, you either sign on in order to get the funding. That's bribery.

I'd like to ask the Minister why it is that this government is playing with the Aboriginal people's lands and rights. You talk about all this money that's going to the people of the Northwest Territories. Well, excuse me, who's got the poorest health system? Who's got the lack of infrastructure? It's Aboriginal communities and not where the government is set up.

Fifty percent of the public funds in the Northwest Territories is spent on this government's bureaucracy, which doesn't really work its way down to Aboriginal people and Aboriginal communities. That's why Aboriginal people don't trust this government, because of exactly what we're doing here is the whole reason that they can't trust us is because we are not being fair. This is a perfect example of how this money is going to be distributed through this \$2.8 million and it is not going to benefit Aboriginal people who basically are there to protect their lands and resources at all costs. If that means waiting a little longer, well, let's wait a little longer.

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: This process fully respects the land claims, treaties, all the other obligations as it relates to Aboriginal rights. We are talking about public lands. We are talking about authority that now resides with the federal government to reside in the North. We have a process, a not legally binding process, to move us forward through a process of negotiation to resolve the issues that have been identified. We have funds put forward to do that. We have a request for additional funds to keep that process moving. It's a process that folks can, if they're not happy, they can leave. If they can negotiate and resolve the issues that are of concern to them before the final agreement, then they don't have to take part.

What we have now is an opportunity as Northerners to finally move forward, to take our full place at the Canadian table of Confederation where we have the same rights enjoyed by all other Canadians except ourselves and Nunavut. This process is critical for us to do the things we're talking about in terms of managing our future, the type of things that Mr. Bromley talked about, types of development, the control over the decision-making. This process allows us to move forward. It's been carefully considered. It's not legally binding. It fully respects all the Aboriginal rights issues.

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

MR. BEAULIEU: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I have a couple of questions and some comments. I'm kind of understanding from the discussion here that there is no money here to work with bringing the Aboriginal governments that have not signed. In other words, the Dene from Gwich'in, Sahtu, Dehcho, Tlicho, and Akaitcho. No money to work

with them in this whole area of devolution and resource sharing at this point. Is that correct?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Abernethy): Thank you, Mr. Beaulieu. Mr. Miltenberger.

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. There is \$173,000 earmarked for political engagement with regional leaders' meetings. The Premier, as well, is still carrying out the regional leaders' meetings and the regional leaders' forums that we've been carrying on during the life of this Assembly, which as well will bring tables that will allow us to bring all the leaders together to continue to have these broad discussions. There's the \$173,000 there. There's also another \$123,000 for meetings in the regions, which brings that up to \$300,000 to meet with individual leaders on devolution-related matters, in addition, once again, to the other broader processes that we've engaged in as a government that have been led by the Premier.

MR. BEAULIEU: Okay. I was more or less thinking about the funding that would go directly to dealing with or negotiating with those Aboriginal governments that have not signed on. Not really in a regional context but in more of a government-to-government between the three governments was what I was referring to.

I have another question. Is this process of the final Devolution Agreement going to proceed, in as far as how the Government of the Northwest Territories sees it, without the Dene governments?

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: The intent for this process is to allow us the time to move forward to resolve the issues that are outstanding, and that when we believe there is a final deal on the table that can be supported, then we move forward with that.

To get to that point we have to have this process which was started with the initialing of the AIP back in December. I would just point out for the Member as well that the \$123,000 I referenced is for meeting with individual leaders on devolution-related matters. The \$173,000 talks about regional leaders' meetings that I've already talked about, as well.

MR. BEAULIEU: I guess carrying on a bit with what the line of questioning Mr. Krutko was talking about. I recognize that the territorial government and the Dene governments are seeing this process as split between the Aboriginal governments, which includes the two Aboriginal governments that have signed on, and the GNWT I think as a 75-25 split. Then the position of the GNWT is that of the 75 percent based on population, about half of that money is being spent directly to, I guess, I don't know how else to...spent on issues that are facing the Aboriginal people.

The problem there is that the GNWT has been delivering programs and services already. Right? As indicated earlier, if you look across the board and you look at the employment rate, as one example. We have this \$1.3 billion budget in the GNWT. We're spending it, supposedly half of it, on Aboriginal people, based on population. However, the employment rates in Aboriginal communities are much less than half of the employment rates in communities that are non-Aboriginal communities. Or maybe more like the larger centres. The money seems to be going into... The GNWT doesn't seem to be able to trigger any sort of mechanism that will let employment grow in the small Aboriginal communities. So Aboriginal communities look at that as an example, one example only, and say, well, if we hand our entire resource revenues and any devolution over to the GNWT, wouldn't that type of thing continue? Low employment rates. Poor health standards. Poor housing. Right? So the notion that the money that's going to the GNWT is going to go to the Aboriginal community anyway, and it is going to the Aboriginal community, but the effectiveness of it is what the issue is. It doesn't seem to be effective. I think that's what the issue is.

From the Dene communities, at least the communities in Tu Nedhe, there seems to be an issue of how effective this government is at delivering programs and services. There will be more responsibility now given to this government to do that delivery. It's true. The government could say, yes, it's somebody in Ottawa that's making the decision now and we're going to bring that decision to Yellowknife. I think that's the problem. That decision should go to Simpson, and Res, and Providence, and Aklavik, and McPherson, and Good Hope, and places like that. The problem is that decision is going to be brought to Yellowknife. The people in the Dene governments are saying, I don't think that's a really big huge improvement from what we've seen. Just speaking from historical data only, not trying to predict the future of what it's going to be like, but just based on historical information that the GNWT doesn't have a real good track record in those key areas of programs and services. I think that's what the issue is. Bringing people on board is a good idea, but I think you have to show and I think this government has to show today that they're going to seriously and actively work in these areas that need so much work. I think that's what the issue is.

I'd like to ask the Minister what's going to happen, what's going to change when they take control. What's going to change that's going to make things better for the Aboriginal people? Thank you.

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Firstly, I'd point out to the Member for Tu Nedhe it's not they, it's us that sit around this table. Every Member in this House, including the Member for Tu Nedhe and myself as the Member for Thebacha, that we are

representing the people of the Northwest Territories at this public government table. The Member is suggesting that we have decades of problems that could be tied to the fact that we don't control a lot of our own decisions. We didn't take over health, forestry and those types of things until the mid-'80s, but that it may be better to stick with the devil we know than to be able to say that we're finally ready to stand up as Northerners to take on responsibility.

I would suggest to all the Members here and the people of the Northwest Territories, that we can't do things any worse, and if we make mistakes, they'll be our mistakes that we can fix, that we control. We will control the decisions. We will not be sitting here with bated breath waiting to find out what they're going to regulatory reform and what they're going to all the land claim agreements with the boards that were set up and not have any say.

We have one of the most decentralized governments in the country and if that design is not appropriate, then we can change it. If we want to have discussions about how do we handle water, what type of resource development, what do we mean by sustainability, we have those discussions right now but we don't control the decision. We can talk about it until we're blue in the face and come up with all sorts of principles and put those on a shelf and hold them up, but the final decision is not ours. That's the benefit to us.

We cannot turn our back any further, I believe, having sat in this House for 16 years and listened to the constant concerns and need for more money on the hundreds of millions of dollars that are currently left on the table that are not retroactive. Just think what we could have done with a quarter of a billion dollars to add to our operations and maintenance, or to our capital funds. That money will never be spent. Yet we will all stand up in the most passionate way and make the case for the housing needs in our communities, for the roads, for the health services, for the addictions services. Yet at the same time we're prepared to say that \$200 million can just stay on the table. We won't take it but we'll sit here and complain about the doggone government not giving us enough money. At what point do we say let's seize our own future and make those decisions? Let's realize those resources and set up the structures of governance that every other province can do but we can't. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Abernethy): Thank you, Minister Miltenberger. I have nobody else on my list. Any questions on page 4? We're on page 4, Executive, operations expenditures, executive operations, not previously authorized. Mr. Krutko.

MR. KRUTKO: Thank you, Mr. Chair. In regard to the devolution process, what happens if an Aboriginal group does not want the devolution negotiations to apply to their settlement regions? In regard to the Gwich'in, or the Sahtu, or the Tlicho,

make the unilateral decision at an assembly this summer saying that devolution negotiations will not apply to their settlement regions and you only negotiate the devolution agreements in those areas that the individuals that signed on have to negotiate for those resources in those settlement regions, the Inuvialuit or wherever the Metis settlement region is. I'd like to know what is this government going to do with that scenario.

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

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. As far as I understand, this is an agreement between the Northwest Territories and Canada, not two-thirds of the Northwest Territories or a quarter of the Northwest Territories or seven-eighths of the Northwest Territories, but it's going to be for the benefit of all Northerners with the federal government. Thank you.

MR. KRUTKO: Again, Mr. Chair, there are land claims agreements in the Northwest Territories. There are three claimant groups that basically have not signed on -- the Gwich'in, the Sahtu, and the Tlicho -- which makes up almost two-thirds of the settlement of the Northwest Territories. I'd like to know, as a government, and I have a letter from one of the former federal Ministers basically making it clear that he would not negotiate provincial-like powers to the Government of the Northwest Territories if there are large parts of the territory who do not want to be included in this process, regardless of who they are, and that, again, can't happen.

I'd like to know exactly what is this government going to do. Will you consider negotiating with those groups that have signed on and not with those... If you're not going to have those groups that have not signed on have that opportunity to partake in this process, that you'd exclude those areas from this process and you only negotiate with the Inuvialuit and the Metis.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Abernethy): Thank you, Mr. Krutko. Just a reminder that we're on Supplementary Estimates (Operations Expenditure), No. 1, and we're on the Executive with respect to this \$2.831 million, so if we can try and keep focused on the budget that we're discussing here, that would be great. Minister Miltenberger.

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. We've signed an agreement with Canada to start a process, a non-legally binding process that will allow us to negotiate the elements that were assigned in the AIP, and resolve those issues to come to a final agreement for all Northerners. Thank you.

MR. KRUTKO: Mr. Chair, again, we're spending \$2.8 million for a negotiating process that's not fair,

it's not inclusive, but more importantly, it will have a long-term political effect on people in the Northwest Territories and especially those areas, those groups that have not signed on. I'd like to know again from this government exactly what are we going to do to ensure that those groups have land claims or land claim settlement areas be excluded from this process.

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: This is a fair process. This is inclusive. It's going to finally give us as Northerners the same rights now shared by about 99.5 percent of the Canadian population. We're no longer going to be second class where we have to rely on a distant government to make key critical decisions about our life, our water, the land, and the resource development and how we want to move forward as a territory. To me, that is a fundamental improvement that is long overdue.

There's money in the budget to continue to engage with those signatories that have not yet come to the table of the Aboriginal governments, and the funds are there, the commitment is there, the process is underway, and I'm confident that as we move down this negotiation path and people see what great value this is going to be to us, that by the time we come to the final agreement, that we will have a significant number of Aboriginal governments sign on. Thank you.

MR. KRUTKO: Mr. Chair, the majority of these royalties that we're talking about comes from Dene territory, from the groups that are not party to this agreement, regardless if it's the Tlicho, the Dehcho, the Sahtu, the Gwich'in, and I for one feel that you cannot take resources out of anybody's treaty area without their consent. That is exactly what you're doing here. I think it's important to realize that we have to basically agree.

I was at the northern leaders' meeting a couple of weeks ago and it was pretty clear from all of the Aboriginal leaders that spoke there, that if we cannot resolve the devolution process, why are we even talking about a northern vision if we can't come to finding a way to work that issue out and find a way to go forward. The way we're moving on this thing is spend \$2.8 million, railroad the negotiations into overdrive, get an agreement in a year and, sorry, if you miss the bus, well, we're taking your royalties anyway. For me, that is not a process that's fair to the people in the Northwest Territories, especially for the Dene people up and down the Mackenzie Valley.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Abernethy): Thank you, Mr. Krutko. I didn't hear a question, more of a comment. Minister Miltenberger.

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. You can only consider this any type of speedy process if you accept the fact that it's okay to wait 45 years, from 1967 until today, for the basic rights that other Canadians enjoy. If the Member is

suggesting that we should be prepared to wait another 45 years, to still in that time period, we stay here as second-class Canadians because we don't have those rights, I would highly disagree and say it's high time that we move on this.

The federal government is currently taking in the royalties. The federal government is currently taking all those royalties. We do not get what is in this agreement. We are leaving...on this table we have left over \$200 million. There's going to be another \$60 million this year. I'm not sure how the Member can sit here and say it's not fair that we should just... We might as well have a big bonfire and burn all the money that we could have had, and for the Member to say we still need money for houses, we still need money, I want roads, I want this, I want that, yet we'll turn our back on the opportunity to have those resources, to have the ability to generate more resources, and to be saying that we're going to turn our back on that. We are not taking anything, we are not diminishing or derogating from any Aboriginal right, treaty settlement or land claim. Thank you.

MR. KRUTKO: Well, again, I have to totally disagree with that from somebody who was at the negotiating table when the Northern Accord was being negotiated, in which the Dene-Metis were guaranteed that they will be able to negotiate a Northern Accord agreement throughout the Mackenzie Valley and they would take ownership of the royalties and resources throughout the Mackenzie Valley under the Dene-Metis claim. That is what was agreed to. That is what was committed to the Dene-Metis people during those negotiations. Nowhere was the GNWT going to be there to pillage the Dene-Metis lands at the 11th hour with a group that doesn't have an interest in the Mackenzie Valley and move forward. For me, that is exactly what is happening here, and to say that the Dene-Metis people down the valley are losing out, they've been losing out since the Government of the Northwest Territories moved here. They're still losing out, because they've got a better working relationship with the federal government than they do with their own government.

This is the worst government relationship with Aboriginal people we've had in the Legislative Assembly since it's been established, sad to say, and it's because of the attitude of the Premier and the Deputy Premier towards Aboriginal people, especially Dene people. I think it's important that this government, making those type of comments, saying that oh, the Dene-Metis people have been waiting this long, well excuse me, they've been waiting this long to settle the Dene-Metis claim throughout the Mackenzie Valley and they were committed to a land and resource arrangement where they were full participants, not sitting on the sidelines because they weren't invited to the table or basically rejected from the table because the

people that were around the table didn't like the idea.

So, again, I think it's pretty clear that this government is wanting to go full speed ahead and leave the Aboriginal people in the dust again.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Abernethy): Thank you, Mr. Krutko. I didn't hear a question, more of a comment. Minister Miltenberger, would you like to respond?

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The Member has made some very harsh, inflammatory comments, highly critical of the Premier and myself, and highly critical of the institution that he has served in for the last 16 years. He's made some inaccurate depictions of what is on the table. Land claims have been settled and have been honoured, maybe not as well as could be, but we are talking about public lands, we are talking about resources that we're currently not getting at a time, as I just demonstrated when I did the fiscal update, that we are under some significant fiscal constraints and we do not have the authority to control our own destiny and our own ability to generate the revenues and wealth that we're going to need as a territory and to avoid the type of situations that we just talked about in this House today, once again, with things like regulatory reform.

So what we need is measured debate. What we need is to have the discussion with the recognition that we are moving forward to take our place as full Canadians at the table of Confederation. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Abernethy): Thank you, Minister Miltenberger. We're on page 4, Executive, operations expenditures, executive operations, not previously authorized, \$2.831 million.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Abernethy): Agreed. Total department, not previously authorized, \$2.831 million.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Abernethy): Agreed. We'll move along to page 5, Human Resources, operations expenditures, management and recruitment services, not previously authorized, \$8,000.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Abernethy): Agreed. Corporate human resources, not previously authorized, \$1,000.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Abernethy): Agreed. Employee services, not previously authorized, \$1,000.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Abernethy): Total department, not previously authorized, \$10,000.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Abernethy): Agreed. We'll move along to page 6, Aboriginal Affairs and Intergovernmental Relations, intergovernmental relations, not previously authorized, \$269,000.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Abernethy): Agreed. Total department, not previously authorized, \$269,000.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Abernethy): Agreed. Moving along to page 7, Finance, operations expenditures, deputy minister's office, not previously authorized, negative \$6,000.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Abernethy): Budget, treasury and debt management, not previously authorized, \$4.2 million.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Abernethy): Ms. Bisaro.

MS. BISARO: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I note the amount under this particular item is \$4.2 million and it is intended for a line of credit for the Taltson Hydro Expansion Project. In total, this supplementary appropriation request is some \$11 million and this is a very significant portion of that total amount of money. I am concerned with what we're being asked to approve here in total.

Yesterday the Minister advised me that we have a cap of 3 percent increase on our operations expenditures in any one year, but the total amount of \$11 million affects a 0.8 percent increase to our operations expenditures for this year of 2011-12, which is what we're discussing here. So if we have a rate of 2.8 percent, which is what was in his statement yesterday, and we add another 0.8, I think it puts us over 3 percent. So I have difficulty with the answer I got yesterday, that we're managing to stay under our 3 percent increase to our operations expenditures.

The other significant amount of money is the one that we just discussed related to devolution and resource revenue sharing. The other expenses are some in, some out. Overall, by the time we consider lapses in funding from the last fiscal year and some reduction in funding in various areas, we're advised that it's only about \$5 million that we are actually being asked to approve here, in new funding anyway. But I again have a problem with the \$4.2 million in that we're being asked to approve it as an expenditure here, but then we're advised, well, it's already in our fiscal framework so we can credit it back. So it's kind of not really an expense and I have great difficulty with that.

My question to the Minister is: why we are paying down this line of credit to the Hydro Corporation? Is it an expense? I guess I understand the principle of paying down the line of credit. It's costing us thousands of dollars, I gather, in interest payments and I'm quite happy to not pay interest to somebody else. So I'd like to know not so much why we're paying down the line of credit but why is it an expense here and then credited back. So, really, it doesn't affect the bottom line. I'm having great difficulty with that.

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

MR. KALGUTKAR: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. In terms of the why does it affect the fiscal framework, the Hydro Corp debt is included as part of the fiscal framework in our total debt picture. What we're doing essentially here is moving the debt from the Hydro Corp into the GNWT as a short-term debt.

In terms of why it is an expenditure, I guess there's really two sets of authorities that the Member has to keep in mind. The first set of authorities is the actual approval of the line of credit, which the authorities there are found in the Hydro Corporation Act. Then the actual payout of the line of credit, which the authorities there are in the Financial Administration Act.

The Financial Administration Act stipulates that when you pay out a line of credit such as this, you need an appropriation, because the payment has to come from the Consolidated Revenue Fund. To make a payment from the Consolidated Revenue Fund, you need an appropriation, and that's what we're seeking here.

MS. BISARO: Thanks to Mr. Kalgutkar. I almost understood that. That was great. However, what I kind of heard was we let somebody else set up a line of credit and borrow the money and then we pay it off, which I understand it's a Crown corporation, but I have a bit of a problem with that. I would like to clarify, I do believe that when and if this project goes forward and there are revenues to the Taltson project, that the GNWT will be paid back for this money that we are paying out. Is that correct?

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

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Just two quick responses. Yes, all the money, the \$17 million or so, when the project is complete and starts generating revenue, that money will be reimbursed to us. It's not just a Crown corporation but it's our Crown corporation of which we are the one and only shareholder. We are also, for the most part, their banker.

MS. BISARO: Thanks to the Minister. Yes, we're a banker for lots of organizations and that's what gets us into trouble. However, I want to just comment as

well. This large expense and along with the others that are being asked for in this supplementary appropriation are putting a fairly big strain, I believe, on our reserve fund, our supplementary reserve, which is about \$10 million. If this appropriation goes through, it's \$5.2 million and it will reduce our reserve fund to slightly less than \$4.8 million. We're only two months into this fiscal year. We have 10 months of a fiscal year to go with a contingency of about \$4.8 million, which I fear is going to be really problematic.

There is any number of events which could occur. We have a fire season approaching which could be quite catastrophic. Things are very dry. We really don't know what's coming up there. Traditionally we do not budget for our fire season for the costs that we actually incur. So we know pretty well there is going to be a supplementary appropriation coming up at some point in time after the fire season for us to pay for the cost of the fire season because it's not in the budget. We know that's coming.

We know that Norman Wells has a problem with their conversion, the loss of their gas, and they are probably going to need help with their conversion to some other source of fuel or source of heat. There's that. We have a bridge which may or may not be costing us more money. That's still uncertain. There are Members who will say that it's going to cost us an extra \$30 million or \$40 million. I'm not one of them, but it is yet to be determined whether or not the bridge is going to cost us more money. Even with just those three items, we have a really small contingency to deal with and I am quite concerned that this early in the fiscal year we have such a small contingency.

I guess I'd like to ask the Minister, if push comes to shove and we end up with three or four different calls for funds that put us over our reserve and it's \$4.8 million and we need \$10 million, what happens at that point?

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: We'll be working, of course, closely as a government to try to make sure we control our expenditures. If that point occurs, then we will be working, of course, very closely with committee and Members to try to manage and identify what the particular cost pressures are and what steps have to be taken to try to resolve them. One of the reasons we have engaged in this passive restraint process over the last number of months is to try to as well make sure that we have the maximum amount of cushion available over the next year to give us some flexibility should some of these unanticipated or unbudgeted events occur that the Member listed in somewhat gruesome detail.

MS. BISARO: I didn't want to be gruesome, but I think it's better to be realistic than not. So I guess just to try and solidify, clarify in my head, if we end up having to spend \$10 million and we only have

\$4.8 million in our reserve fund, we will borrow to meet the financial or the funding commitments that we have to. Is that correct?

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

MR. KALGUTKAR: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. If we do exceed our supplementary reserve from the amount that is left over, all that would mean is that our projected surplus deficits would be lower than what we anticipated in the main estimates. In terms of how much we need to borrow would depend on how much cash we have in the bank at the time.

MS. BISARO: Sorry, one last question. I thought I heard Mr. Kalgutkar say that our projected surplus deficit would be less. I don't understand that term.

MR. KALGUTKAR: When we do the main estimates, usually in the summary page there's a projection of what our surplus deficit amount is going to be, and that is the amount that is the difference between the amount of revenues that we take in versus the projected amount of expenditures that we are projecting to incur. That amount also provides for a \$10 million supp reserve. So if future expenditures cause us to exceed that supp reserve, then that amount will be lower than we anticipated.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Abernethy): Thank you, Mr. Kalgutkar. Next on my list is Mr. Bromley.

MR. BROMLEY: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I want to ask a couple of questions on this project, as well. The \$4.2 million being proposed here for this payout brings a total, as I understand it, to about \$17.4 million for the Taltson project. These, of course, are all public funds that are going towards an unregulated power project with a partner that has no funds to contribute. Although I believe they did bring some modest, or were instrumental in helping the government bring in some federal dollars, modest though they might have been.

Where are we at in terms of paying those dollars back? Is the project still going ahead and would, presumably, the dollars be paid back equivalent to the dollars that were received from the territorial government?

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

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. This project is currently on pause as we look at reconfiguring how best to move forward. A lot of the issues related to the one customer, the payback period, which was very, very accelerated by the standard for this type of project with this type of significant investment, the routing of the transmission line, how do we address some of the other broader, longer-term needs of the Northwest Territories with grid connections and the ability to look at putting whatever surplus power there may

be to use in communities, in buildings, other potential ventures.

There's a number of these things that now that the Power Corporation has a different chair and different management, and as we have listened to the concerns around this table especially about some of those issues, we want to make sure for this type of investment that we're on the right track. Those things are being considered.

The work that's been done especially on the generation side is going to stand us in good stead. It's engineering work, environmental work, all the other necessary environmental approvals were there. We just have to be sure on the business side and on what's best in our long-term interest as Northerners.

MR. BROMLEY: I thank the Minister for those remarks. I think many of us are disappointed that this project did not work out better and are still hopeful that something can be pulled out of the fire. I am concerned with one of the justifications for this sort of ongoing funding. That is that our partner is worthy of this investment essentially because they are contributing to project knowledge about financial structuring such as the P3 public-private partnership model. Now, I would hope that the government would not need to go to a vested partner that has everything to gain and nothing to lose, for advice on how we structure P3 partnership model, particularly given the experience of this government to date. Can I get the Minister's assurance that that was a typo?

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: What I can indicate to the Member is that over the last number of months we have been working diligently on a P3 policy for the government. That policy has been to committee. We've had extensive feedback. We've put more work into it. Now we have what we think is a workable P3 policy which we will be bringing forward that will provide clarity and a clear way forward if we're going to engage in any type of P3 consideration, how we do it, and who we do it with, and the steps and checks and balances that must be there. Once again based in large part by the feedback from the committees and from the Members.

MR. BROMLEY: Just a couple more quick ones and then I want to follow the Minister's comments up, which I appreciate, by asking for his assurance that he will be referencing the committee reports today and the Auditor General's comments and principles on P3 partnerships, and making sure that those are well referenced in the model that we finally adopt, and that in fact we will not be going out to private partners and adopting their advice on a model to be followed by this government.

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: I can assure the Member that the P3 policy, once it's in place, will be followed by the government. There's built-in,

full engagement of the committees, as well. That policy has been developed based on the things we've learned through the last number of projects; the bridge and the Taltson project most recently. We believe we have pulled together a policy that reflects the lessons learned.

MR. BROMLEY: I guess I would call on all of the House to ensure that the Auditor General's guidance is reflected in that policy before it's approved.

Just my last question here. Given that \$17.4 million has been spent and the development costs for the project were estimated to be \$20 million, we're now over 80 percent expended on the budget for developing the project. Although it's on hold, I understand from the chairman of the Power Corporation that development, or perhaps the Hydro Corporation development, is still proceeding or explorations towards a restructuring and so on. Again, presumably that would engender new costs for essentially a new project. Can we expect that the Minister will be coming forward with another supp on these, and at what point on these projects do we say stop and desist and let's give up if we're beating a dead horse, sort of thing?

Again, I'm just sensitive to our financial situation pressing up against our debt limit and so on. Comments from the Minister would be appreciated. Thank you.

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: I wouldn't describe this project as a dead horse. There is tremendous value here. There's power going over the existing dam, there is a capacity to expand. We chose a path and a way forward that focused on unregulated one business partner process that did not come to realization. We know very clearly that there are other things in the long term that we want to consider that we've talked about, the grid, looking at putting other buildings on electricity, looking at other potential opportunities, Tamerlane, Avalon. We also know that when we did the work and they looked at the demand, it was based only on the use of electricity and not on the use of hydro for power. There has also been studies done, for example, I believe, in Maine, where they did an estimate if they got off their reliance on renewable resources like petroleum products and they did their own energy provision within their state, they would save \$700 million a year and 40-some thousand jobs by having that energy provision in their jurisdiction.

We know that we should control our own source of energy. We also know clearly that the price of gas and oil has gone up. The price is well over \$100 again -- It dipped a bit -- and all estimates are that we're not going to go back to the days of maybe not even double-digit oil anymore. So all these factors make this project more and more attractive, in my mind, in terms of... And that doesn't even touch on

the environmental considerations of greenhouse gases and our own carbon footprint, but managing and controlling our own source of energy. We just have to rethink the best way forward to realize those opportunities. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Abernethy): Thank you, Minister Miltenberger. Mr. Ramsay.

MR. RAMSAY: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I'd agree with everything the Minister has just stated about reasons why we should look at hydro expansion in the Northwest Territories. That's not debatable. What's debatable in all of this is the government's involvement, again, with another partner who had no equity, who the government, in fact, had to pay to be our partner. I mean, what kind of partner is a partner that you actually have to pay to show up?

The government got lambasted over the Auditor General's report on the Deh Cho Bridge. We have got to, at the end of the day, learn some lessons about partnerships, and how we get into partnerships, and what risk we are going to put taxpayers' dollars at here in the Northwest Territories. This is another example of the government going out and flaunting that responsibility to look after the public purse, because how is the \$4.2 million going to come back to the Government of the Northwest Territories?

One point seven five million is what we paid to the partner to be our partner. Again, I'm having trouble understanding why we would have a partner that we'd have to actually pay. Maybe I'll start with that question to the Minister. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Abernethy): Thank you, Mr. Ramsay. Minister Miltenberger.

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. All of the \$4.2 million or all of the \$17 million, should this project go ahead and start generating revenue, will be reimbursed to the Government of the Northwest Territories. We just had a fairly intense debate here about devolution and relationship with Aboriginal governments and the need to engage with our Aboriginal partners. This is an example of what's possible. There's more to equity, in my mind, for ourselves as politicians, than having straight cash. When we're dealing with the major landowners or what will be major landowners in the area, there's a benefit to having support. They bring all that to the table, and this is a project that will deal with some of the broader issues that were referenced by my colleague from Tu Nedhe, for example, about the economy and being able to have strong, independent communities and regions. If this goes ahead and we have a successful partnership, it should be a rising tide that raises all boats, not just some. I appreciate the Member's concern.

We also do have the P3 policy, which will be coming to committee so they can take a look at what the result of all the work that will be, as well, as we go forward, help define future involvement. Thank you.

MR. RAMSAY: I thank the Minister for that. I think that's clearly what Members want to see, is a policy clearly laid out that is going to identify what the rules of engagement are for the Government of the Northwest Territories when it comes to entering into partnerships.

I know the Minister stated money is not everything. That's right, it isn't everything, but at the end of the day, what is everything is responsibility and risk. You have to share the risk. In order to be in a partnership, you've got to share some of the risk.

With the Deh Cho Bridge project we took on all that risk and now we know how that's played itself out. We got into a partnership there that we couldn't get out of and we're going to be paying the price for the next 35 years for that Deh Cho Bridge project, and in this instance we paid all along. Every time you turned around in the life of the last government, I can remember it was like clockwork, every six or seven months the former Premier would come forward and ask us to approve another loan guarantee for the Deh Cho Bridge Corporation. We've also approved loan guarantees in the past for the Taltson expansion.

Again, I think the bottom line for me is somebody, somewhere, has got to protect the public purse from exposure to risk, and we haven't done that. The Auditor General of Canada has clearly indicated that in her report on the Deh Cho Bridge, and if the Auditor General of Canada came and had a look at our involvement in the Taltson expansion, I'm sure that they would come to the same conclusion that the Government of the Northwest Territories enters into these partnerships and assumes all the risk, and the risk is on the taxpayers here in the Northwest Territories, not on anybody else.

Again, my frustration is with our inability to manage the public purse in a fashion that would benefit a government. We just do not do that. We throw that around. Then when things go sideways or the project gets derailed, who pays the price? It's the taxpayers in the Northwest Territories. Again, I think somebody has got to be looking out for the residents here in the Northwest Territories, all the residents, and protecting that public purse wherever possible. Thank you.

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Once again, I appreciate the Member's comments and ongoing concern about the public purse and protecting the taxpayer, and that's the final analysis of the job of this Assembly, of this government and as myself, as the current Finance Minister. Overall, when you factor in all the things we've dealt with and the size

of the budget and all the issues we've dealt with, I think collectively we've managed our way through some very difficult times, things that maybe in hindsight we would not do the same way going forward. We've adjusted some of our policies to reflect that. But I share the Member's concern that we have to be fiscally prudent, but not to the point where we don't want to do anything, but we have to make sure always remembering that these are public dollars. Thank you.

MR. RAMSAY: I thank the Minister again for that. In closing, I think we all share that feeling that we've got to do things right. We have done a number of things right in the past three and a half years but there are some things, yes, if we could go back in time would we do them again? Not a chance. However, we do have to move forward and I think the key to all of this is the P3 policy and, like I said, what the rules of engagement are going to be as we move forward.

My apologies if I missed this, but has anybody asked the Minister when exactly that policy, I know it's in draft form now, when are we going to get a policy in place that we can actually work with? Thank you.

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: In fact, the policy went through Cabinet and FMB today for approval. So it will be on its way to committee for them to look at and see what the fruits of all our collective labours were. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Abernethy): Thank you, Minister Miltenberger. We're on page 7, budget, treasury and debt management, not previously authorized, \$4.2 million.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Abernethy): Agreed. Total department, not previously authorized, \$4.194 million.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Abernethy): Moving along to page 8, Municipal and Community Affairs, School of Community Government, not previously authorized, negative \$1,000.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Abernethy): Agreed. Sport, recreation and youth regional operations, not previously authorized, \$1,000.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Abernethy): Regional operations, not previously authorized, \$261,000.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Abernethy): Agreed. Total department, not previously authorized, \$261,000.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Abernethy): Let's move along to page 9, Public Works and Services, operations expenditures, directorate, not previously authorized, \$5,000.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Abernethy): Agreed. Asset management, not previously authorized, \$22,000.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Abernethy): Agreed. Total department, not previously authorized, \$27,000.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Abernethy): Agreed. Moving along to page 10, Health and Social Services, operations expenditures, program delivery support, not previously authorized, negative \$11,000.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Abernethy): Health services programs, not previously authorized, \$225,000.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Abernethy): Agreed. Supplementary health programs, not previously authorized, \$6,000.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Abernethy): Agreed. Community health programs, not previously authorized, \$669,000.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Abernethy): Agreed. Total department, not previously authorized, \$889,000.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Abernethy): Agreed. Moving along to page 11, Justice, operations expenditures, services to the government, not previously authorized, \$132,000.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Abernethy): Agreed. Legal aid services, not previously authorized, \$7,000.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Abernethy): Agreed. Court services, not previously authorized, negative \$7,000.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Abernethy): Agreed. Community justice and corrections, not previously authorized, \$54,000.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Abernethy): Agreed. Total department, not previously authorized, \$186,000.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Abernethy): Agreed. Committee, let's move along to page 12, Education, Culture and

Employment, operations expenditures, education and culture, not previously authorized, \$110,000.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Abernethy): Advanced education, not previously authorized, \$113,000.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Abernethy): Agreed. Income security, not previously authorized, \$18,000.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Abernethy): Agreed. Total department, not previously authorized, \$241,000.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Abernethy): Agreed. Transportation, operations expenditures, page 11, corporate services, not previously authorized, negative \$4,000.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Abernethy): Airports, not previously authorized, \$1,000.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Abernethy): Highways, not previously authorized, \$3,000.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Abernethy): Agreed. Community access programs, not previously authorized, negative \$3,000.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Abernethy): Agreed. Road licensing and safety, not previously authorized, negative \$3,000.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Abernethy): Agreed. Total department, not previously authorized, negative \$6,000.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Abernethy): Agreed. Moving along to page 14, Industry, Tourism and Investment, operations expenditures, corporate management, not previously authorized, \$7,000.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Abernethy): Agreed. Minerals and petroleum resources, not previously authorized, \$147,000.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Abernethy): Agreed. Energy, not previously authorized, \$500,000.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Abernethy): Tourism and parks, not previously authorized, \$2,000.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Abernethy): Economic diversification and business support, not previously authorized, \$8,000.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Abernethy): Agreed. Total department, not previously authorized, \$664,000.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Abernethy): Agreed. Committee, we'll move to the last page, number 15, Environment and Natural Resources, operations expenditures, corporate management, not previously authorized, \$305,000.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Abernethy): Agreed. Environment, not previously authorized, \$1.050 million.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Abernethy): Agreed. Forest management, not previously authorized, \$52,000.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Abernethy): Agreed. Wildlife, not previously authorized, \$24,000.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Abernethy): Agreed. Land and water, not previously authorized, \$1,000.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Abernethy): Agreed. Total department, not previously authorized, \$1.432 million.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Abernethy): Agreed. Does committee agree that we've concluded consideration of Tabled Document 9-16(6), Supplementary Estimates (Operations Expenditures), No. 1, 2011-2012?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Abernethy): Agreed. You got the motion? Mr. Bromley.

COMMITTEE MOTION 3-16(6):
CONCURRENCE OF TD 9-16(6),
SUPPLEMENTARY ESTIMATES
(OPERATIONS EXPENDITURES),
NO. 1, 2011-2012,
CARRIED

MR. BROMLEY: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I move that consideration of Tabled Document 9-16(6), Supplementary Estimates (Operations Expenditures), No. 1, 2011-2012, be now concluded and that Tabled Document 9-16(6) be reported and recommended as ready for further consideration in formal session through the form of an appropriation bill. Mahsi.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Abernethy): Thank you. A motion is on the floor and is being distributed. Give it a second. The motion is in order.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Question.

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

---Carried

Mr. Miltenberger.

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I would just like to note that this will be Ms. Melhorn's, deputy minister of Finance, last appearance before this House before she...

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Ohhh...

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: ...steps away to enjoy the fruits of her labour and move onto the next phase of her life. I'd like to thank her for her service.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Abernethy): On behalf of committee, I'd like to thank you for all your service and for joining us so often in the Chamber. Thank you very much. Sergeant-at-Arms, can I get you to escort the witnesses from the Chamber.

---Laughter

Now that we've said nice things, get out. Thank you. Mr. Hawkins.

MR. HAWKINS: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. At this time, I'd like to move that committee reports progress. Thank you.

---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: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, your committee has been considering Tabled Document 9-16(6), Supplementary Estimates (Operations Expenditures), No. 1, 2011-2012, and would like to report progress with one motion being adopted, that consideration of Tabled Document 9-16(6) is concluded, that the House concurs in those estimates, and that an appropriation bill 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. A motion is on the floor. Do we have a seconder? The honourable Member for Yellowknife Centre, Mr. Hawkins.

---Carried

Item 22, third reading of bills. Madam Clerk, orders of the day.

Orders of the Day

PRINCIPAL CLERK OF COMMITTEES (Ms. Knowlan): Orders of the day for Monday, May 16, 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 4-16(6), Revocation of Appointment to Executive Council
18. First Reading of Bills
 - Bill 11, An Act to Amend the Public Service Act
19. Second Reading of Bills
20. Consideration in Committee of the Whole of Bills and Other Matters
 - Bill 5, Write-off of Debts Act, 2010-2011
 - Bill 6, Forgiveness of Debts Act, 2010-2011
 - Bill 8, An Act to Amend the Local Authorities Elections Act
21. Report of Committee of the Whole
22. Third Reading of Bills
23. Orders of the Day

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Madam Clerk. Accordingly, this House stands adjourned until Friday, May 13, 2011, at 10:00 a.m.

---ADJOURNMENT

The House adjourned at 5:46 p.m.

