



# **NORTHWEST TERRITORIES LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY**

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**17<sup>th</sup> Assembly**

## **HANSARD**

**Wednesday, June 4, 2014**

Pages 4649 – 4690

**The Honourable Jackie Jacobson, Speaker**

# Legislative Assembly of the Northwest Territories

## Members of the Legislative Assembly

### Speaker

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(Nunakput)

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(Great Slave)

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*Minister responsible for*

*Persons with Disabilities*

*Minister responsible for Seniors*

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(Yellowknife Centre)

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*NWT Housing Corporation*

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*Minister responsible for the*

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**Mr. Norman Yakeleya**

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**YELLOWKNIFE, NORTHWEST TERRITORIES****Wednesday, June 4, 2014****Members Present**

Hon. Glen Abernethy, Hon. Tom Beaulieu, Ms. Bisaro, Mr. Blake, Mr. Bouchard, Mr. Bromley, Mr. Dolynny, Mrs. Groenewegen, Mr. Hawkins, Hon. Jackie Jacobson, Hon. Jackson Lafferty, Hon. Bob McLeod, Hon. Robert McLeod, Mr. Menicoche, Hon. Michael Miltenberger, Mr. Moses, Mr. Nadli, Hon. David Ramsay, Mr. Yakeleya

The House met at 1:31 p.m.

**Prayer**

---Prayer

**SPEAKER (Hon. Jackie Jacobson):** Good afternoon, colleagues. Item 2, Ministers' statements. The honourable Minister of Education, Culture and Employment, Mr. Lafferty.

**Ministers' Statements**

**MINISTER'S STATEMENT 78-17(5):  
HEALTHY FOOD FOR SCHOOLS**

**HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY:** Mr. Speaker, healthy, educated people are a priority for this Assembly and our government continues to investigate ways to support our children's development and give them the right start in life.

We have many strategies across the GNWT that work together to provide supports for northern children, families, residents and communities. One of these is Building on the Strengths of Northerners: A Strategic Framework toward the Elimination of Poverty in the NWT. This framework addresses five priority areas: children and families, healthy living, safe and affordable housing, sustainable communities and better integration of services.

I am extremely pleased to announce that with funding provided in support of the Anti-Poverty Strategy, we have identified \$650,000 to contribute to a new Healthy Food for Schools Program. With assistance from the NWT Bureau of Statistics, we have established the formula for distribution, taking into account food cost indexes, school student populations and median incomes of communities.

Mr. Speaker, research clearly shows that children who eat nutritious food are more physically active, alert and attentive. These children have better school attendance and are more successful at school.

The Health and Health-related Behaviours among Young People in the NWT report from 2012 identified that many of children and youth in the NWT often go to bed hungry because there is not enough food at home.

Providing healthy food through universal programs is one of the best ways to reach those who need it the most. These funds will allow schools to build on existing programs and potentially expand them to increase the number of serving days and increase the age range of students they support.

In addition to the Food for Schools funding, the Anti-Poverty Strategy is also providing \$150,000 for the Department of Municipal and Community Affairs' Active After School Program. This funding will be used to provide healthy snacks for children and youth participating in MACA's after-school programs.

Funding for these important initiatives will help support children and youth to access healthy and nutritious food in both school and in after-school settings.

Research and best practices show that partnerships are the way to build the strongest school meal programs. Our government continues to do its part and we encourage schools to continue to use existing partnerships and seek new partners, where possible.

Mr. Speaker, we are on the right track. With every investment our government makes in children's health, well-being and development, and in families' ability to ensure their children can access opportunities for healthy growth and learning, our collective future becomes brighter. Mahsi, Mr. Speaker.

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

**MINISTER'S STATEMENT 79-17(5):  
COMMUNITY EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS**

**HON. ROBERT MCLEOD:** Mr. Speaker, two years ago the 17<sup>th</sup> Legislative Assembly made supporting sustainable, vibrant, safe communities one of its goals. Today I wish to advise Members on Municipal and Community Affairs' efforts to help achieve that important goal. I am referring to efforts that are underway to help ensure the safety and security of Northwest Territories residents by assisting with community emergency preparedness.

Communities in the NWT have experienced natural, technological and human-caused hazards in the

past and will continue to do so in the future. Emergencies related to these hazards can occur at any time and in any place, with or without warning. Planning for and responding to emergency events is an ongoing process involving all levels of government.

Over the past several years, community governments have made considerable progress towards improving their emergency response capabilities.

Eleven communities have created new emergency response plans since 2011, while eight have updated their existing plan. MACA will continue to work with communities to assist them in updating or creating emergency response plans, and last month MACA delivered its first table-top exercise in Whati, which is now available to all communities to help validate current plans.

Mr. Speaker, emergency preparedness involves continual planning and capacity building. Our collective efforts need to help ensure all communities reach a suitable level of readiness. To this end, MACA is engaged in several important initiatives that will help lay a foundation with which to support and strengthen community efforts.

This summer, MACA's School of Community Government, in partnership with the Department of Transportation, will begin delivery of first responder training to community volunteers and staff. These skills are critical in responding to emergencies outside medical facilities and at remote locations.

Mr. Speaker, the department recently completed a territorial hazard identification risk assessment which provides community governments with guidance concerning risks that pose the greatest threat to people, property, environment and the economy. This tool can be used to update community emergency plans, develop municipal disaster risk mitigation plans and guide development of emergency response exercises. These tools are especially important as we enter into this year's forest fire season.

MACA has also started work on modernizing the Civil Emergency Measures Act to ensure it provides the Government of the NWT and community governments with effective tools to respond to hazards in our current environment.

This year MACA will begin updating the Northwest Territories Emergency Plan, which has not been thoroughly reviewed since 2001. It is time that we ensure the plan provides the GNWT and its partners with proper guidance to implement an effective territorial response when necessary.

As clearly demonstrated, keeping residents safe in our communities involves a number of key elements all working together. Success is achieved by partners coming together to ensure effective planning and capacity.

Mr. Speaker, I wish to commend community governments for their continued efforts in this important area, and once again, I encourage their continued support and participation in the work ahead of us. I would also like to remind all residents of the NWT that emergency preparedness is everyone's responsibility. Every household should have a plan for an emergency ready in case of an emergency. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. McLeod. The honourable Minister of Human Resources, Mr. Beaulieu.

MINISTER'S STATEMENT 80-17(5):  
NWT PUBLIC SERVICE –  
NATIONAL PUBLIC SERVICE WEEK

**HON. TOM BEAULIEU:** Mr. Speaker, June 15<sup>th</sup> to 21<sup>st</sup> is National Public Service Week. This year's theme is "Proudly Serving Canadians." National Public Service Week provides an opportunity for us to celebrate the contribution and accomplishments of public service employees across Canada and especially here in the Northwest Territories.

A strong territory needs a strong society. All residents of the NWT should have the chance to enjoy the benefits of living in a prosperous, well-governed territory and to participate fully in a healthy, just society. The GNWT is committed to helping our residents achieve their aspirations for themselves, their families and their communities by providing the right support, programs and services, and we rely on a dedicated and engaged public service to deliver those programs and services.

Providing quality programs and services to our residents requires an engaged public service. Employees who are engaged not only in their daily work but also in communities of interest help make the public service the best place to work. Our employees are interested in the environment, diversity, Aboriginal relations, health and safety, and work together to offer solutions to improve programs and services for residents and employees. Our employees are involved in charitable and social activities which contribute to community well-being where they work and live. These actions tell us our public service employees are engaged in contributing to the quality of life here in our territory.

Mr. Speaker, earlier today the Premier recognized employees and individuals who contribute through their efforts and actions to the success of the public service in helping residents achieve their aspirations. The 2014 Premier's Awards recipients are:

- Award for Excellence Individuals – Tom Wasylyshyn with the Department of Justice in Fort Smith;

- Award for Excellence Employee Teams – the Devolution Implementation Team, the Accountability Framework Development Team and the “NWT Days” Team;
- Award for Collaboration – the Aboriginal Cultural Awareness Training Group, the Northern Sustainable Housing Project Design Team and the Wildlife Act Working Group;
- Dave Ramsden Career Excellence Award – Warren St. Germaine with the Department of Finance.

I invite you to join me in congratulating the recipients of the 2014 Premier's Awards presented this morning.

Mr. Speaker, it is an exciting time for the NWT. Our new authority and responsibility for public lands, water and resources bring significant changes. Northerners are now making decisions about the things that matter most to them: about our economy, about our environment and about the kind of society we want to be. On April 1<sup>st</sup>, in addition to the devolution of new authority and responsibilities, we were very pleased to welcome 131 former federal public servants into the GNWT who bring experience, expertise and enthusiasm for these new responsibilities.

Under our NWT Public Service Strategic Plan, work continues so we can enhance the capacity and effectiveness of our public service. We continue to build and maintain a representative workforce. We reaffirm learning and development as an ongoing priority in the GNWT public service. We work to ensure occupational health and safety. We build understanding and awareness of diversity, particularly an appreciation of the rich cultures upon which our territory is founded and which inform our programs and services.

Mr. Speaker, in April the Government of the Northwest Territories was honoured to be acknowledged as one of Canada's Top Employers of Young People for 2014. This national award recognizes our employment, culture and career management initiatives as being some of the best across the country in supporting younger workers to advance in their careers.

The 2014 Internship and Summer Student programs are underway, providing young Northerners with unique work experience. I am pleased to advise that as of May 29<sup>th</sup>, 228 summer students have been hired with approximately 49.5 percent being indigenous Aboriginal and 48.2 percent being indigenous non-Aboriginal. Summer student orientation sessions started earlier this week, providing these youth information on their opportunities and responsibilities as GNWT employees as well as information on diversity, cultural awareness and occupational health and safety.

Mr. Speaker, the public service has accomplished a lot in support of Believing in People and Building on the Strengths of Northerners. They have proudly served NWT residents. I invite Members to join me in thanking public service employees for a job well done. There is still more to accomplish in our term and I know that with our engaged public service we will be successful. Mahsi cho, Mr. Speaker.

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

#### MINISTER'S STATEMENT 81-17(5): JUNIOR KINDERGARTEN FACTS

**HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY:** Mr. Speaker, last week I informed the Assembly that officials from the Department of Education, Culture and Employment would be meeting with officials from the two Yellowknife education authorities to compare financial numbers about junior kindergarten. I would like to advise the Assembly of the results of those meetings because I think they confirmed that there is a lot of incorrect information floating around about junior kindergarten.

Mr. Speaker, there seems to be too much opinion and not enough facts about junior kindergarten, which is why I tabled a detailed fact package in the Assembly on Tuesday. I encourage all Members, parents and the public to look at it on the Department of Education, Culture and Employment's website. Today I would like to highlight some of these facts because I am very concerned that we are forgetting how important and beneficial this program will be for children in every community in the Northwest Territories.

Mr. Speaker, there is no question that the Yellowknife education authorities, like every other education authority, will help finance the implementation of junior kindergarten through re-profiled funds. Junior kindergarten will not be introduced in Yellowknife until 2016-17, so these two education authorities will see their budgets reduced in 2014-15 and 2015-16. However, as the fact package clearly shows, in 2016-17 both Yellowknife boards will get a significant injection of new money. This will come from two sources: their share of the reallocated junior kindergarten implementation dollars because they will start delivering junior kindergarten, and the new money that they will get because of the 16 to 1 pupil-teacher ratio commitment that I made in this Assembly.

Mr. Speaker, working with the officials from the two boards, we have identified maximum and minimum funding estimates for this new pupil-teacher ratio money based on two projected enrolment scenarios. I would like to confirm that Yellowknife Catholic Schools is projected to receive a budget increase in 2016-17 of between \$580,000 and just

over \$1 million dollars, depending on their student enrolment. Yellowknife Education District No. 1 is projected to receive a budget increase of between \$1.14 million and \$1.25 million in 2016-17. This important fact has been missing from the debate about how we are funding junior kindergarten in Yellowknife. I believe this makes a very powerful statement that Yellowknife is not being treated unfairly, as some people might have us believe.

Mr. Speaker, it has been said that the Northwest Territories has one of the worst pupil-teacher ratios in Canada. This is not true. Our territory-wide pupil-teacher ratio is 13.8 to 1, which is right on the Canadian average and comparable to most southern jurisdictions.

It has been said that we are not spending enough on kindergarten to Grade 12 education in the Northwest Territories. Mr. Speaker, the facts say something very different. The Northwest Territories is one of the best funded education systems in Canada. We spend just over \$22,000 on every student, and the Canadian average is approximately \$12,500 per student. We spend more than the other two territories and nearly double the Canadian average.

Mr. Speaker, it has been said that we are going to steal money from the dedicated Inclusive Schooling funding that assists students with unique needs. This is not true. Junior kindergarten implementation will not impact the approximately \$26 million in Inclusive Schooling funding that education authorities receive for this purpose alone.

It has been said that I am forcing education authorities to spend their surpluses on junior kindergarten implementation. As I have already said in this Assembly, this is not true. It is up to them how they spend this pot of taxpayers' money that was originally provided to them to deliver the best possible education program.

Mr. Speaker, we have even heard some people say that the junior kindergarten curriculum "lacks benefits for four-year-olds" and is "harmful to some aspects of child development." This play-based curriculum was designed by professionals to be developmentally appropriate for both four- and five-year-old children. It was also built on the foundation of our cultural curricula, to help young children be confident and proud of who they are and where they come from.

Mr. Speaker, this is not a perfect world where resources are unlimited and there are no competing priorities. Our fiscal reality demands that the government exercise prudence and look at where it spends money, to see if it could do better by re-profiling some of it. Mr. Speaker, that is our duty as a responsible government and we did just that.

Some people might say that we should just wait and deliver junior kindergarten in a year or two,

when our fiscal situation might improve. But this overlooks the immediate benefit that junior kindergarten will have for four-year-olds in many of our small communities. Junior kindergarten is an investment in the future of our children. Delaying it doesn't just defer the expenditure to another year, delaying it deprives our children of a chance to get the kind of support now that can give them lifelong advantages. Twenty-nine communities were given a choice whether or not to deliver junior kindergarten in 2014-15 and 23 communities have now said yes. We must deliver on that promise.

Mr. Speaker, change is often difficult and some people fear the unknown. But we should not lose sight of the most important fact that has remained throughout this debate: almost everyone supports junior kindergarten and agrees that it will help families across this territory. For some it will be the only child care option in their community. For others it will save the family up to \$1,000 per month. Free, safe, optional, play-based junior kindergarten is simply the right thing to do for our children. At the end of the day, that is what really matters. Mahsi, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Lafferty. Item 3, Members' statements. Member for Mackenzie Delta, Mr. Blake.

### Member's Statements

#### MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON MUNICIPAL SERVICES IN FORT MCPHERSON

**MR. BLAKE:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My statement today is on municipal services in Fort McPherson. Over the past couple of years, the hamlet incurred a deficit of over \$2 million. This deficit has affected the hamlet, the employees and the users of the services. My constituents continue to call, asking why they have to pay back the deficit, which the hamlet council took upon themselves for better services, only to be pulled deeper into debt.

I want to ask the Minister of Municipal and Community Affairs, where is the control? At what point does the department step up and say there's something wrong? Where are the auditors? Who authorizes funding to council when there is such a deficit? The department needs to realize that responsibility is shared.

Municipal service costs in Fort McPherson have drastically increased and this is affecting everyone. The local housing authority is not getting any extra subsidy for the increase in water, elders are not compensated for extra costs and they have a fixed income every month. Homeowners are barely making it as it is. Now they have to pay almost three times what they were normally paying.



Is there any way that the department can work with the community to lower the municipal service bills so that community members could gradually adjust to the increase? The department should consider a five- to 10-year payback on a deficit, not recover it in one year at the expense of community members. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Blake. Member for Range Lake, Mr. Dolynny.

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON  
CKLB RADIO REVENUE STABILIZATION

**MR. DOLYNNY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. CKLB Radio has been a prominent member of the NWT media community since the 1980s and has been a forum of news, Aboriginal issues, culture, languages, public service announcements and entertainment. The station, with a following of about 20,000 residents, produces Aboriginal language programming as part of its schedule. It plays an integral part of the Aboriginal culture, and with a wide geographic predisposition to deal with, it's a gathering place of sorts for many.

CKLB also has many Aboriginal listeners who get another perspective on life and culture in the NWT that is provided by mainstream media. Its small revenue helps support its operation, but not much more. Luckily, it receives some core funding from Heritage Canada; however, this core model has not increased in over 30 years.

Its owner, the Native Communications Society, is always on a lean funding base and the station has struggled to keep up the maintenance of its community transmitters and, sadly, has been unable to implement new technology for communication. To draw an analogy, the station is a Timex watch working in a digital age.

There has been a long-standing relationship with the work of the society and CKLB in supporting many GNWT initiatives over the years. Some of these initiatives include promotion, use of Aboriginal languages, education, information of GNWT programs and event broadcasting.

Admittedly, the GNWT, through inconsistent community broadcasting grant programs or broadcasting contribution programs, has played a very small role in revenue stabilization. It has never contributed in ways to help upgrade CKLB to current technology. Clearly, it would be a tragic loss to all in our territory if CKLB wasn't able to maintain operation.

Therefore, at the appropriate time, I will be asking the Minister of Education, Culture and Employment for his role in the state of northern and Aboriginal broadcasting in the NWT, with the hopes of a renewed commitment from his department and the GNWT. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Dolynny. Member for Hay River North, Mr. Bouchard.

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON  
NWT TRACK AND FIELD CHAMPIONSHIPS

**MR. BOUCHARD:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I assume, along with myself and yourself, that all the Members here will encourage all the youth of the Northwest Territories who are congregating in Hay River tonight to be in the 24<sup>th</sup> Annual Track and Field for the Northwest Territories.

---Applause

This event, like I indicated, has over 1,100 athletes and a couple hundred volunteers from the community that are helping to feed, to house and to manage where everybody goes. My assistant is out there working on the shot put event right now. The weather typically is either hot or cold or rainy, and this year we got cold. It's not going to be raining, but it's cool out there, so we can dress for that.

Obviously, this event is a fun event for the kids to go out there and compete. We have kids who are four and five years old, all the way to teenagers.

This also is an event that some of our competitive athletes use to springboard into the other national events. One of our great athletes of the Northwest Territories, Brendan Green, was a track and field athlete at these events. I commend this event as a springboard to be more competitive out there.

I'd also like to thank the Members who are travelling down with us for the opening ceremonies tonight. I encourage all the kids. Run, kids, go run!

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

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON  
GNWT/FORT PROVIDENCE  
FOREST INDUSTRY DEVELOPMENT  
MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING

**MRS. GROENEWEGEN:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. This morning my colleague and I had the privilege of joining the Minister of ENR and the Premier in our Caucus room of our Legislature here to witness the signing of the Forest Management Agreement Memorandum of Understanding between the GNWT and the Deh Gah Gotie Dene Band and the Fort Providence Metis Nation.

This was an historic milestone and brings one step closer the dream of a proponent in Hay River, Mr. Brad Mapes, who has wanted to set up an operation to manufacture wood pellets in the Northwest Territories.

We know that we have a very vast resource of inventory of vegetation and forestry in the Northwest Territories. It's a renewable resource, and when we can harvest that and put that into the manufacture of pellets, it's a win-win for everyone.

It will certainly create a lot of employment and industry in Hay River. It will create a lot of employment and industry in the regions around Hay River as those folks become involved in the jobs that will be harvesting that vegetation.

In order to get to this milestone today, though, I want to say that we have to give some recognition to the folks at forest management under ENR, because in order to come up with this agreement, there were many hours of work that had to first go into doing an inventory of what's out there, what can be sustainably harvested over the years to come, and also to come up with the actual Forest Management Agreement. Many, many hours of work, and compliments to the folks at forest management under Minister Miltenberger's guidance for getting us to this point.

I understand that there will be a celebration in Fort Providence in conjunction with what took place in the Caucus room this morning, but I just wanted to take this opportunity today to thank and congratulate all the parties to this agreement for this milestone, and we look forward to its continued and future success.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mrs. Groenewegen. The Member for Inuvik Boot Lake, Mr. Moses.

#### MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON INUVIK FIRE DEPARTMENT

**MR. MOSES:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to take this opportunity to acknowledge, appreciate and give a sincere thank you to the Inuvik fire department. The Inuvik fire department currently has 40 members, including the fire chief, the deputy fire chief and the dispatch. Only the fire chief and the deputy fire chief are career firefighters. All other members are volunteers, and in fact, this might be the biggest volunteer fire department in the Northwest Territories. Our longest serving volunteer firefighter has been doing their job for over 30 years, as well, so his commitment, his experience that he has is helping train all our new rookies that we get into the department.

I wanted to take this time because just recently, as Members might have seen in the news, the Inuvik fire department battled a blaze in Inuvik for over 10 hours initially, and did more hours of control throughout the night and the following days. A lot of these firefighters are family members, they have full-time jobs, they volunteer for other organizations, as well, and I think this is a great opportunity to show them our appreciation and say thank you for the work that they do.

Under the leadership of fire chief Mr. Jim Sawkins, the Inuvik fire hall is about to become a training hub for the Beaufort-Delta region, building capacity not only in Inuvik but in the surrounding communities of the Beaufort-Delta region. Hence, firefighters now

don't have to travel to Yellowknife to get their training and they can stay closer to home.

I just want to commend the volunteer fire department on their dedication, commitment and the sacrifices that they do make protecting the residents of Inuvik, creating a safe community for the residents and also for saving lives, saving property, going above and beyond what they're asked to do. Today the Inuvik fire department is actually participating in a very worthwhile program called the PARTY program, Preventing Alcohol and Risk-Related Trauma in Youth, in partnership with the youth centre, and they were doing work in terms of getting people who are in accidents out of vehicles.

Like I said, I just want to take this opportunity and I hope Members will join me in thanking the Inuvik fire department for all the work that they do in Inuvik and going above and beyond their jobs and being great members of society and residents of Inuvik.

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

#### MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON STABILIZATION OF FUEL PRICING IN SMALL COMMUNITIES

**MR. MENICOCHÉ:** Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Last week I spoke about the concerns that fuel prices are driving up the cost of living in the small and remote communities. The NWT Energy Plan suggests all kinds of ways to reduce fuel use over the long term, but people need immediate relief. Eliminating goods and services tax on gasoline and home heating fuel is a simple way to bring down the price of fuel in small communities to more affordable levels right away. The GNWT helps stabilize the cost of fuel when it purchases fuel in bulk to ship to remote communities that are not on the road system, but people pay for this fuel at a fixed price and that price is never going down. In fact, this year the price has increased about 20 cents per litre over the price of last year. It's going to force seniors and low-income earners into desperate situations. It makes even average wage earners rethink their choice to live and work in remote communities in the Northwest Territories. Our small communities need more people, not less.

People will no longer be able to afford to live there. Cost to government will only increase, putting even more pressure on our programs, plans and services. We must take action to reduce costs immediately. I urge the GNWT to negotiate with the federal government to eliminate GST and bulk fuel purchase for small communities, much like the break small communities were getting when we had the food program.

We must reduce energy costs. That should be the main priority for the remainder of this Assembly and set a clear direction into the next. Thank you.

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

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON  
PREMIER'S PROPOSAL FOR A  
WOMEN'S PARLIAMENT

**MS. BISARO:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Not too long ago the Premier made a public proposal presented to the NWT Status of Women Council to establish a mock women's parliament, similar to the Elders and Youth Parliaments that we currently have every second year.

The Premier's intent was to provide an event that would create interest in and motivate women for territorial politics, and heaven knows we need more women to be elected to this Assembly.

The idea has generated a lot of opinion and discussion since. Many people, both men and women, have expressed their disappointment and, yes, disgust at the idea of such a parliament. Others have defended it.

To the Premier's credit, he has recognized a void in the elected leaders in our Assembly and has put forward a strategy for change. Like the idea or hate it, contemplation of a women's parliament has started a much needed conversation, one that asks how we go about electing more women to this territorial Assembly.

A women's parliament could be a tool to affect some of the necessary change, but I feel there are many other things which we could do instead, which we should do first and we could have a much greater impact. At the outset is the matter of missing resources.

The NWT Status of Women Council operates on a shoestring budget, more so since the federal government cut funding to status councils all across Canada. The GNWT could properly resource the NWT council so that organization could expand their activities, could be proactive in evaluating programs and services for gender equity and equality in government actions. They could look at gender issues across government and across our cultures. When was the last time our NWT council researched and produced a report on the equitability of women in any NWT organization or business? When was the last time that they made a presentation to a public policy forum or environmental assessment hearing? A long time ago, no doubt the result of minimal staff and reduced funding for this type of work.

We could fund them to do an analysis of gender in board appointments. I suspect it would show a disproportionate number of men appointed to our NWT boards and agencies. The council could be

funded by the GNWT to run a campaign school every year, not once every four years.

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

---Unanimous consent granted

**MS. BISARO:** Thanks to my colleagues. I must point to the British Columbia Women's Campaign School held annually with high-powered presenters, expert women speakers, drawing participants from all over BC and even across Canada. The school is open to women running for any office and to women interested in working on or for a political campaign. The NWT Status of Women Council could be mandated and funded to reach out to do work to increase the participation of women in elected positions, something that happens in Newfoundland. They could establish a mentorship program and/or set up online resources for potential candidates, for example.

The possibilities are many and we have to look no further than other Canadian jurisdictions for ideas and strategies. The conversation has been started. Is there will within this government and this Assembly to keep it going? Is there the will to make some changes and achieve one goal: more elected women MLAs? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Ms. Bisaro. The honourable Member for Deh Cho, Mr. Nadli.

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON  
BENEFITS OF HYDRO GRID EXPANSION  
INTO THE DEH CHO REGION

**MR. NADLI:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Over the last week, Members and I have spoken to the issue of high costs of living in NWT communities. The high cost of living is directly linked to the cost of fuel. It has become clear that the only way to reduce fuel cost is to reduce fuel use.

The NWT Energy Plan was an important piece of policy work for the 17<sup>th</sup> Assembly. It lays out a framework for how we will supply energy to our communities and industry. The planed proposal ties Kakisa and Fort Providence into the hydro grid and expanding hydro power to create the NWT grid.

Mr. Speaker, I strongly support these actions. With the opening of the Deh Cho Bridge, the GNWT has new options for extending a transmission line to Fort Providence, Dory Point and Kakisa. For too long, these communities have paid for diesel power while their neighbours just a few hours to the south have cheaper, cleaner hydro power.

One option is to run a low voltage line from the Taltson power plant directly to Kakisa and Fort Providence. Another plan would be to run a high voltage transmission line around the west side of the Great Slave Lake to connect the Taltson and

Snare power systems. A low voltage “step down” line would reach Fort Providence and Kakisa.

There are many benefits to developing a grid. The major challenge is cost. A transmission line to Fort Providence is estimated to cost between \$20 million to \$30 million. This sounds like a lot of money, but we must consider the long-term payback of hydro power. Hydro dams don't have the gigantic environmental footprint that fossil fuels do. Once diesel is burned, it's gone forever. Water, properly managed and protected, can supply energy as long as the river flows.

The Kakisa and Fort Providence transmission line appears in the Energy Action Plan but not in our budget. We need to earmark some dollars for future development. We must seek opportunities to partner with industry wherever possible. We need to get industrial customers online while projects are in the review process, ensuring no opportunities are missed, even opportunities we have yet to discover. Mahsi, Mr. Speaker.

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

#### MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON VALUE OF TRADITIONAL LAND USE

**MR. YAKELEYA:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. This spring I've had the opportunity to go on the land with my family. I brought my little boy out there. He's 12 years old. Being out on the land for 11 days, I truly believe that the land is alive and well, and the land is the boss. The land has certain laws that when we're in a certain type of environment that we really don't understand. I know that when I was with my son, we were talking about walking with his grandparents on the land. His grandparents from my side of the family are not alive anymore, but they have put a place where we can go and fish, hunt and trap and enjoy a good life.

All over the Sahtu, there was excitement that people were going out on the land. Close to 300 or 400 people went out and they used the modern technology of a helicopter for the business they have with the helicopter companies. A lot of them took advantage of that. Historically, there are a lot of trails in the Northwest Territories and in the Sahtu region. Even in our land claim, Chapter 12, it states we are going to strengthen the traditional way of life and the people.

I want to continue that and support the traditional use of our lands. It's stated clearly in our land claims and our hearts that that is given by our elders. Our Sahtu Land Use Plan states that, traditional knowledge states that. Spring hunts are exciting times. Ninety-four percent of people in Colville Lake use traditional foods and the other areas, about 7 percent. We have a high number of harvesters in our area, 112 trappers and 60 percent

so far that we've identified have cabins in the Sahtu area. Over 400 sites have been identified. Take a Kid Trapping is powerful.

This summer we are going to hike the Canol Trail. So far there have been 87 hikers on that trail in the past eight years.

I seek unanimous consent to conclude my statement.

---Unanimous consent granted

**MR. YAKELEYA:** I want to thank Members and colleagues and say, in my grandmother's words, when I asked her about her husband, Chief Albert Wright, about the future, Chief Albert Wright said, “Go onto the land. In the future it's going to be very valuable.” That's where I take my inspiration when I hike – in the past years there have been 87 hikers on the Canol – is to go on the land, live on the land. You know what? If we continue to go on the land and teach our children the value that anything in life that you want, you need to practice it first. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Yakeleya. Member for Weledeh, Mr. Bromley.

#### MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON FISCAL STRATEGY

**MR. BROMLEY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As spring arrives and the trees leaf out, it's clear that money is not growing on those trees. But perhaps our Minister of Finance has a different view.

Our government is deeper in debt than it has ever been, yet the Minister wants a spending spree that will put us another billion dollars in the red. We continue to aggressively pursue more and more massive and expensive infrastructure projects that we can ill afford, while seeking ever-increasing debt limits. We spend big on infrastructure for large private sector projects that never materialize, stranding us with unaffordable costs and few benefits. Some might call this living beyond our means; others, perhaps, dreaming in colour.

Unfortunately, added to the financial costs of these so-called investments are the cost of foregone investment in truly sustainable development; increased, rather than decreased, cost of living; and impacts which often run counter to the intent of our Land Use and Sustainability Policy.

The government refuses to come to terms with reality with what projects, policies and directions are actually environmentally, socially and economically sustainable. Growth in the number of migrant workers snapping up jobs more suitably filled by the unemployed and skilled workers of the NWT continues unconstrained, fuelling the leakage of \$500 million in wages and over \$33 million in tax dollars from our territory every year. This grows annually.

Meanwhile, our soaring debt builds up on the backs of fewer and fewer people. This demands a revenue response, of course, so there's no surprise that government is bent on aggressive resource exploitation that will service this black hole.

It doesn't have to be this way. We know what is required for truly sustainable development, development that strengthens our social fabric, supports our different cultures, creates local and lasting jobs and real economies, and is environmentally benign or restorative.

Clearly, a new approach to territorial financial planning and a move to development versus exploitation at all cost are needed. It ain't rocket science, as attractive as such rocket science might seem.

When will the Cabinet come to us with fresh, new proposals based upon sound and effective policy and focused on truly sustainable development? People in the Northwest Territories are waiting. While we enjoy spring, we know fall will be here soon enough and even the leaves will disappear. Mahsi.

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

#### MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON NWT HEALTH CARE CARDS

**MR. HAWKINS:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm going to use the opportunity here to return to a subject I've raised in this House before and it's the health care card issue.

In the past I've raised with the Health Minister, more accurately the former Health Minister, about the need to move towards photo ID cards. As many of us will remember, and certainly want to forget, the last health care card renewal was no thrill with any standard we should be looking back to as a benchmark. So we should use this opportunity to be planning forward with better health care cards.

The recent issue of cards, I believe, are good for about three years. That would certainly give us substantial time to proceed at a very smart and strategic way to copy other jurisdictions such as Ontario and even British Columbia.

A photo health care card comes with many incredible advantages, security certainly being the first. We have to recall that many photo cards can carry substantial basic information such as things like bar codes that show valid information, indicate a person's wishes if they choose to be an organ donor. They even have a person's signature on these.

Of course, in talking to seniors, they will all tell you a health care card is just like gold. Nothing is more important than your health care opportunities,

because the NWT's health care system is second to none, so it must be protected.

There are opportunities here to proceed in a manner that makes a lot of sense, and in some ways it could eliminate our general I.D. card. Now, we could find ways to work this out for those who can't show up and have their photos taken, but there are many opportunities that could help here. We could blend this nicely with our Electronic Health Record system. Regardless of what language you carry, there could be a bar code on the back and they can scan it and know everything they need to know about you.

A photo health care card issued to our residents proves that they are residents, because they have the picture to match who they are, and if they're done under a secure situation, just like our driver's licence, we could ensure that all residents can have them.

May I remind you it was only a few short weeks ago we were listening to the federal government talk about taking voting opportunities away from our citizens because they didn't have photo I.D. The opportunities of photo health care cards are endless, and now is an opportunity.

Let me finish with this. A few years ago we had found that we had over 4,000 extra health care cards. This would give us a great chance to audit them properly and ensure that when we are giving health care to our citizens and supporting them in the way that they are meant to be supported, we can guarantee that they are who they are.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Hawkins. Item 4, returns to oral questions. Item 5, recognition of visitors in the gallery. Mr. Lafferty.

#### Recognition of Visitors in the Gallery

**HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY:** Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. First and foremost, I'd like to recognize all the Pages that are here today working for us, and it has been a long session as well. I'd like to thank them for their services. More specifically, for two Pages from Wekweeti, they are Autumn Football and Laylu Judas who are with us today. I'd like to say mahsi for your services.

I'd also like to recognize my former constituents, but they're still from Behchoko in my view. That's Debbie Lemouelle and also Stephanie Lafferty who are here with us. Welcome.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Lafferty. Ms. Bisaro.

**MS. BISARO:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. You'll notice we have a group of young people in the gallery today. I'm very pleased to welcome the Grade 6 social studies class from William McDonald School. Ecole William McDonald School,

pardon me. I'm going to ask them to stand when I read their names so you can be recognized. Your name will go into our Hansard, which is a recording of our proceedings for the day, so you're going to be forever marked in our register. My apologies if I get your name wrong, but I'm trying very hard to follow the rules in front of me. Chasity Atigkyoak, Kameron Burt, Dustin Caisse, Cameron Chambers, Brayden Christofferson, Logan Doyle, A.J. Lawrence, Siad Mohamud, Kenny Neyelle, Drayton Pagonis-Friesen, Mason Saunders, Cerynn True-Jewell, Kathy Truong, and accompanying them are teacher Paul McDonald and student-teacher Paige McDonald, long-time residents of Yellowknife. Welcome to them. I would also like to say welcome to Frame Lake resident Mr. Byrne Richards who is here watching us.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Ms. Bisaro. Mr. Hawkins.

**MR. HAWKINS:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I, too, wish to welcome Byrne Richards, certainly a community advocate and very well known to all of us. I want to also use the occasion to recognize Paul McDonald. I used to be a neighbour of his, and a little known talent of his was he was a clown, so all the students there with him here today... No clowning around. He was a professional clown. He may have been both. I'll leave it with the students to see if they can get some gags and tricks out of him, but he's quite the gentleman.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Hawkins. Mr. Moses.

**MR. MOSES:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I, too, would like to recognize Mr. Byrne Richards and all the work that he has done in the mental health and addictions field and his consideration for people with addictions. Welcome to the House.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Moses. I'd like to welcome everybody here in the public gallery. It's so good to see our youth in the House today. Thank you for coming and taking interest in our proceedings here today to all.

Item 6, acknowledgements. Mr. Yakeleya.

### Acknowledgements

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT 9-17(5):  
2014 NWT OUTSTANDING VOLUNTEER AWARD  
– ELDER AWARD – EDWARD OUDZI

**MR. YAKELEYA:** Mr. Speaker, I would like to congratulate our elder Mr. Edward Oudzi from Norman Wells on being selected as the territorial recipient of the 2014 NWT Outstanding Volunteer Award for the Elder Category.

Mr. Oudzi is a well-respected elder and is especially known for his traditional knowledge,

spirituality and his tireless volunteering in the town of Norman Wells.

On behalf of the Sahtu region, I pass on good wishes to Mr. Oudzi for his outstanding volunteer efforts, and all the best to him, his family and his community. Mahsi cho, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Yakeleya. Item 7, oral questions. Mr. Yakeleya.

### Oral Questions

QUESTION 354-17(5):  
SUPPORTING TRADITIONAL WAY OF LIFE

**MR. YAKELEYA:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I want to ask the Minister of ITI... I talked about the activity of the Sahtu people who still continue to use the land through different methods, different avenues we have today. I know that I did ask a question at one time, I'm not too sure if it was to Mr. Ramsay, on the support that's given to people who want to continue to strengthen and pursue their traditional way of life in the year 2014.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Yakeleya. Minister of Industry, Tourism and Investment, Mr. Ramsay.

**HON. DAVID RAMSAY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We have a number of supports through the Department of Industry, Tourism and Investment that help people get out on the land through the CHAP funding, also the Take a Kid Trapping Program that we have. We've also got some other programs that we've got up and running – Take a Kid Gardening Program, that's run by the regions around the territory – we'll also encourage people to get out on the land and pursue traditional-type activities. Thank you.

**MR. YAKELEYA:** Thank you. In the Sahtu region, there is a high rate of families that are not working today that are looking for work. A lot of these families would love to pursue a lifestyle on the land.

I ask the Minister, has he had any type of discussion yet as to what type of activities or programs could be looked at to support young families who are not working, who want to go on the land? Is there any type of family harvesting assistance program for these young people?

**HON. DAVID RAMSAY:** Thank you. I talked of some earlier and the issue the Member brings up, of course, runs across the numerous departments with the Government of the Northwest Territories, Health and Social Services, Education, Culture and Employment, certainly ITI. We have initiatives, the Healthy Lifestyle Initiative, that encourages people to pursue activities and certainly that's a discussion that we have to continue to have on how to get people out on the land pursuing their traditional activities.

As we mentioned, we have programs and I'd be more than happy to talk to the Member and the other Regular Members about opportunities to enhance how we can get more people out pursuing traditional activities on the land. Thank you.

**MR. YAKELEYA:** Thank you. This spring, people in Deline, Colville Lake, Fort Good Hope, Norman Wells and Tulita certainly took advantage of the geese coming over into the Sahtu region and one of the advantages of our communities that show a lot of people going out on the land was because of their agreements with the helicopter companies that they have. The helicopters today are being used by community members to get people on the land. I want to ask the Minister in regard to supporting the families and the communities in regard to some traditional programs, I guess we could look at where we can do some economical activities when they're in their areas where they're hunting.

**HON. DAVID RAMSAY:** We do have funding that gets down to the regional level and the community level that folks can access at the community level to help them get out on the land hunting or trapping, and certainly that's something we will continue to support. As far as providing assistance for helicopters to take folks out, that's something we would have to continue to discuss with the Member.

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

**MR. YAKELEYA:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Certainly, I know the communities have done a great job with the helicopter companies and have somehow made arrangements for that benefit to happen every spring, and certainly in talking to the helicopter pilot, there were a lot of hours flying into the communities bringing people out to the spring hunt and locations where they were going to spend some time. I just want to continue to support that avenue.

Is there any type of programs in ITI that will look at a youth program that will specifically teach the youth about the traditional way of life given by some of our community professors who know how to live off the land?

**HON. DAVID RAMSAY:** We do have the Take a Kid Trapping Program, Take a Kid Harvesting Program. It's \$125,000 a year. We also have the Genuine Mackenzie Valley Fur Program at \$600,000 a year. We also have the Western Harvesters Assistance Program, or WHAP, that's \$15 million a year. We also support local wildlife committees. We also look at the Community Harvesters Assistance Program, that's another \$1 million that we put out there. We do also have a Harvesters Disaster Compensation Program that we run through the Department of ITI, all there to assist people as they pursue traditional lifestyles on the land. Thank you.

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

QUESTION 355-17(5):  
HAMLET OF FORT MCPHERSON  
DEFICIT REDUCTION PLAN

**MR. BLAKE:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My questions are for the Minister of Municipal and Community Affairs. At the moment, we are in the process of writing off debts to BDIC.

Can the Minister and his department write off the deficit for the Hamlet of Fort McPherson? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Blake. The honourable Minister of Municipal and Community Affairs, Mr. McLeod.

**HON. ROBERT MCLEOD:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. No, we can't, but we will work with the community of McPherson. There has been some work done already to have a deficit recovery plan. We will work with the community to see what their options might be as far as recovering some of the deficit that they are currently running. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. BLAKE:** Why did the department not step in sooner to fix this problem?

**HON. ROBERT MCLEOD:** We gave our community government funding and we are confident in their ability to administer that funding. However, in some cases, we come into situations like this and it's unfortunate that the residents of the communities normally end up paying for it. With the new Accountability Framework, we will be able to track the community's finances a lot better, and if we see potential red flags, we can step in a lot sooner.

As far as the Member's community goes, we have appointed a municipal supervisor to help with the deficit recovery plan, so we are working with the community right now and will continue to do so. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. BLAKE:** Can the Minister and his department move to a five- to 10-year plan to pay back the deficit to ease the cost of living in Fort McPherson? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**HON. ROBERT MCLEOD:** We will have to examine our options. I am willing to meet with the council and the residents of Fort McPherson to fill them in on the deficit and some of the work that's being done. There are other options that we may have at our disposal. We may have to look at possibly dissolving council and appointing a public administrator in the community. Again, these are options that we need to explore and I am going to meet with the leadership and the citizens of Fort McPherson, Mr. Speaker. Thank you.

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

**MR. BLAKE:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. That leads me to my fourth question. Will the Minister and his officials come to Fort McPherson and work with the community on a better recovery plan? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**HON. ROBERT MCLEOD:** We would be pleased to come to the community and meet with them again. We want to make sure that they have all the tools at their disposal to try to deal with the deficit. So, we'll be glad to work closely with the community to come up with a recovery plan. With the new Accountability Framework, we'll be able to monitor our communities a lot closer and if there are any potential issues in the community, we will be able to identify those quicker and step in a lot quicker. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

QUESTION 356-17(5):

PROPOSAL FOR A WOMEN'S PARLIAMENT

**MR. BROMLEY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to follow up on a topic that Ms. Bisaro introduced in her statement today with questions to the Premier. There are serious systemic issues that create barriers to women running for political office.

Would the Premier be able to list some of the top barriers that women face and explain how a mock women's parliament could significantly reduce those barriers? Mahsi.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Bromley. The honourable Premier, Mr. McLeod.

**HON. BOB MCLEOD:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The Member has made it very simple, suggesting that there's a silver bullet that would resolve this complex issue. Suggesting a mock parliament, we were raising the issue to raise dialogue and debate and to help identify the barriers that women face in getting involved in politics. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. BROMLEY:** Thanks for that simplistic answer. The lack of women here is a reflection of women's lack of political power in our society in general. We need to enable women to represent their various perspectives in our day-to-day functioning of society. We need to support women's organizations that represent their views and environmental assessments, economic decision-making and so on. We offer similar support to Aboriginal organizations and this is a good thing.

Rather than just funding the Premier's handpicked Status of Women Council for a narrow selection of topics, will the Premier commit to providing similar levels of funding and political access to women's organizations to enable their meaningful participation in a broad range of topics on the road

to fair political representation that would benefit us all? Mahsi.

**HON. BOB MCLEOD:** We should be welcoming any opportunity to focus on women's participation in politics in a very direct and high profile manner. We're not trying to shut it down. We need to come together as a society and have a constructive discussion on this issue and what we can do to solve it together, not just trying to score political points, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. BROMLEY:** I don't recall at all making any comments about shutting anything down. I'm not sure where the Premier is coming from on that.

One practical barrier I've heard is that our meeting schedules are very demanding. We compress a year's worth of meetings and diverse, very intense activity from morning to night, that's probably especially true for the Premier. It has been shown in other jurisdictions that reasonable meeting schedules are more family friendly and, therefore, encourage more participation by people with families, both women and men.

Would the Premier commit to studying this issue and reporting back on the possibility of a more family-friendly schedule in this Legislature? Mahsi.

**HON. BOB MCLEOD:** That's something we should all aspire to. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**MR. BROMLEY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm not sure it's worth it, but I'll stand up and speak anyway. I personally was enabled to go into politics by participating in workshops arranged by the non-profit sector on how to run for office. I suppose that may be grounds for the Premier to deny my following suggestion; however, these were very helpful to me.

Would the Premier commit to funding similar workshops across the NWT, aimed at encouraging more people to run for political office, not just enjoying hearing me speak? Thank you.

**HON. BOB MCLEOD:** Thank you. It's good to know that Mr. Bromley has all the answers on this issue.

We want to encourage women to run for politics. We've been trying to work through the Status of Women Council. I don't think it's only the purview of the Status of Women Council. I think this Legislative Assembly could do more in that regard. I think other groups in society could do more. To put the tail on the donkey and blame it just on an organization that is doing its best to further the advances of women, I think, is not very helpful. I think we will do whatever we can to do, as we have in the past, to put on campaign schools for women. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.



**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. McLeod. Colleagues, before we go on today, I'd like to welcome to the House our Languages Commissioner, Ms. Snookie Catholique, and her assistant, Eleanor Klengenber. Welcome to the House.

Member for Hay River North, Mr. Bouchard.

QUESTION 357-17(5):  
LEAVE OPTIONS FOR  
COMMUNITY VOLUNTEERS

**MR. BOUCHARD:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Earlier today I talked about the hundreds of volunteers that are working in Hay River, and some of those volunteers are GNWT employees, so I have questions for the Minister of Human Resources about what leave is available to GNWT employees for volunteering for community events.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Minister of Human Resources, Mr. Beaulieu.

**HON. TOM BEAULIEU:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The GNWT has various leave for volunteer activities. Some of the leave is laid out in the Collective Agreement and in the Human Resource Manual. We have civic leave, where an individual employee of the GNWT can take up to 15 days to work with public boards, community councils and committees. There is other leave, as well, for something we refer to as sporting leave for people who are athletes, officially designated coaches, managers, head officials and so on, and GNWT allows up to eight days for that type of activity. Thank you.

**MR. BOUCHARD:** Mr. Speaker, the next question I have is I understand this leave is something you probably have to apply for, but I'm wondering if we have any agreements or any leave in place for short-term demand or quick demands on volunteers, such as firefighters in the Northwest Territories. My colleague from Inuvik talked about his firefighters and department. In Hay River we have a strong firefighters group as well.

I'm just wondering: what agreement does a firefighter have to have with the GNWT to take immediate action when there's a fire?

**HON. TOM BEAULIEU:** Mr. Speaker, as far as the training of the firefighters goes, for that aspect of it the GNWT will provide five days of leave. If a firefighter at work is called to a fire and needs to take leave for that day when they're fighting a house fire, I think that is something that we don't have specifically covered in our HR Manual, but it's something I think that the GNWT, as the manager of that employee, allows an individual to go and fight a house fire if they're part of the volunteer group.

However, some of the other things that may be important to this questioning is that right now the

GNWT is doing a comprehensive review of all of the planned leave, to try to determine the best way to move forward with this leave and also recognizing the fact that the GNWT has probably the best leave from most public services across the country. Thank you.

**MR. BOUCHARD:** Mr. Speaker, the question about the short-term leave for firefighters has come up over the last couple of weeks when we've had two major fires in the community. I'm just wondering: in that review, will there be something that once you have a firefighter on staff, that basically there is no requirement; he or she can be called on demand for the firefighter services once they've agreed that they're allowed to be in the GNWT and be a firefighter at the same time? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**HON. TOM BEAULIEU:** Mr. Speaker, although the operational requirements are something that is a factor in granting immediate leave for an individual to fight a fire, none of the departments or any of the managers that work for the GNWT will withhold leave when some firefighters have an immediate need to leave to fight a house fire. None of that leave will be unreasonably denied, but like I indicated, there is an operational requirement as well. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Beaulieu. Final, short supplementary, Mr. Bouchard.

**MR. BOUCHARD:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. One of the other volunteer groups that have come to me recently is the Canadian Rangers, obviously a great volunteer organization, as you all know.

I guess the question is: What are the leave requirements for GNWT staff that are members of the Rangers?

**HON. TOM BEAULIEU:** Mr. Speaker, as I indicated, civil leave used for participation in community councils, public boards and other committees, other volunteer organizations around the community. The Rangers are used extensively for search and rescue, as well as firefighters. CASARA have their leave when an individual is out on the land, lost. In that case the Rangers would fall into that leave. When the Rangers are exercising, as I'm sure the Speaker is aware, then the leave will be granted under the civil leave. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Member for Range Lake, Mr. Dolyunny.

QUESTION 358-17(5):  
NORTHERN AND ABORIGINAL  
BROADCASTING

**MR. DOLYNNY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Earlier today I made reference to the state of northern and Aboriginal broadcasting in the Northwest Territories by pointing out opportunities in assisting our broadcast station of CKLB. I made reference that

capital funds are particularly hard to come by. The station has struggled to keep up with maintenance of its community transmitters and has been unable to implement new communication technologies. In essence, as I see it, Aboriginal media should not be a second-class citizen in today's NWT broadcast community and it deserves better. My questions today are for the Minister of Education, Culture and Employment.

Training has always been a major component of the Native Communications Society's work. It has been a springboard for many well-known careers woven into the fabric of our daily life in the Northwest Territories: William Greenland, Peter Hope, William Firth, Richard Van Camp and photographer Dorothy Chocolate are among the first to jump to mind. Therefore, I'm recommending that we build upon this strength and develop a fully funded training program for northern Aboriginal broadcasters, monitored and administered by the society.

Can the Minister tell me how he will assist in making this happen? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Dolynny. Minister of Education, Culture and Employment, Mr. Lafferty.

**HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY:** Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. As this House knows, I am a true supporter of anything that contributes to the health and strength of our Aboriginal languages. NCS, the Native Communications Society, is valuable and also contributes towards this.

Again, there is no doubt that those talented individuals have worked for the society, as well, and learned from NCS over the years. We fully support that as government, for their contributions over the years.

The Member does put in a very interesting idea about how we can move forward on providing the training to these northern broadcasters. I have instructed my department to work with NCS possibly developing some sort of a training package. Not only that but identifying those students that may be pursuing this at post-secondary. It will consist of northern broadcasters, Aurora College, Aboriginal organizations to keep the language strong. Those are the individuals that I need to coordinate with.

**MR. DOLYNNY:** I'm encouraged by what I'm hearing today and I'd like to thank the Minister for that. As mentioned, core funding from Heritage Canada has not changed in over 30 years, and coupled with the meagre advertising revenue and inconsistent GNWT funding, this has created a very lean operational base in which to maintain the open doors.

Can the Minister tell me how he's going to leverage what is possible from the GNWT as own-source funding in order to meet this growing concern, and

how is he going to act as a lead negotiator with CanNor opportunities?

**HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY:** The CanNor funding has got its own sources and they deal directly with NCS, but I can speak to the areas of meeting with the federal Minister, the former Minister and the current Minister of Canadian Heritage, on a number of occasions to lobby the federal government for additional funds on Aboriginal language in general. This work, obviously, is ongoing work that we're doing between the two parties. This year we've entered into negotiations, as well, with the federal government on the Canada-NWT Languages Agreement. We are on the verge of negotiations with the federal government and it will be happening this fall.

**MR. DOLYNNY:** I thought we were on a roll here, but it seems at a little bit of an impasse. Some of the things that I can introduce to the Minister are simply just indexing what we're giving annually to this society so we can actually increase with the cost of living.

As I mentioned earlier, CKLB is a Timex watch working in a digital age. Therefore, I'm recommending that the proper funding be provided to assist northern and Aboriginal broadcasters with, specifically, capital equipment replacement costs.

Can the Minister tell me what he'll do to support this initiative?

**HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY:** This is an area that we've been working very close with NCS, identifying the capital projects, and they've submitted proposals to our shop, the GNWT, through ECE, and we've been working very closely with Heritage Canada, as well, because they provide the capital expenditures. Those are some of the discussions that we are currently having with the federal government on behalf of NCS. At the same time, NCS, the CEO is also advocating with the federal government, as well, so at both angles we're pushing the federal government. We'll do what we can to push that even further.

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

**MR. DOLYNNY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In order for us to make sure we do not hit this wall of worry for our northern and Aboriginal broadcasters in the future, it's imperative that we put in place the right evaluation tools to prevent this mishap from occurring again.

Assuming we can get a new funding model in place, can the Minister indicate to the House by what measures he plans to evaluate progress after this renewed funding is made available?

**HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY:** Since we've been dealing with NCS the last few years now on the

reporting mechanism with the federal government, we've been talking about evaluating and reviewing of their proposals, as well, and the annual reports that are coming in. I completely agree, because we are a public government, and the way that the money is spent is essential to be a responsible government. This is an area that we're primarily focusing on.

My department also recently discussed the 2014-15 contributions with NCS, which included an enhanced review of the outcome. This was done with NCS agreement, so they've also supported our government, as well, and we support them in return. The annual reporting requirement, which I'm very pleased to advise the Members that NCS has provided on time and in accordance with the requirements.

In closing, I'd just like to give the Members a heads-up that I would like to restate that this government supports NCS and, indeed, our community broadcasters in terms of their contribution in promoting Aboriginal languages across the NWT and I would like to thank them for the excellent job that they do on a daily basis.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Lafferty. The Member for Inuvik Boot Lake, Mr. Moses.

QUESTION 359-17(5):  
UPDATE ON THE  
REGIONAL RECRUITMENT STRATEGY

**MR. MOSES:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In the short sitting time we have here – we only have two weeks and we can only do so many Members' statements and questions – one area that I wanted to focus on was human resources and some of the issues that have come up with human resources. I know I asked questions back in our winter session about the Regional Recruitment Strategy and how we were taking some of our employees and giving them 80 percent of their salary and 20 percent goes to training.

Can I ask the Minister of Human Resources what the progress is on that? Last I heard, there was one person that went through it when we were supposed to have numerous individuals in the program early in 2014. We're about halfway through the year. I just want to see how many people who have gone through the Regional Recruitment Strategy are new employees or employees with advancement in their jobs.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Moses. The Minister of Human Resources, Mr. Beaulieu.

**HON. TOM BEAULIEU:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The Regional Recruitment Strategy is one where a position would be identified by a department. Of all the vacant positions that may be in the region, the department would identify a position and then determine that that position would be one that can

be filled by an individual that does not have all of the skills necessary to do that function at this point but can be trained up.

We are having some difficulties finding the key positions in the department; however, we have found some. We managed to put one individual on, like the Member said. We have five more individuals where we're developing training plans and those ones are underway, so we're looking at that. We have four more applicants where the department is developing a job description type of thing, one in management, so we're looking for an individual with certainly some schooling and some skills that can be brought into a management level. We're actually looking at a nursing position, as well, with one of the health authorities, an officer position, and a clerical position as well.

**MR. MOSES:** That's definitely something that's good to hear about. It's a lot better update than the one we received during the winter session where there was just one individual in the program. Should an employee of the GNWT or somebody looking for a job would want to get into this type of program, how is the person able to access the department rather than the department recognizing these positions and just looking at filling them.

How can an individual approach the department, their manager or even the Department of Human Resources? What steps would an employee of the GNWT need to take to get advancement in their career under the Regional Recruitment Strategy?

**HON. TOM BEAULIEU:** A good point of contact for us has been the government service officer. The government service officers who have worked in the communities that they're responsible for put a list of individuals in the community that they feel that have achieved Grade 12, and from that list the government service officers have talked to the regional directors. It's a standing item with the regional directors at the regional management committee meetings and they're communicating that back to the Human Resources department. In Human Resources, we have a regional recruitment specialist, and that individual then works with the department. Once the position has been identified and potential candidates have been identified, then we work with the human resource specialist to draft job descriptions and then we move forward with the department on that. That would be the good point of contact. You can also just contact the human resources division through our employment website.

**MR. MOSES:** Thank you. I'd just like to ask the Minister, under this Regional Recruitment Strategy, he mentions that managers look at filling positions.

Have any of these positions resulted in direct appointments from the managers or from the department position that didn't go out for public

contest? Have any of these positions been direct appointments?

**HON. TOM BEAULIEU:** Mr. Speaker, the reason for the whole thing would be direct appointments; it's a direct appointment process. We go through the regular direct appointment process. The individual managers, unless they're dealing with a person that's affected, cannot direct appoint. Individuals affected through layoff would be the only way where an individual can go through the process back to the Minister as a Human Resources direct appointment. Otherwise, all direct appointments go through Cabinet. So there have been no direct appointments through the Regional Recruitment Program. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Beaulieu. Final, short supplementary, Mr. Moses.

**MR. MOSES:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Under the new program, I was hoping that we'd see more of these jobs being filled by people that aren't employed in the GNWT or ones that are already at GNWT and can advance to management positions. I understand that we're also reviewing our Public Service Act that reflects these direct appointments. The reason I'm getting into direct appointments is because I have had concerns of our P1 residents of the Northwest Territories not getting jobs and losing most of the jobs to people that have been living in the North not very long.

I just want to ask the Minister, what is he doing to address that issue where our P1s are being overlooked for jobs when we have a program here that's supposed to promote and enhance and train and develop our northern residents? Thank you.

**HON. TOM BEAULIEU:** Thank you. A representative public service is a priority of this government. We have asked, through my office I have talked to the deputy minister of Human Resources and advised the deputy minister of Human Resources that I wish to see all of the human resource plans from all of the departments, that she was to talk to all of the deputy ministers across the GNWT to look at the human resource plans and determine how the departments are going to raise the level of Priority 1 candidates in each of the departments. So we are doing that. We're examining that to determine how the numbers look now so we have some department-by-department, community-by-community statistics. From there we will look at where we see the key issues being or the key areas where there are issues and we'll be approaching those issues within the various departments across the GNWT.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Beaulieu. The Member for Deh Cho, Mr. Nadli.

QUESTION 360-17(5):  
HYDRO GRID EXPANSION  
INTO THE DEH CHO

**MR. NADLI:** Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. Earlier I made a statement on just some of the challenges that our people have in terms of meeting their challenges to heat their homes. My question is to the Minister of the Northwest Territories Power Corporation.

Could the Minister explain how the NWT Energy Action Plan could provide immediate relief for increasing fuel prices and our dependency on fossil fuels? Mahsi.

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

**HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The Member's statement today in the House captured some of the potential in terms of hooking in some of the communities in his riding, Providence, Kakisa, to the grid. It's just a question of where are the resources available to do that and we are working on that piece as well. Thank you.

**MR. NADLI:** The question that I have is the Energy Action Plan outlines the potential expansion of the southern goods from the South Slave region. I wanted to see and to know whether there has been any regard or consideration for the benefits that communities in and around that area could derive from the expansion of the grids, especially at the end of the day the consumers that have to contend with the high and increasing rate of fuel.

How would the communities benefit from such an expansion? Mahsi.

**HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER:** If there was one of the two options that the Member talked about in his statement, if one of those was put into effect, either the running of the grid north along the west side across the bridge up to Behchoko or running a low voltage line down as the Member suggested in his statement, both would have the benefit of taking two communities off of diesel-generated electricity and would bring the costs in line with Yellowknife and would drop the emissions. It would be a much better long-term solution for all and would get a big chunk of community needs off of fossil fuel.

**MR. NADLI:** In terms of the next steps for the Energy Action Plan that the government is contemplating and in development, what can we expect in terms of this series of steps that could come about within the year in terms of advancing the plan? Mahsi.

**HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER:** Thank you. The government will continue to invest, as we've laid out in our business plan, in relatively modest investments that we can afford in the different areas with renewables, with solar, with biomass, with energy efficiencies, rebate programs, those types of

things. We're also looking to successfully conclude our negotiations and discussion with the federal government on our increased borrowing limit that would give us the opportunity to sit down and talk about these economic investments, be it grid expansions in the North and South Slave, road expansion between Wrigley and Norman Wells, those type of things where we would be able to come to the table and talk to industry through a P3 type of process about how do we partner in those type of things.

So, in the short-term, it's going to be the business we already have committed, longer term it's going to be a successful conclusion to give us the tools to make those investments. Thank you.

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

QUESTION 361-17(5):  
FORMAT OF HEALTH CARE CARDS

**MR. HAWKINS:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The issue I want to ask questions on today is a continuation of my Member's statement. During my Member's statement I talked about the importance of a health care card that is secure. I've promoted the idea before and I've done a fair bit of research recently. I found it quite interesting that British Columbia actually has a photo I.D. health care card, but what's interesting about theirs in particular is they include their driver's licence on it as well. It simplifies one's life.

Ontario has been doing this since 2007 and they have many and critical pieces we don't have time to go through here today, but just highlight things such as magnetic strip, organ donor.

So, knowing that health care is so important, I'd like to ask the Minister of Health and Social Services, would he be interested in investigating this type of process as we proceed to our next renewal of health care cards, which is in about two to three years? Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Hawkins. Minister of Health, Mr. Abernethy.

**HON. GLEN ABERNETHY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to thank the Member for bringing this to our attention today and also for providing me with his research. I think it's a really good idea. I think we should do the research and I commit to having the department do research and analysis into the different types of cards that are out there like BC, and I think BC is certainly an interesting model where they've combined driver's licence and health care cards. There might be cost-saving opportunities there for us. So I commit today to having the department do that review and we'll be able to provide that information to the Members with a cost analysis on what potential costs could be...(inaudible)...in 2015. Thank you.

**MR. HAWKINS:** Thank you. That's an awful tough answer to come back to because that was pretty much everything I wanted. So the only other thing that I would ask is it's important, as I pointed out, that British Columbia links it to their driver's licence.

So, just to be very clear, did the Minister, and I saw him nodding his head, but I'll let him speak to this issue, that they work with the Department of Transportation to find out if this is something they could progress to merge towards a one-card system that makes sense?

The last thing, Mr. Speaker, is I've already got pretty much what I wanted, unless he takes it back, which wouldn't be the first time. Minister Roland did that to me. A lot of small communities, you can get your driver's licence done with a photo ID process. To me this could help blend it. That's the point I want to make sure, is that it's accessible throughout the territory. Thank you.

**HON. GLEN ABERNETHY:** I think these questions are timely given that we don't have a renewal again until 2016. So that gives a bit of time to do the analysis that the Member has asked for, including models like BC which may be reasonable. I will certainly work with the Minister of Transportation to see if there are any opportunities for us to expand and have a joint card. I won't take it back. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

QUESTION 362-17(5):  
JUNIOR KINDERGARTEN – FACT SHEETS

**MS. BISARO:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My questions today are addressed to the Minister of Education, Culture and Employment. I'd like to thank the Minister for tabling the fact sheet yesterday. There's a lot of information in there. I think there are a few opinions, as well, but I would like to ask him a few questions about some of the statements in those sheets.

On the page that says "What Will JK Cost," it goes on to say the total cost to offer junior kindergarten is projected to be \$7.4 million annually. The cost will be absorbed by education authorities. On another page, the School Funding Framework page, it says, "The school funding formulas used prior year September 30 student enrollments," and that's to determine board contributions. But on one of the latter pages it says, "The Yellowknife Catholic schools will receive additional dollars when they implement junior kindergarten in 2016-17 and is actually offering the program, so I'm a little confused, Mr. Speaker. There are a couple of other statements, as well, that are contradictory.

I'd like to ask the Minister will, for instance, the Yellowknife Catholic Schools receive funding for junior kindergarten students in 2016-17 when the

students first start, or will they receive that funding a year later when the September 30<sup>th</sup> enrollments are determined a year after the kids start?

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

**HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY:** Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. This projected information that I tabled in the house, the fact sheets, it lays out every detail of information that is the most accurate between ourselves and the school boards in Yellowknife. Part of the plan, obviously, is the funding that the Member alluded to for 2016-17 will be happening at that time because they will be rolling out their program. The money will be provided to them as is stated in the fact sheets. As well, I believe above and beyond the 16 to 1, we are also contributing additional funding towards that. Mahsi.

**MS. BISARO:** To the Minister, thank you. I thought I heard the Minister say the funding will flow when the program first starts. I would appreciate him reconfirming that in his next answer. If that's the case, that's great, that's what it should do, but I have been hearing from more than just the Yellowknife boards that they will not be getting any new dollars, and this is coming from their schools as well. They will not be getting any new dollars for junior kindergarten when it starts, for instance, in this next school year, September 2014-15.

So, Mr. Minister, why am I hearing from schools that there will be no new funding for them to implement junior kindergarten in 2014-15 when, according to the fact sheets, they are supposed to get that money when the program rolls out? Thank you.

**HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY:** Again, the fact package does cover that detailed information. In 2014-15 for YCS, \$277,000 will be deducted from YCS budget out of the \$7.4 million that we've been talking about re-profiling through PTR. In 2015-16 another \$467,000 is meant to be deducted from their budget. In 2016-17 another \$393,000 estimated to be deducted. So it's a total of \$1.137 million. This reduction will be offset with an increase of \$960,000 funding from ECE through formula funding to support implementation of JK, resulting in an overall reduction over three years of \$177,000. Mahsi, Mr. Speaker.

**MS. BISARO:** Thanks to the Minister for telling me the information I already know. That's not my question. My question was I'm hearing that schools will not be getting any new funding when they start junior kindergarten in 2014-15. Why is that, if it's supposed to be coming?

On another page titled, "How Will We Pay for Junior Kindergarten," the statement is, "All education authorities are being asked to implement junior kindergarten with existing funding." That seems to,

again, contradict that they will get funding when the program rolls out.

One of the things that are required is resources for new programs, so how much money will a school receive in resources to buy things like sand tables and water tables? How much will each school receive in resources for their Junior Kindergarten Program? Thank you.

**HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY:** I can provide that detailed information at an appropriate time. We must keep in mind that we're re-profiling the \$7.4 million that the Member alluded to earlier. We are still under the PTR as we have been legislated to. I believe, over a 10-year period, there has been an influx of funding that came in to increase the PTR due to the fact of a surplus of funds within the GNWT, which we don't have right now. Those are just some of the areas we've talked about. We've been working with the school boards to make that a reality and that's where we are at today. Mahsi.

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

**MS. BISARO:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I appreciate the Minister's commitment to give me the information on resources, but again, I am hearing that schools will not get funding in 2014-15 when they start the program and I didn't hear an answer from the Minister on that.

The Minister talks about the pupil-teacher ratio and, yes, we are still under the 16 to 1 pupil-teacher ratio in most cases.

I would like to know from the Minister: What is our current pupil-teacher ratio and once we have implemented junior kindergarten and after all three years, what will our PTR become following the budget cuts and the reallocation of funding? Thank you.

**HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY:** We are re-profiling; we aren't cutting the budget. So the \$7.4 million, as indicated, it is being rolled out to all the school boards to implement junior kindergarten. Those are the areas we have been working with the school boards and we will continue to make that a success. The junior kindergarten has been under discussion through the Aboriginal Student Achievement Initiative, Early Childhood Development. This is where we're at today. We've done a lot of research, and research is telling us this is the best way to go. The 16 to 1, at this point we are at 13.8 to 1. When we start implementing the junior kindergarten, we will still be...(inaudible). Mahsi.

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

QUESTION 363-17(5):  
CANOL HERITAGE TRAIL

**MR. YAKELEYA:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is to the Minister of ITI. In my Member's statement I made a brief comment on the Canol Heritage Trail. The Canol Trail follows the traditional Shotagotine Dene trails through the Mackenzie Mountains and was used over thousands of years by the Sahtu Dene and Metis. Over the last eight years, 87 hikers have had a very intimate experience with the Canol Trail. Over the eight years these hikers have experienced the value of these traditional trails.

In order to help tourism and other people who are going to take part in hiking on the Canol Trail and hiking by themselves, is there any type of discussion about a handbook that will guide them through the trail, knowing which areas they should be careful in, what areas, as they are passing through, are very sacred and spiritual to the Sahtu people?

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Yakeleya. The honourable Minister of Industry, Tourism and Investment, Mr. Ramsay.

**HON. DAVID RAMSAY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The Canol Trail remains within the authority of the federal government. It does have a number of sites along the trail that would, or could, cause issues for health and safety of persons travelling on that trail. That's not to say we're not continuing to move forward with discussions with the federal government on how we are going to make improvements. We have some capital dollars earmarked for improvements in the park, including cable crossing at Twitya River next year.

The Member has a very valid point about the guidebook for hikers on the Canol. It hasn't been updated in a number of years and it's something that for people who are interested in hiking the Canol Trail, we should have an up-to-date guidebook for those persons that are going on that trail. Thank you.

**MR. YAKELEYA:** Mr. Speaker, certainly the Minister has been very clear to use in the House that it's still the authority of the federal government until other issues are resolved with the Sahtu Land Claim corporations and the territorial government. Once the authority comes to the territorial government, this park will be the largest territorial park in the Northwest Territories, and I continue to support the discussions. The territorial government can then work with the Sahtu Land Claim organizations on the operations, development and management of the Canol Heritage Park and Canol Heritage Trail.

I want to ask the Minister, given the importance of this trail here, what is being done in the interim to

improve some of the key areas that will need infrastructure support?

He did talk about Twitya River, and we would certainly like to see a bridge crossing the river there.

**HON. DAVID RAMSAY:** Mr. Speaker, the Member is correct; we are looking at putting a cable crossing across the Twitya River. The good news is the remediation work will start next summer. The federal government has made a commitment to look at the remediation beginning next summer. That's a period of approximately five years that they feel that they need to spend remediating the area. There are a number of waste sites, four in particular that were classified as Class 1 waste sites that would be targeted immediately for cleanup and remediation.

The beauty of that Canol Trail would certainly rival anything that Banff National Park has in Alberta, and it's certainly a real jewel that we have here in the Northwest Territories. We have a very bright future ahead with the development of that park and we're very optimistic about that park, that's why we are... Even though we're working with the federal government on the remediation and waiting for them to get started, we are continuing to move forward with plans, working with leadership in the Sahtu on how to put emergency shelters and a cable crossing in. So we are moving forward with some initiatives and we will continue to do that. As I said, it could be a real jewel for us going forward in our tourism efforts. Thank you.

**MR. YAKELEYA:** Mr. Speaker, I certainly agree 110 percent with Minister Ramsay's observation on the Canol Heritage Trail and Doi T'oh Park.

Given that we now have 87 hikers that hike on the Canol Trail, some of the hikers have hiked over 300 to 400 miles on that trail and they've been coming consistently. The average hiker walks about 25 miles and it's said they become very intimate with the trail.

I want to ask the Minister, through his discussions, through what's happening now with the Canol and the future infrastructure projects, is the Minister willing to look at setting up a management-type of community that we could look at projects that are going to happen on the Sahtu trail? We certainly want to make sure that our hikers are well informed.

I now understand that the Minister of Health and Social Services is going to be joining us on the hike this summer.

**HON. DAVID RAMSAY:** Mr. Speaker, the Member has a lifetime of experience in that area and I know the last eight years he's spent on the leadership hike with...(inaudible)... The Member and I have had a number of discussions of how best the department and the government can use the information that people who have actually been out,

walked the trail, hiked the trail and have lived that experience can provide to the government in terms of what infrastructure is needed and where it's needed. We talked earlier about the update guidebook for hikers. These are things that are tangible and things that... We need to look to the experts and people that have spent a lot of time out there who are certainly more knowledgeable in how best to put infrastructure in place in that park.

Again, I know our regional staff have met with folks in the past, and we will continue to work with the Member and people who have spent a lot of time out on that trail, so that we can get an update guidebook, so that we can get infrastructure put in place where it needs to be put. Thank you.

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

**MR. YAKELEYA:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I want to ask the Minister, given all that we know about the Canol Heritage Trail, the federal government is working with the work committee, the land corporation authority under our land claim, specifically Chapter 17, Protected Areas. That's where we speak to some co-management decision-making development of the park and the territorial government's mandate under the territorial parks with ITI.

Given all of this, I want to ask the Minister, can a type of co-management committee be started up and look at what needs to be happening to get this park in its proper place and get ready for the development of this heritage trail?

I look forward to the hikers this year. On July 2<sup>nd</sup> we will be hiking 25 miles, and I certainly look forward to Mr. Abernethy's participation. I understand he's getting in great shape.

**HON. DAVID RAMSAY:** Again, I thank the Member for raising the concerns today. It is important to note, as I mentioned earlier, that the federal government is looking at a five-year time frame for the remediation. They're also looking at an additional five years for monitoring, after the end of that initial five-year remediation period. But we have to continue to move forward and seek the means to have that land transferred to the Government of the Northwest Territories. Once we do that, the Member is right; I mean, it has to be co-managed. That's certainly a recipe for success that the Government of the Northwest Territories has acted on in the past and certainly something that we're looking forward to achieving in the future. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Ramsay. Time for oral questions has expired.

Colleagues, I would like to welcome to the House today Mr. and Mrs. Nick and Betty Ball from Deer Lake, Newfoundland. Those are the parents of our Clerk, Mr. Ball. Welcome to the House.

Item 8, written questions. Mr. Bromley.

### Written Questions

#### WRITTEN QUESTION 18-17(5): RESOURCES SPENT ON WILDLIFE ACT CONSULTATIONS

**MR. BROMLEY:** Thanks, Mr. Speaker. My questions are for the Minister of Environment and Natural Resources (ENR).

1. In March 2011, ENR was able to provide an update on funds spent on Wildlife Act consultations for the 2009-2011 fiscal years – response to Written Question 24-16(5). Please provide a similar update for what has been spent so far on consultations since the Wildlife Act was passed. As in the previous request, please indicate how much has been spent on the working group, on SWAAG and any other funds spent on developing regulations and implementing the act.
2. In addition to a financial breakdown, please provide an estimate of staff time spent working and consulting with the various groups involved in developing regulations to implement the Wildlife Act.

Mahsi.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Bromley. Item 9, returns to written questions. Item 10, replies to opening address. Item 11, petitions. Item 12, reports of standing and special committees. Mr. Bromley.

### Reports of Standing and Special Committees

#### COMMITTEE REPORT 8-17(5): REPORT ON THE REVIEW OF THE AUXILIARY REPORT OF THE CHIEF ELECTORAL OFFICER ON ISSUES ARISING FROM THE 2011 GENERAL ELECTION

**MR. BROMLEY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Your Standing Committee on Rules and Procedures is pleased to provide its Report on the Review of the Auxiliary Report of the Chief Electoral Officer on Issues Arising from the 2011 General Election and commends it to the House.

#### Introduction

The Auxiliary Report of the Chief Electoral Officer of the Northwest Territories on Issues Arising from the 2011 General Election was tabled in the Legislative Assembly on October 23, 2013. It is the Standing Committee on Rules and Procedures' responsibility to review the report and make recommendations to the Legislative Assembly.



The committee held public hearings with the Chief Electoral Officer (CEO) in Yellowknife on February 27 and May 27, 2014. At the latter meeting, one witness, in addition to the CEO, made presentations to the committee and provided a written submission. The committee thanks everyone who provided their comments and attended the hearings.

### **Review of the Chief Electoral Officer's Recommendations and Public Concerns**

The CEO's Auxiliary Report includes a number of recommendations for amendments to the Elections and Plebiscites Act (the act) and other changes to improve electoral processes. The research and reasoning supporting these recommendations are described thoroughly in the CEO's auxiliary report. The committee considered this information, public input and the views of fellow Members in reaching consensus on the recommendations included in the following summary.

#### **Voter Identification Requirements**

The purpose of voter identification requirements is to ensure that only eligible electors cast ballots to protect the rights of voters and candidates to fair elections. The CEO was asked to provide additional research on identification requirements following his initial report on the 2011 election. The evidence shows that the electoral process in the NWT is sound and trustworthy.

Allegations of ineligible electors casting ballots are very rare in the NWT. In the past 15 years, spanning four general elections and one by-election, there have been just two complaints and no evidence of unqualified electors actually voting. This suggests that stricter voting requirements would be a preventative measure, not a solution to a burning problem.

The committee shares concerns it heard that stringent federal identification requirements discourage qualified voters from casting their ballots. There is great disparity in the number of people with government-issued photo identification, depending on where they live. Eighty percent of Yellowknife residents have a driver's licence or general identification card compared to 76 percent of residents of regional centres and only 44 percent of residents of the remaining 27 communities.

The smaller communities also have higher proportions of Aboriginal electors, meaning they would currently be disproportionately impacted by this type of identification requirement. This could be mitigated by a better system of issuing identification in our smaller communities and by implementing a robust vouching system that ensures both the rights of eligible voters and the integrity of the electoral system.

The committee endorses the following principles for voting requirement rules outlined by the CEO:

- Consistency: Rules should be the same regardless of place of residence;
- Integrity: Confidence in a free and fair electoral system is paramount;
- Participation: It is better to punish an unqualified elector who votes than to exclude qualified electors from voting; and
- Trust: The overwhelming majority of electors participate in good faith.

The committee also accepts the CEO's recommendations with respect to voter identification requirements.

#### **Recommendation 1**

The Standing Committee on Rules and Procedures recommends that the act be amended to increase the number of times an elector may vouch for another elector from one to five.

#### **Recommendation 2**

The Standing Committee on Rules and Procedures recommends that the act be amended to prohibit candidates from vouching for another elector.

#### **Recommendation 3**

The Standing Committee on Rules and Procedures recommends that Elections NWT and the GNWT work together to expand the coverage of government-issued photo identification among residents of the Northwest Territories.

#### **Polling Day**

Polling day is currently the first Monday of October. In his first report on the 2011 election, the CEO suggested that having polling day on a Monday presents challenges for election administration and candidates and may impede voter turnout. The CEO recommended that polling day be changed to a Saturday or a day later in the week than Monday or be declared a holiday. The standing committee requested additional research.

However, there is very little research on the relationship between polling day and voter turnout and what does exist is inconclusive. No province or territory holds general elections on weekends, although municipalities do in three provinces.

In the absence of research supporting the argument that voter turnout is lower on Mondays, the standing committee does not support a change to the polling day at this time.

#### **Prohibition on Broadcasting**

The CEO was asked to identify options for clarifying the rules with respect to broadcasting. For example, current legislation bans a candidate from polling day promotion of his or her campaign on radio, but allows a newspaper ad to be published that day.

The committee believes that some limit on last-minute campaign advertising is reasonable and helps ensure the fairness of our elections. However, any limit should not be discriminatory, favouring one method of advertising over another, and potentially one campaign strategy over another. Moreover, the definition of election advertising must be clear, practical and easily applied, particularly in light of rapid changes in communication technology.

To these ends, the committee makes the following recommendations:

#### **Recommendation 4**

The Standing Committee on Rules and Procedures recommends that Sections 104 and 299 of the act be amended to prohibit election advertising on polling day and the day prior.

#### **Recommendation 5**

The Standing Committee on Rules and Procedures recommends that the definition of election advertising in Section 237 of the act be clarified, as proposed by the CEO on page 13 of his auxiliary report.

#### **Recommendation 6**

The Standing Committee on Rules and Procedures recommends that, for greater clarity and certainty, the term "campaign material" be replaced by "election advertising" throughout the act.

Mr. Speaker, through you, I would ask that my colleague Mr. Hawkins continue with the reading of the report into the record.

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

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

#### **New Special Voting Opportunities**

In the 2011 election, residents of 11 communities had only one opportunity to vote: on polling day itself. Residents of these communities are to be commended for the generally strong voter turnouts. However, all residents of the Northwest Territories should have comparable voting opportunity.

The committee requested that the CEO develop detailed recommendations for a new special voting opportunity to replace the provisions for advance polls in communities without a resident returning officer and populations of less than 500. The committee is convinced that provisions for all polls in these small communities can be replaced by a new voting opportunity that will allow electors in all communities, regardless of size, to vote before polling day if need be.

#### **Recommendation 7**

The Standing Committee on Rules and Procedures recommends that Sections 152 to 162 of the act be repealed as well as all other references to an advance poll, and that the CEO provide the Assembly with detailed recommendations to establish a new special voting opportunity for communities without a resident returning officer, similar to voting in the office of the returning officer.

#### **Campaign Finance Provisions**

The CEO's additional research on campaign financing in other jurisdictions was very informative despite the role of political parties in many instances. For example, partial reimbursement of candidates' campaign expenses is done in all Canadian jurisdictions except Alberta, British Columbia and the three territories. Adopting such a system of public financing was proposed by Yellowknife resident David Wasylciw, who made both oral and written presentations to the committee. He pointed out that the cost to taxpayers would be quite modest.

While subsidizing the cost of running a campaign might lower a barrier for some candidates, reimbursing candidates' expenses is not a simple matter in our system. Running as independents, candidates for our Legislature typically raise funds in their constituencies and must account for those funds as required by the act. Many candidates also contribute to their own campaigns in varying degrees. This raises the issue of how a reimbursement to a candidate would be administered and monitored.

Absent evidence to the contrary, committee members are not persuaded that the cost of campaigning is a significant barrier to potential candidates in the NWT as it may be in more populous jurisdictions. In addition, reimbursements would unnecessarily increase the complexity of administering elections, which affects both candidates and Elections NWT.

The system of campaign financing in the NWT is currently fair, transparent and independently regulated, as it should be. This does not mean there is no room for improvement. For example, to ensure full transparency and accountability, anonymous donations to candidates' campaigns are not allowed in half of the Canadian electoral jurisdictions. Some that do allow anonymous contributions limit the total amount a candidate can collect. The committee agrees with this approach and suggests that a limit of \$1,500 be imposed per candidate. This is equivalent to the maximum allowed by a single contributor.

#### **Recommendation 8**

The Standing Committee on Rules and Procedures recommends that the campaign

financing provisions of the act be drafted in plain language, with a view to improving their logical consistency.

#### **Recommendation 9**

The Standing Committee on Rules and Procedures recommends that the current limit of \$100 remain for each anonymous donation, but that each candidate be limited to a total of \$1,500 in anonymous contributions to his or her campaign.

#### **Recommendation 10**

The Standing Committee on Rules and Procedures recommends that the types of expenditures that may be incurred by a candidate, rather than the official agent, be expanded to allow minor, practical expenditures.

#### **Recommendation 11**

The Standing Committee on Rules and Procedures recommends that the act be amended to require candidates to include statements from accredited financial institutions for campaign accounts in their financial reports to Elections NWT.

#### **Recommendation 12**

The Standing Committee on Rules and Procedures directs the Chief Electoral Officer to provide additional research on the regulation of third-party election advertising for future consideration.

#### **Additional Enforcement Powers**

In the event of an investigation of an alleged breach of election law, the CEO currently lacks the power to summon persons to appear, produce documents and give evidence. This can be a serious impediment to thorough investigation.

In the past, the committee has several times called for more active or enhanced enforcement of the Elections and Plebiscites Act.

To address this, the CEO recommended amending the act to grant the CEO the same enforcement powers as a board of inquiry under the Public Inquiries Act, or by conferring appropriate specific powers. These powers are similar to those available to CEOs elsewhere in Canada, including the Yukon and Nunavut, and have already been granted in the NWT to the administrators of the Human Rights Act, Residential Tenancies Act and Electoral Boundaries Commission Act. The committee agrees that thorough investigation of complaints is essential.

#### **Recommendation 13**

The Standing Committee on Rules and Procedures recommends that the act be amended to strengthen the enforcement powers of the CEO, by conferring the specific power to

summon persons to appear, produce documents and give evidence under oath.

Mr. Speaker, this brings me to the end of reading of the report and MLA Bromley will read out the conclusion. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Hawkins. To conclude the report, I'd allow Mr. Bromley

**MR. BROMLEY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and thank you, Mr. Hawkins.

#### **Conclusion**

Members of the Standing Committee on Rules and Procedures believe that taken together, the recommendations stemming from this review will help clarify, modernize and strengthen the NWT's electoral system. It is a strong system, founded on fairness, transparency and accountability. We thank the Chief Electoral Officer for his diligence, and all those who provided public input or attended the committee's hearings.

#### **MOTION TO RECEIVE COMMITTEE REPORT 8-17(5) AND MOVE INTO COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE, CARRIED**

That concludes the presentation of our report. Now therefore I move, seconded by the honourable Member for Great Slave, that Committee Report 8-17(5), Report on the Review of the Auxiliary Report of the Chief Electoral Officer on Issues Arising from the 2011 General Election, be received by the Assembly and moved into Committee of the Whole for further consideration. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Bromley. Motion is in order. To the motion.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Question.

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

---Carried

Committee Report 8-17(5) is received by the Assembly and moved into Committee of the Whole for further consideration. Mr. Bromley.

**MR. BROMLEY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I seek unanimous consent to waive Rule 93(4) and move Committee Report 8-17(5) into Committee of the Whole for consideration today. Mahsi.

---Unanimous consent granted

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Bromley. Item 13, reports of committees on the review of bills. Item 14, tabling of documents. Mr. Beaulieu.

### Tabling of Documents

TABLED DOCUMENT 101-17(5):  
RESULTS REPORT (2013-14),  
20/20 A BRILLIANT NORTH,  
NWT PUBLIC SERVICE STRATEGIC PLAN

**HON. TOM BEAULIEU:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I wish to table the following document, entitled "Results Report (2013-14), 20/20 A Brilliant North, NWT Public Service Strategic Plan." Thank you.

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

TABLED DOCUMENT 102-17(5):  
INTER-ACTIVITY TRANSFERS EXCEEDING  
\$250,000 FOR THE PERIOD APRIL 1, 2013,  
TO MARCH 31, 2014

**HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER:** Mr. Speaker, pursuant to Section 32.1(2) of the Financial Administration Act, I wish to table the following document, entitled "List of Inter-activity Transfers Exceeding \$250,000 for the period of April 1, 2013, to March 31, 2014." Thank you.

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

TABLED DOCUMENT 103-17(5):  
ESTABLISHING AN OFFICE OF THE  
OMBUDSMAN FOR THE  
NORTHWEST TERRITORIES

**MR. NADLI:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In response to Motion 12-17(4) of the Legislative Assembly, the Standing Committee on Government Operations wishes to table a document, entitled "Establishing an Office of the Ombudsman for the Northwest Territories."

The Standing Committee welcomes public comment over the summer and anticipates further discussions during the fall sitting of the Assembly. Mahsi.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Nadli. Mr. Hawkins.

TABLED DOCUMENT 104-17(5):  
SAMPLE PHOTO HEALTH CARE CARDS

**MR. HAWKINS:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In my Member's statement I referred to health care cards that are from Ontario as well as British Columbia. I have two samples. I have one sample here from Ontario – it's a two-page document in colour – and I have a second sample here on a document from British Columbia. All people will be able to note the details that I discussed here and certainly the aspects the Minister of Health has agreed to investigate.

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

TABLED DOCUMENT 105-17(5):  
ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS OF SHALE GAS  
EXTRACTION IN CANADA –  
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY,  
COUNCIL OF CANADIAN ACADEMIES

**MR. BROMLEY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to table the Council of Canadian Academies Executive Summary of the report "Environmental Impacts of Shale Gas Extraction in Canada" issued last month. Mahsi.

TABLED DOCUMENT 106-17(5):  
ANNUAL REPORT OF THE OFFICE OF THE  
NORTHWEST TERRITORIES LANGUAGES  
COMMISSIONER FOR 2011-2012

TABLED DOCUMENT 107-17(5):  
ANNUAL REPORT OF THE OFFICE OF THE  
NORTHWEST TERRITORIES LANGUAGES  
COMMISSIONER FOR 2012-2013

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Bromley. Colleagues, pursuant to Section 23 of the Official Languages Act, I wish to table the Annual Report of the Office of the Northwest Territories Languages Commissioner for 2011-2012 and 2012-2013.

Item 15, notices of motion. Item 16, notices of motion for first reading of bills. Mr. Abernethy.

### Notices of Motion for First Reading of Bills

BILL 32:  
AN ACT TO AMEND THE  
PHARMACY ACT

**HON. GLEN ABERNETHY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I give notice that on Friday, June 6, 2014, I'll move that Bill 32, An Act to Amend the Pharmacy Act, be read for the first time. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Abernethy. Item 17, motions. Mr. Bromley.

### Motions

MOTION 21-17(5):  
PUBLIC REVIEW OF  
HORIZONTAL HYDRAULIC FRACTURING,  
DEFEATED

**MR. BROMLEY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I do have a motion on the public review of horizontal hydraulic fracturing.

WHEREAS on May 8, 2014, the NWT Elders Parliament unanimously supported a motion calling for a moratorium on fracking (horizontal hydraulic fracturing) in the NWT;

AND WHEREAS on March 12, 2014, a petition signed by 790 people from at least 24 NWT

communities insisting that the GNWT exercise its authority under the MVRMA to refer future fracking applications to a full environmental assessment that includes public hearings was presented in this House;

AND WHEREAS the GNWT response to that petition does not provide for any substantive public review to address the concerns expressed by members of the public;

AND WHEREAS the GNWT response to the recent horizontal hydraulic fracturing application from Husky failed to acknowledge that the public is concerned about fracking and, therefore, should be referred for an environmental assessment;

AND WHEREAS the Council of Canadian Academies released a report in April 2014, titled "Environmental Impacts of Shale Gas Extraction in Canada" that recommends a cautious approach to horizontal hydraulic fracturing and says more research and information is needed on its environmental impacts;

AND WHEREAS many jurisdictions, including the Canadian jurisdictions of Newfoundland and Labrador, Nova Scotia and Quebec, have imposed moratoria on hydraulic fracturing until further research and review;

AND WHEREAS the impacts of hydraulic fracturing are wide-ranging and not well understood, especially in the North;

AND WHEREAS many people in the NWT are concerned about serious, lasting impacts on our people, land, water, air, climate, fish and wildlife;

AND WHEREAS the issue of horizontal hydraulic fracturing with its related exploitation activities can overwhelm and divide communities;

AND WHEREAS community members of all ages need to be fully informed, consulted and involved in discussions around hydraulic fracturing and the risks and benefits in their regions;

AND WHEREAS the federal government allows fracking in Canada without enough understanding of the environmental impacts and the Northwest Territories has allowed the first projects to go ahead with minimum environmental assessment;

AND WHEREAS more applications for hydraulic fracturing are before the Sahtu Land and Water Board right now;

AND WHEREAS both the oil companies involved have announced that there will be a pause in their fracking operations and they will not frack any more wells for the next two to three years;

AND WHEREAS the Northwest Territories has the authority to regulate hydraulic fracturing within our territory;

AND WHEREAS the Northwest Territories needs more baseline information and better monitoring

plans that involve elders, the community and traditional knowledge;

AND WHEREAS a fracking operation in one region of the NWT will have impacts on every other region of the NWT;

AND WHEREAS we need to act in the best interest of our youth and future of the Northwest Territories;

AND WHEREAS Section 144 of the Mackenzie Valley Resource Management Act provides for the establishment of a committee to study the effects of existing or future physical activities carried out in a region of the Mackenzie Valley;

NOW THEREFORE I MOVE, seconded by the honourable Member for Deh Cho, that, in recognition of the clear public concern about fracking, the Government of the Northwest Territories immediately refrains from supporting any hydraulic fracturing proposals until a full and public assessment has been completed that demonstrates that the impacts of fracking and related development on the North are better understood, and demonstrates that it can manage this technology in a way that ensures the integrity of our environment and communities;

AND FURTHER, that the Government of the Northwest Territories report back with the results of this public assessment within 12 months.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Bromley. Motion is in order. To the motion. Mr. Bromley.

**MR. BROMLEY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Just this morning our Minister of ITI was interviewed on the radio, stating that fracking is absolutely a safe practice, in spite of only being on the job of regulating our oil and gas industry for a couple of months, and in spite of a report commissioned by Environment Canada stating that we as a country do not know enough about fracking to determine if it is safe. He then said that his department needed some time to consult the public and develop new regulations.

First of all, this Minister is the regulator. As a regulator, it is his role to weigh the evidence presented and then make a decision. It is not his role to publicly speak about what is safe and what is not safe before he has seen the evidence. He is obviously not experienced in his new role, and a pause in the fracking application would give him time to get used to the idea that he is now speaking as a regulator and not a cheerleader.

Second, the Minister has stated that his department needs time to consult with the public as it develops new fracking regulations. This is exactly what this motion is asking for: time to properly consult the public, starting with the big questions and then getting to the details.

A thorough public review and environmental assessment are overdue and it shouldn't have

come down to this. Unlike just about every jurisdiction I know, we are pushing forward without any attempt to seek a social licence through a comprehensive consultation of this controversial technology from our residents. All across Canada and around the world, governments are calling moratoriums positive, while they take more time to review the evidence and consult with the public. The cost of a thorough and public review and assessment is modest, especially when compared to the risks, but necessary for sound planning that puts a firm hand on the directions, face and scale of exploitation with backing from all residents, not just a few business owners that stand to benefit the most.

The ConocoPhillips project went ahead partly with the understanding it would be closely monitored and reported upon, but where are the evaluation reports we were led to expect? We all heard about the many close calls, the jackknifed trucks that produced water, the onsite accidents, the water and sewage spills. We know there is massive flaring of gas happening, but there is no inclination of what kind of gas, efficiency of flaring, how much greenhouse gas emissions and what type is occurring. How do we know that the wells are not leaking? What will be the long-term integrity of the wells? Were the lakes drained, and so on? People have many questions.

Currently, Husky has pulled out for the next two years and ConocoPhillips is applying for 10 fracked wells to be conducted in two or three years, so there is a timely lull in fracking activity for a year or two. This provides an opportunity for serious and comprehensive public review and environmental assessment. To be clear, we are not talking about a review of regulations. The issues to be dealt with first are bigger than this. People wish to learn more and have their questions clearly stated and answered and views considered before going ahead with fracking. We need to listen to the people.

We are currently dealing with a fourth application to conduct horizontal hydraulic fracturing in the NWT. The first has been referred to an environmental review before they went through the application. What changed? As far as I can see, the public has only become more concerned about fracking activities. Section 125 of the MVRMA, Mackenzie Valley Resource Management Act, states that an environmental assessment will be called for if there might – and I underscore “might” – be cause for public concern. I’d say there’s no question here.

Recently, a number of relevant events have brought forward new perspectives: a petition tabled here in March, a national report on the impacts of fracking in Canada in April, the Elders Parliament motion in May and, finally, the Yukon has established a select

committee to look at the costs and benefits of fracking in the Yukon. I will briefly review these.

A petition in the House in March, signed by 790 people from 24 communities, including every Sahtu community, expressed serious public concern about fracking and called for an environmental review.

In April a national report was published by the Council of Canadian Academies, urging caution and more study before wholesale commitment to fracking and outlined serious risks it entails. Entitled “Environmental Impacts of Shale Gas Extraction in Canada,” the author stated, “The North American energy landscape is undergoing dramatic change. Unconventional oil and gas resources are fuelling an energy boom that is having profound economic, environmental and social impacts across much of the continent, including Canada.” And further, it said this report comes at the request of Environment Canada, which asked the council to assemble a multidisciplinary expert panel to consider the state of knowledge of potential environmental impacts from the exploration and extraction and development of Canada’s shale gas resources.

The report reviews the use of new and conventional technologies in shale gas extraction and examines several issues of concern, including potential impacts on surface water and groundwater, greenhouse gas emissions, cumulative land disturbance and human health. The report also outlines approaches for monitoring research as well as mitigation and management strategies.

“Overall, the panel found that well-targeted science is required to ensure a better understanding of the environmental impacts of shale gas development. Currently, data about environmental impacts are neither sufficient nor conclusive.”

The panel’s assessment focused on a number of environmental impacts. They include oil integrity, water, groundwater and surface, greenhouse gas emissions, land impacts and seismic events, human health, monitoring and research. In the executive summary they note: “...the rapid expansion of shale gas development in Canada over the past decade has occurred without a corresponding investment in monitoring and research addressing the impacts on the environment, on public health and communities. The primary concerns are the degradation of the quality of groundwater and surface water, including the safe disposal of large volumes of wastewater; the risks of increased greenhouse gas emissions, including fugitive methane emissions during and after production, thus exacerbating anthropogenic climate change; disruptive effects on communities and land and adverse effects on human health. Often, concerns include the local release of air contaminants and the potential for triggering small

to moderate-sized earthquakes in seismically active areas.

“Two issues of particular concern to panel members are water resources, especially groundwater, and greenhouse gas emissions. Both relate to well integrity.”

The authors note that there are many uncertainties, a lack of knowledge, an unavailability of knowledge – that’s knowledge that resists but will not be released – few baselines and insufficient monitoring.

In May, during the Elders Parliament right here in the House, a motion called for a moratorium on fracking and this was passed unanimously. Jean-Pierre Isore put forward a fracking motion and said, “We are balancing economic decisions with the life and health of our citizens and that is inadmissible. There is no such thing as an acceptable risk when it comes to the health and life of our citizens. There is no compromise with the life of the earth, of our children and our grandchildren.” The motion before us today has drawn, to some degree, upon the motion passed by the elders in this House.

In May 2013 the Yukon Legislative Assembly established a select committee regarding the risks and benefits of hydraulic fracturing. It was established just over a year ago. This is a comprehensive, all-party review of fracking that is developing a science-based understanding of hydraulic fracturing, which also provides for public participation. The select committee has been visiting sites of its own choosing and had experts in many areas of the field testify in a public hearing in Whitehorse, including witnesses from CAPP, industry, Pembina Institute, hydrogeologist, the B.C. Oil and Gas Commission, Mark Jaccard on the economics of fracking in the Yukon, the chief medical officer of New Brunswick, and the regional medical health officer from northeast BC, and it made a point of visiting citizen coalitions in places like Alberta where grassroots people have many years of experience and huge concerns about impacts of fracking.

The select committee note that Yukon First Nations have concluded that impacts of fracking far outweigh the benefits and, thus, have banned fracking on their lands. The select committee has heard many of the same concerns highlighted by our Elders Parliament, by the Canadian Council of Academies in their report and from expert witnesses in public hearings, and they just completed a second round of hearings with expert witnesses last week and they are now on the road visiting communities in the Yukon.

Not surprisingly, our citizens in the NWT, community groups, elders and so on are bringing up similar points, but so far this government has not exerted its authority to refer fracking applications to environmental assessment. This is upsetting,

especially so given the legislation that clearly states an environmental assessment will be conducted if there – and again I underscore – “might” be public concern.

Fracking is seen by many as gambling and, even worse, as government’s gambling on the health costs of their citizens and the land. People are asking, is this what we voted you in for? Is this what I get for putting my trust in government? The risks are great and it will only grow if we move forward without comprehensive and public environmental review from two wells to 10 wells to 100, and then thousands of wells with all its such development entails in costs to people, their communities, cultures, land, air and wildlife.

People want a meaningful opportunity to discuss and learn about fracking and the associated activities of exploitation and then to provide input towards our future direction. They have opinions, thoughts and insights, and values they want to present and have considered. To date, the only response from government is that they have confidence in themselves; that is the government has confidence in themselves and their ability to manage the situation. Government has remained mute on their responsibility to hear the public and to support a thorough review of what fracking means and whether our people feel the impacts outweigh the benefits.

Maude Barlow of the Council of Canadians is also concerned, calling fracking in the Sahtu the next Giant Mine. The Council of Canadians opposes fracking because of its high water use, its high carbon emissions, its impacts on human health, the disruption it causes to wildlife, and the danger it poses to groundwater and local drinking water.

Many residents have pointed out the fracking in the Sahtu could have horrible consequences for the Mackenzie watershed and for the communities through which trucks carrying contaminated water and toxic, potentially explosive hydrocarbon products will pass. They are also concerned that taxpayers and GNWT budgets will be heavily drawn upon for infrastructure, its costly maintenance and it’s even more costly replacement, worsened by the knowledge that these expenditures are taking away from other much needed infrastructure that could support truly beneficial development. These are concerns that provide insights into the territory-wide impact that fracking in one region can have. In this case, it’s not just a Sahtu issue. It affects everyone around the Sahtu.

In contrast to the government, the people of the NWT may see different paths for economic development. Choices that they are comfortable will provide for the values they have without impacting other people’s health or land or water or cultures. They want to bring these ideas forward into the light

for weighing against the government's unilateral decisions on how to move forward.

I don't think anybody questions that there might be public concern about fracking. There is public concern about fracking in Tulita, Norman Wells, the Sahtu, throughout the NWT, across Canada and around the world. The question is: Will this government listen to its people and follow the law that is in place requiring an environmental assessment when there might be public concern as per Section 125 of the MVRMA, or better still, calling for a regional review as per Section 144 of the MVRMA? This wise law was put in place by the people through land claims settlement legislation. Let's listen to our elders and our residents and heed it.

To wrap things up, I call upon the words of elder Jean-Pierre Isore of the Elders Parliament: "Not one single independent study supports fracking." This is based on an all-night study of several hundred studies and summaries of fracking research.

Further quoting: "The technical analysis shows that whatever you do today in terms of fracking is risky. In the military life, we learned to take risks, calculated risks. There must be a direct proportion between the risks you take and the result you get, and we don't get that. We take all of the risks and we get no result, so at one point we have to turn to our government and say, will you listen? Of course, they will come back and say, you don't know what you are talking about. Well, we happen to be in an area of the country where the term "elders" means something. Around this table I calculate that we have 1,200 years of wisdom. That beats the government, doesn't it? And we say, no way. No way. Get back to the drawing board. We're not crazy. We want prosperity but not at any cost."

Mahsi, and I will be calling for a recorded vote.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Bromley. I'll allow the seconder to the motion, Mr. Nadli, to speak to the motion. Mr. Nadli.

**MR. NADLI:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I want to thank the Member for Weledeh, Mr. Bob Bromley, for moving this motion forward. I stand in support of this motion. What the motion asks for is refrain from supporting fracking until a full and public assessment, and if fracking could actually happen within the public scope of the existing regulatory system and public opinion.

It's timely that the ITI Minister has committed his department to develop regulations on fracking. I would like to encourage him with his leadership to really think about how this would be done. It could be done within the regulatory framework or it could be done within a committee, a committee comprised of both Cabinet and Regular MLAs, with

a collaborative effort in setting the terms of reference similar to what's happening in the Yukon.

Devolution has given the GNWT more powers and we need to practice those powers with a level of responsibility. The stage is set, the GNWT has the power and responsibility, the structure and system are in place, and now is the time for a real need to check with the public and do it right.

Like many constituents and Northerners, I want to understand what fracking is. Fracking, of course, is a practice of the oil and gas industry and it's been around for a long time.

There is always a need to challenge the system and achieve a balance between environmental values and the need for jobs, also for business and also for the greater economy. Here in the North we are particular in terms of loving the beauty of the land and we want to ensure that future generations enjoy what they will inherit from us.

As First Nations people, we learned to respect our elders, and the motion from the Elders Parliament, obviously, we have to respect it in terms of their call for a moratorium on fracking.

I applaud our colleagues in the Yukon that have taken steps and are studying this very matter by striking up a committee to publicly assess the risks and benefits of fracking.

Again, I think the ITI Minister commitment to develop regulations is timely, the call to develop regulation, but we need to be clear in terms of creating a forum for public discussion.

I've always had my questions in terms of the practice of fracking. It's been a practice that's been around since 1947 when the first experimental drill holes were drilled in the United States. The whole practice creates fractures and fissures underground by pumping water or substances and extracting petroleum products. I understand there have been technological advances in terms of addressing a lot of the public questions in terms of the chemical composition of the substances they are pumping underground, plus the status of the effluence once that water is brought back up or maybe, perhaps, potentially affecting the water tables in the underground.

In all of this it's kind of ironic because people have caution. We need to have a very rational mind and we need to have a clear mind and not let the better of our emotions take a hold of our thinking. What do we do in those cases? We rely on scientific knowledge that we've been taught in school. It's to try and take a very scientific analysis of fracking. But the irony of it is that as we compensate the effects of fracking, the effects are greater than what we thought of as perhaps in terms of some of the studies and some of the testimonies from people that have experienced fracking first-hand.



I need to acknowledge that there are federal regulatory systems in place and we do have our very first experience. We've established, here in the North, land claims. Because of the land claims, we've set up the Mackenzie Valley Resource Management Act. That in place set up boards. With the devolution of responsibility for public lands and resources to the GNWT, that was a great achievement, but in the same instance what happened is that we've basically moved to eliminate regional boards in terms of ensuring our regional bodies have input into the overall regulatory framework for the environment.

I do know and I understand that at some point, projects are referred for environmental assessment. That gives an opportunity for the public and industry to engage and to ensure that the system that we have goes through a rigorous process and at the end we conclude with a decision.

I wanted to take the opportunity just to describe some of the values that we're having, in our language, in terms of how we see the land up here in the NWT. Nahendeh...[English translation not provided.]

There are existing regulations. There are the federal regulations, we have the National Energy Board, we now have the responsibility for the oil and gas regulations and we have to look at other jurisdictions that have set in place a moratorium in terms of trying to assess and study this very matter.

At this point what's called for is the need for leadership and to create a forum for public discussion on this matter, similar to what the Yukon is doing. If indeed one reflects upon the motion, it's almost giving permission or support. Let's have a couple of discussions and contemplate how fracking could be done within the existing regulatory framework. Mahsi.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Nadli. To the motion. Mr. Dolyunny.

**MR. DOLYUNNY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to thank the mover, Mr. Bromley, and the seconder, Mr. Nadli, for allowing this discussion to occur today here.

Given almost two pages of whereas within this motion it's a bit hard to agree with all the points, but it's easy to agree with some of the points raised, but I'll try to attempt to take more of a reasonable step back from the specifics of the motion and evaluate the direction we're asking this government to take and the overall message we're trying to get through industry.

In preparation for today, I thought bringing back my experiences in science as a chemist, I wanted to maybe start quoting from mini scriptures of scientific journals and everything else, but I thought you know what, I don't want to bore everyone to death here. So all I can tell you is what I know is

that science is riddled with many unknowns and I just want to leave it at that.

I did think I was going to take more of a perspective maybe as a hockey fan to bring more of a hockey analogy to my argument today, but the Habs didn't win. So we'll use that another day. Looks like we've got a lot of Hab fans here.

Which leads me to my final area to try to bring some reasonableness and that is that of a reasonable man's perspective. So what does that really mean? There's nothing hidden in the term. I think one has to look at fracking in a more fair and reasonable way and really what's best for everyone involved. Being in health care for almost 22 years in the North and sitting for almost three years as a deputy chair on Social Programs committee, it has given me a unique perspective on the state of the social network here in the Northwest Territories. I can tell you that as much as I like to hear how great our health care system is, it does show many signs of stress and opportunity, and like the saying goes, the wheels on the bus have to go round and round. So does the need for proper funding for these social wheels to turn. So, we need to ask ourselves, how do we fund these health care dollars, poverty initiatives, income support, medical travel, job training, jobs themselves? I don't think these entities self-fund and I can tell you that many around this table know they don't as well.

So the reasonable man must look at the bigger picture to this motion's ask. What is industry thinking when they're listening to us here today? So when the industries have a choice in making an attempt for an investment to create prosperity in the North and to create hope for the people of the North, we as legislators are now asking to create barriers and almost a wall of worry. So we need to ask ourselves, what are we doing to ensure our future in doing that?

We've been given, recently, some newfound powers with devolution and we haven't even taken this new car out for a spin yet and we're asking, with today's motion, to put it back in the garage. I say let's manage our risks as being prescribed in our regulations, let's set the rules and let's enforce the rules.

With that, I just want to deviate a little bit here because it was just brought to our attention and it's recently new. This is a CBC special report as of this morning of June 4<sup>th</sup> and this is an interview with CBC interviewer Loren McGinnis and Minister Ramsay here. Again, I just got the transcripts, but what we're seeing in here is that we're still setting the rules and we're still learning and we're doing so in good faith, and I'd like to quote, if I can, from some of the transcripts very quickly. Mr. Ramsay is quoted, "We fully intend to consult all stakeholders in the development of regulations." Another quote is: "It's very important that people get a say and I

think that's the most important thing here, is stakeholders, the public." Finally, "We haven't even announced yet how the consultation will work, the timelines."

So it's clear we're still working on the rules, but like I said earlier, let's set the rules and let's enforce them. I believe we can move forward and develop our fracking initiatives safely. I also firmly believe we can reasonably navigate all fracking development reasonably and in compliance with the strict rules this government has said they would do. In the end, we have to give government a chance to make this work before we throw this whole initiative under the bus.

I would like to end by saying, I care about my environment, like everyone in this room. With our economy being so fragile, to balance questionable risk versus economics is not putting prosperity at any cost, it's saying let's be reasonable with this motion today. Let's be very careful what we're asking for.

Again, I do respect and I want to thank my colleagues for all their opinions and points of view in this debate today, and if it's not clear by now, I have a hard time supporting this motion today. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Dolynny. To the motion. Ms. Bisaro.

**MS. BISARO:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I spoke these words some time ago, but they bear repeating, and I'm going to quote.

"Mr. Speaker, we've heard a lot about fracking in the last two weeks. I haven't said much about it, but now feel the time has come and I must add my views. I've been following the statements and exchanges in the House, the media reports and so on. The Economic Development and Infrastructure Committee has been at the forefront of the fracking issue, doing the research, considering the pros and cons, monitoring Sahtu exploration and development. I've tried to stay abreast of the info flowing through the committee, but it's a challenge with my other committee work.

"At this point, I'm not sure where I stand on this issue, not sure if I support fracking or oppose it. I know that the Sahtu and the NWT need an economic shot in the arm and I know that the proposed development will provide that boost. I'm not against development, but feel it should be controlled. The face of development must be considered and measured. The all-out/do-it-all/do-it-now approach that seems to be happening in the Bakken scares me. I do not want that for my territory. I have a major concern about our lack of knowledge about our subsurface environment in the area where fracking will occur, particularly our lack of

analysis of aquifers. Our water tables are unknown and unmapped. Fracking has two huge impacts on our water supply: the amount of water used in and needed for the fracking process and the potential contamination of our groundwater through the injection of the used fracking water back underground.

"Another major concern for me is just what regulations, contaminants and chemicals will be used in the fracking process. It seems that currently relations don't require full disclosure of the products used. Will it be the same after devolution when we are in charge of fracking developments, or will we even have the authority to regulate it? I can only hope that the NWT will ensure strict guidelines or regulations are established to govern the environmental liabilities that can result from fracking.

"In my mind, there's the potential for the Sahtu to become a situation akin to Yellowknife's Giant Mine, 'a monstrous environmental liability.'"

Mr. Speaker, I made that statement seven months ago and my views have changed very little in that time. I still feel we don't fully understand what fracking will do to our environment, what legacy it will leave behind when all the drilling of wells and the removal of oil and gas is done. Do we have the strict guidelines and regulations I hoped for last fall? No, I don't think so. Apparently they are coming. Have the public had an opportunity to provide input into the regulations that are advised by the government will be forthcoming? No, and apparently they will, but how will it be done? Do we understand what the impact of fracking will be on our lands and waters? I don't think so.

Mr. Speaker, this motion asks not to stop fracking altogether, but to stop it while we figure out the answers to these questions. The timing is appropriate. The companies in the Sahtu have advised they are halting exploration for two or more years. What better time to fully assess the effects of the fracking process? What better time to develop guidelines and regulations with full public input? Regulations which, as the motion says, "demonstrate and manage this fracking technology in a way that ensures the integrity of our environment and communities."

Mr. Speaker, I support this motion and I urge my colleagues to do the same. We have only one chance to set things out right in regards to fracking. Let's not blow the opportunity. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Ms. Bisaro. To the motion. Mr. Hawkins.

**MR. HAWKINS:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. When I think of fracking, I'm often reminded of the saying "you can't unring a bell." What that basically means is that once you've done it, you've done it and you

can't take it back. As we all have come to learn, fracking is certainly not for everyone and not for every region where it could happen. So it puts the utmost importance upon each and every one of us to consider this problem.

Do we do it right or do we do it because we want it? I think this opportunity here is the chance to do it right. Everyone knows industry's interests and industry wouldn't be here in the Northwest Territories if they didn't have an interest. Just because they aren't fracking today doesn't mean they won't be fracking in the future. Just because industry wants to, doesn't necessarily mean I want them to.

I understand the complexity around this problem. I think it's a challenge we will never fully understand or appreciate all the information. Frankly, I don't have the lifetime to imagine how much information one argument can propose at the same time another argument can propose. What I am finding is we have so much information, it gets meshed in there somewhere and we are doing the best we can. On that, I think we need to take the time to find out if fracking is right for the Northwest Territories.

Now, we know some of it has happened and we know it happens around other provinces, and even states, such as places like Alberta, Saskatchewan and North Dakota. I have had the opportunity to visit sites in Saskatchewan and certain places in North Dakota. I am deeply confident the Northwest Territories will never ever allow our land to look like North Dakota. I certainly don't believe that will ever be the case. Under no condition I can imagine standing and allow this to happen, because frankly, I can't believe what they've done and put the balance at risk in such a manner, that I'm deeply worried.

We must do fracking under the conditions that are meaningful and representative of the values of the Northwest Territories. In this case, that could actually mean no fracking. We need public input that tells us the right way to do it. I only support fracking under the principles under the immense – and I want to be very clear here, Mr. Speaker – the immense regulations that represents best practices used throughout not only Canada but the world. Let us take this opportunity to do things right. We don't have an oil company pounding at our door, saying if you don't approve this application today, we're going to pull money out; we're going to make sure people don't work and we're not coming back. We don't have that pressure today. We are well aware of the most recent of a company deciding to pull out, re-evaluate its options and reconsider where they plan to go in the future. What better time than to pause and say to ourselves if we want fracking, under what conditions can we support it? As I said at the beginning, fracking is not for everyone.

Many people in the Sahtu – I wish to tip my hat to them – want these opportunities. I would be the last person to stand in the way of the aspirations of the people making their own decisions. At the same time, we do have people in the Sahtu who are worried about what decisions are being made. This type of pause, this type of reflection can benefit everyone, both those for and certainly those against. As I said earlier, immense regulation is the step that we need to consider if this is the right approach.

As a Member, I often hear from constituents very strongly. They either feel very strongly positively or very negatively about a particular issue. Interestingly enough, the people who were very positive about this tended to speak to the issue of making sure we have jobs for people. I want to ensure that the Sahtu has opportunity and I take every occasion to ensure that I do support that. Member Yakeleya knows I'm with him when it counts.

We always must balance the interests of the few, the oil companies, over the many. That's why we must find ways to do it.

As I said earlier, I would support the principles of fracking under immense regulations and my support would have to be built around the fact that those regulations need to be transparent, available for full public input in a manner that makes sense. If the Sahtu wishes to proceed with this – and there may be other areas across the Northwest Territories – we must remember that there are communities, families downstream of these opportunities. We must never forget about those people, those families, those communities or those regional governments. In essence, they are just waiting for whatever comes downstream, so we must ensure that they are fully on our minds when we make decisions.

Mr. Speaker, I am going to support this motion because I think now is the time, more than ever, to do the work, work that our committee and Members like myself have been looking forward to. I was completely elated to hear the most recent statement that appeared to be a shock and I never thought was coming. I'm glad the government is now considering looking at regulations, because frankly, up to a day or two ago, I never thought they would. So this is the time to do the hard work. This is the time to get the public input. This is the only time to get it right.

As I began my statement, I'm going to finish it. You cannot unring a bell. If you poison the well, you poison the river. You cannot fix it. So let us be darn sure we do what we do in a manner that takes care of the environment and people for time immemorial. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Hawkins. To the motion. Mr. Bouchard.

**MR. BOUCHARD:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. This is a very big topic we are discussing today. I thank the mover and the seconder for this motion to come forward and discuss some of the hydraulic fracturing in the Northwest Territories.

In November 2012 the Standing Committee on Economic Development and Infrastructure did a report to this House and indicated there were some recommendations we wanted done. We wanted some baseline studies to be accomplished. We wanted to adopt standards throughout the whole phase of the implementation, the monitoring of the land and waters, the monitoring of greenhouse gases. Public consultation was one of our recommendations, a thorough public consultation. These were the recommendations that came out of that and that's what we're debating here today. We have a motion to take a pause until we complete public consultation, yet we have, on June 2<sup>nd</sup>, the Minister of ITI saying we're going to introduce hydraulic fracturing regulations and we will do full public consultation at that time.

So I guess the debate that is being done here is what kind of public consultation will be done during that regulatory process, and the public consultation in getting the information out to the general public.

So, we look at what will be the impact of this motion. I guess one of the concerns that I have with this motion is the message that is being sent out throughout the country and to industry, is Hay... I say Hay River, sorry. The Northwest Territories. I mean, I'm a Hay River MLA. I apologize. Is the Northwest Territories open to the concept of hydraulic fracturing, open to the concept of the development of oil and gas? I think that I support that concept.

Obviously, I support that concept with some strict guidelines, regulations in place that the government has indicated that they're willing to do and willing to have public consultation on that. I think one of the things that some of the Members have talked about is identifying the chemicals. These organizations are all part of CAPP, which indicate they have public access to the chemicals that are done.

I guess at this point I will not be supporting the motion, because I think the public consultation will happen in this hydraulic fracturing regulation review and that's where the public is going to get their input, and we're going to be able to get regulation put on what we are going to do in the Northwest Territories to control what happens in this industry. I am concerned that this motion will send out a message to industry that we are stopping development in the Northwest Territories, we are putting a moratorium... The word "moratorium" was taken out of here. I appreciate that. But the message still is that we're taking a pause, that we're not going to accept applications at this time, and I'm concerned that this is going to have

implications for the economy in the Northwest Territories for the future generations of the Territories. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Bouchard. To the motion. Mr. Moses.

**MR. MOSES:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I agree with my colleagues here that this is a pretty big topic of discussion. I have to give points on both sides; there are a lot of pros and cons. I thank Mr. Bromley and Mr. Nadli for bringing the motion forward and speaking so well to it and speaking about making reference to the Elders Parliament and respecting our elders and our land.

When I think about this, these are discussions that we've had almost since we started hearing about possible fracturing going on in the Sahtu. If you think, in hindsight, if we had started doing these regulations that we're going to be doing through the Minister's office and the department sooner than later, we wouldn't be here debating the motion before us. But that's in hindsight, and I think we could have made a lot of headway in the amount of time and not looking at this. But I do acknowledge that the Minister and his department are looking at developing these regulations and they're going to go to public input and get that input from people in the Northwest Territories.

Being a representative for Inuvik and just living downstream from the Sahtu region, I want to make references to the CBC report from the fall of last year where it stated that Norman Wells leads the country in reported pipeline incidents. Some of the facts out of there were that there was 40.860 million litres of water put back into the Mackenzie River, and we're downstream. There are people who live off the land and fish, who hunt and make their way of life off of that. There are many communities that are downstream from that. They also talked about 127,000 litres that had hydrocarbons in there. So those are things that, obviously, as a Member representing Inuvik and the Northwest Territories, those things are concerning, but I do understand that as we go through devolution that we're actually taking on these new powers to manage our resources in a more responsible and sustainable way. I think that moving forward in this type of practice with hydraulic fracturing that as we speak to the public – and the public needs assurance that we're going to do things the right way. I think that as we develop these regulations that we also need to find best practices and be a leader in Canada, and the world, actually, in terms of how we monitor and give public updates to our residents and people that are concerned about what kind of chemicals are being put into the ground here.

We've also talked about the two fracked wells that have already happened in the Sahtu. They were done safely and I think that shows that the GNWT is doing a good job in terms of moving this forward.

On the other hand, I've seen first-hand the economy struggling in the community of Inuvik. I've seen small businesses shut down. I've seen families go on income assistance. I've seen big companies struggle and people having a hard time making ends meet. Just through our budget system, the amount of income assistance that this government supports, the increase the amount of money that we've even had to do through a supplementary appropriation because we're taking care of a lot more people that if the economy was stronger, they might have jobs. I know there are a lot of small businesses that invest in the Sahtu to create jobs for local people, but small businesses who invest, thinking there's going to be prosperity and economic growth in the region. With the recent news of the companies withdrawing because of the environmental assessments that were needed, I can only think of the families, I can only think of these small businesses that are going to be affected with the lack of activity that's going to be happening there.

There's one section in this motion that refers to "immediately refrain from supporting any hydraulic fracturing proposals." We all know how long those proposals take in approving them and the amount of work that gets in. The government is doing a good job right now in terms of looking at developing these regulations. I think as we move forward, it's going to be something that will be, I guess, groundbreaking and can be leading for the provinces that actually put the moratorium through that. As leaders, we can make those decisions.

I think Mr. Nadli said it well when he said there is a need for leadership. I think this government is taking that leadership role on and looking at starting to develop those regulations. But we also have to be leaders for our people in terms of... We had two wells that were fracked safely, but we also have to be leaders in helping create the economy.

In the Sahtu region, I know not a whole lot has happened in many years. When I take flights up to Inuvik, when I go home, it's nice to see that kind of business happening.

I am friends with some of the guys who own a small business and I can only imagine the effect that putting this type of motion in place would have on their businesses, their family life and their health and wellness and their well-being.

Because of that one statement in there, "immediately refrain from supporting any hydraulic fracturing proposals," is just going to increase the time that we support it or support any kind of economic activity there. So with that one line there, I can't really support the motion at this time. But I do respect the Members for bringing this forward, and I do respect the groups out there that do have this cause of concern, and I do respect the small business and the communities and the hard work

that they're trying to do to survive. With that said, I will not be supporting the motion. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**MR. YAKELEYA:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I want to thank the mover and the seconder for raising this issue to this level here. In the Sahtu we've been dealing with this for some time. There are some inaccuracies, inconsistencies in the motion in the wording and I just don't get it. I don't believe in some of the whereases. There are some concerns that certainly we are talking about in the Sahtu and I want to speak on that today.

I want to hopefully give my interpretation of what's happening in the Sahtu. Certainly, as we know, everybody has different interpretations.

In 1993 the people of the Sahtu reclaimed some of their land. They were not given this land. They reclaimed what has always been theirs. Under the land claims they own the subsurface rights to all oil, gas and minerals on over 1,800 square kilometres.

I respectfully say it is not this Assembly to infringe on any hard fought negotiation rights that the Sahtu have fought for. People of the Sahtu want to control their destiny. There is strong support in my region for strong, sustainable economic development. Ask any Member in this House who does not support economic development to think clearly and carefully about the signals we'll be sending if we say we know better than you.

At the same time, we have accomplished devolution of so many aspects of governing from the feds to the GNWT. This government has also accepted – has accepted – the Aboriginal government must have and will have a greater say as to how we govern. That's called respecting each government. We have fought for that in the Sahtu Land Claim, and any other land claims that have been negotiated have been settled. We have a government-to-government-to-government relationship.

The big picture has many facets and many angles, like an octopus, and I want to say that I rise to speak on the vision of our elders when we put together the land claim package as a young negotiator with a lot of other negotiators and our elders who have driven us, who have sat in meetings and listened to the elders. The late George Kodakin, the late Paul Wright, Alexis Arrowmaker, J.B. Gully. Lots of elders in our region. Fred Andrew and my mom, even my grandmother. There are a lot of elders that we sat and listened. We didn't talk. We listened to what they were saying and tried to figure out what they were saying to us.

I want to speak about the pathway of economic freedom. We in the Sahtu have been working on

creating such a path for ourselves for many, many years. We know that we have to do this ourselves. People of the Sahtu are strong, and we negotiated a path to economic freedom with the completion of our land claim 20 years ago. We are now starting down that path. No one should be trying to set up roadblocks, because we will knock them down.

Our land claim is part of the Constitution of Canada, as are all modern treaties. Chapter 12 of the Sahtu Dene and Metis Comprehensive Land Claim Agreement speaks to how we, the Metis and the Dene of the Sahtu, will be economically self-sufficient. We did not get land. We did not get land given to us in our land claim. We simply negotiated to get our land back. Let us get us to our promised land.

Long before contact, when the Europeans came in to our land, we controlled the land. We were sovereign in our territory. With our land claim we have regained some of our lost sovereignty so we can decide for ourselves.

The 1987 project by the Harvard University said five things. It said three things, actually. For a sovereign nation to be healthy and be successful, they need to have their sovereignty. Our land claim gave us that in 1993. We need to set up institutions. Our land claim gave us institutions and we need to protect and promote our culture. Our land claim, through our agreement, gives us this type of cultural institutions and promotion, but also we realized, later on with the Harvard project, that there are two other things that the nation of people need to have. One is leadership and strategic thinking, and we are working on that today. The Harvard project also said that this does not guarantee success, but it's more likely to lead a path of success.

When I refer to Sahtu Land Claim, we have set up institutions like the Sahtu Land and Water Board. I was the chief negotiator for our claim when we negotiated for the board. Our elders insisted on the board so that decisions about economic development and strengthening our traditional way of life and about using our resources, using our water and land could be made in our region. It is not for this legislation to infringe on the ability of the board to do its work. We're in the driver's seat with the board. They can say yes or no, set the terms and conditions. Let's leave them alone to do their work.

That board and how it works shows all of our people that we did our job. The elders wanted that board and we achieved that. The board and how it operates serves as a role model for our youth. It shows them that we have a big say in what happens in our region. More specifically, from our land claim, we own the subsurface rights, as I said earlier, to the rights to oil and gas and minerals. No one should think that taking away our rights to

decide what happens on and below our land is going to be acceptable. Again, no one gave us this land. Rather, in true Canadian fashion, we sat at the negotiating table for many years and we regained some aspects of our sovereignty.

I know every Member in this House knows that we must respect the Constitution. We must respect what has been negotiated in these documents that make up the Constitution, including the land claims. We must respect what each other's land claims allows under the Constitution. We have the responsibility and duty in the Sahtu to develop an economy. We have the jurisdiction in the form of the Sahtu Land and Water Board to make important decisions. We own the oil and gas under some of our lands. We want to develop our economy. This is our pathway to economic freedom.

The people in the Sahtu that have this constitutional right are in a land claim organization representing just over 1,200 people. The entire population of the Sahtu is about 2,600. There is a small minority group that is voicing their opposition, and that will happen. We say to them, go to the land claims. They're the ones that are making these decisions. We have a right in our land claims that says we will determine our own destiny.

I've been told by a reality show that a trapper from the Northwest Territories went to Finland. In Finland he had talked to some people who don't understand trapping. One of the comments from one of the European people was saying there's no need for trapping fur any more. That, I thought, was done with when the Greenpeace tried to kill the fur industry in the Northwest Territories. They wanted to have some say over our way of life.

Also, there are many reports that I've read that show that the conditions in our small communities, the environment is susceptible to high crime rates, alcoholism, addictions and violence because the violence breeds it. As Mr. Bromley has noted, there are many studies on the impacts and effects, and people are looking at these types of behaviours that are factors that are linked to low income, poverty, unemployment. When you look at the statistics in the Sahtu, we kind of fit some of that picture. We have a high unemployment rate. We have close to 250 people ready to work today. We have close to over 500 who want to work. We have needs there, training opportunities. Maybe this might be a blessing in disguise so that we can look and see how do we get our people ready. We are ready. There are conditions that the Land and Water Board puts on these applications like for pass and protection. Land claims are still clearly stated here where conditions will be put in place so that applications will be monitored very closely.

I guess I want to say that the Norman Wells issue of their licence, I think, who is Maude? Maude should be jumping up and down right now because

Imperial Oil is going to want to release 1.5 billion litres of reusable oil from the Mackenzie River for their operation. They've been doing that for years. There has been no evidence of fracking water being released underground. So when you talk about our evidence of our horizontal fracking, that's what we've been saying in Fort Good Hope. The effects of Imperial's water licence are going down the river, not the hydraulic fracking water. As a matter of fact, it uses less water than to operate a camp.

So I'm having a difficult time again, as to how the motion is reading. I think that we need to get the information out there clearly, and I guess the bottom line for me is respecting the Aboriginal governments and what they negotiated for, and understanding that we did this for ourselves to control our destiny and to have a say in our lives.

A few points before I close. For the last 60 years there have been 175,000 fracked wells drilled in Canada. To date there's no evidence that there are any significant environmental problems that have risen as a consequence. Also, the head of the U.S. government EPA is on record saying she is not aware of any single event of contaminated groundwater as a consequence of fracking.

While we think that this would be something that is a horizontal fracking issue, it would be an issue, it has been, but let's face the facts. In the Northwest Territories there have been fracked wells vertically in the '70s and '80s in the Cameron Hills in the Liard Basin. This is prior to any type of new regulations that we now see. They actually hadn't had any injection wells on their Type A licence. So I'd like to look at some of this information. I think that if it's an issue of impacting all the regions, we can say a lot about Giant Mine and the Giant mines in other areas, but we respect the guys who need to look after themselves. Look in your own backyard instead of pointing fingers in ours. Have respect.

So I want to say that I will not be supporting this motion at this time. Thank you.

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

**MR. MENICOCHÉ:** Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I know that all my colleagues went on at length and there are many positions to be taken on fracking. The motion does specifically talk about refraining from fracking and it is a controversial way to recover oil and gas from the ground, more specifically shale areas. I definitely know people in my riding, as I travel around my constituency tour, do want to know more about fracking, they want to understand it and our people should. For instance, I don't believe people know that fracking has been around for almost 50 years. Only now people are afraid. It's only because they think it's new that there has been a big, massive campaign by concerned environmental groups and they do well,

they're well-funded and they get out in the lead and they advertise it. So now people are afraid of fracking, but it has been here for 50 years. There was certainly no concern before that.

But just overall, the reality is that all forms of energy production have some environmental consequences and, yes, this new fracking technique should be held to the same standard as every industry when it comes to safety, when it comes to environment and water.

Devolution and those that were afraid of it was about not trusting us as a Legislature, not trusting us as a government in taking care of our NWT, in taking care of our land and taking care of water. I really think that the Minister wants to go public, travel our communities and create some new fracking regulations. I think it was far better if we stood here this afternoon and had a debate on those new proposed regulations, how to do it, what to put into it, how extensive it should be, and I think Mr. Bromley's motion speaks to a lot of that as well. People want to know, everybody wants to do it the best way possible, and asking for a temporary ban right now for myself, it's just not the way to do it. I believe in our consensus style of government. I'm confident that our government can work with our committees, they can work with our communities, they can work with our Aboriginal governments and work towards developing the best regulations.

That being said, there is a pause in new fracking right now, so here we've got a huge opportunity to do it. I don't believe that going all out by saying that there is a ban or temporary ban is the way to do it. So at this point, I won't be supporting the motion. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Menicoche. To the motion. Mr. Blake.

**MR. BLAKE:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I, too, would like to support this motion, but due to the wording in the motion, it made me refrain from supporting any hydraulic fracturing proposals as we already have some work that is to be done this winter.

I too, like Mr. Moses, have a lot of constituents in my riding that rely on this work that is being done, upwards of 30 to 40 people. In my communities I have a 35 percent employment rate. We have to have some sort of balance here.

I like the Minister's stance that they're going out, consulting with the communities. That is what our people wanted. I think a lot of the concerns that were happening earlier this year were because the work went through without consultation. That is what a lot of people had issue with. Moving forward, we need to come up with proper regulations and policies to do this properly. I know a lot of the oil and gas work that's done in the Territories is all

monitored and we have to ensure that moving forward. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Blake. To the motion. The honourable Premier, Mr. McLeod.

**HON. BOB MCLEOD:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The Government of the Northwest Territories is committed to protecting the health of our people and the environment in creating prosperity for our residents by responsibly and sustainably developing our natural resource potential. We support the use of recognized best practices in making decisions about protecting human health, wildlife, land, air and water in the Northwest Territories. We share a vision of a strong, prosperous and environmentally sustainable Northwest Territories that provides opportunities for all our people, communities and regions. We cannot have prosperity without an economy that provides jobs and economic opportunities for our people and revenues to our government to invest in infrastructure and deliver programs and services.

We talk in this Assembly about breaking the cycle of dependency that traps individuals and keep them from realizing their full potential. We should aspire to be self-sufficient as a jurisdiction, not dependent on handouts from the federal government.

The reality is that responsible development of our natural resources is the mainstay of our economy and source of our prosperity. If the government were to accept the recommendations put forward in this motion, it would effectively mean the end of exploration and resource development in the Sahtu for the foreseeable future. That would stall economic growth not just in the Sahtu but in the whole territory, eliminate potential revenue this government could be collecting under our new Devolution Agreement and reduce opportunities for all residents to prosper.

Resource development is not new to this jurisdiction. We have seen the benefits that development can bring and seen some of the negative impacts. We have seen how projects were approved and managed in the past and have gained valuable insight and information that will allow us to better manage the potential risks associated with future projects.

Our government assumed new responsibilities for an already well-developed environmental protection and regulatory system as part of devolution. It is the same system that has overseen the development of diamond mining and other projects in the Northwest Territories. We have every confidence that this system will continue to serve the public interest.

Land and water boards continue to be responsible for reviewing project applications and granting and recommending approvals based on their assessment of potential environmental risks and

expected benefits for the people of the Northwest Territories.

The Government of the Northwest Territories continues to participate in review processes and decision-making, consistent with established legislative requirements and roles. The Ministers of Environment and Natural Resources and Land and the oil and gas regulator all have responsibilities for assessing projects and granting certain approvals in this system. They are guided in their decision-making by a legislative and policy framework that includes the Mackenzie Valley Resource Management Act and territorial mirror legislation, the Land Use and Sustainability Framework, Sustainable Development Policy, Water Strategy, Economic Opportunities Strategy and our commitments under several land claims. That legislative and policy framework ensures decisions are consistent in the public interest and reflect northern priorities and values.

Guidelines developed by the National Energy Board prior to April 1<sup>st</sup> set out information requirements for applications for projects that involve hydraulic fracturing. These guidelines currently apply to projects in the Northwest Territories and we have already committed to strengthen them by developing regulations under the NWT Oil and Gas Operations Act that will set out our own information requirements.

Our intention is to consult broadly on the development of those regulations. There will be opportunities for individuals, communities and regions to have input as well as Aboriginal governments, industry, non-governmental organizations and other stakeholders.

Any regulations that government establishes will be based on current science, recognized best practices and will consider all the views presented during consultations. We will continue to review and assess our new responsibilities and refine and strengthen the system over time to ensure it serves the public interest and reflects the views and priorities of Northerners.

In addition to developing hydraulic fracturing regulations, we have already launched a public review of devolution legislation. Our government is committed to balanced responsible development that protects our people and environment at the same time as it creates prosperity. We do not believe that a blanket rejection of all projects that might include hydraulic fracturing before they even come forward or are described in project applications reflects the balanced approach.

Our system gives us the tools we need to manage development responsibly, creating sustainable benefits for our people and protecting our environment. We will continue to monitor and manage the pace of development and ensure that all project applications receive the necessary



review as set out in established legislation. The government will be voting against this motion. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. McLeod. To the motion. Mr. Ramsay.

**HON. DAVID RAMSAY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As oil and gas regulator, I am fully committed to ensuring that NWT petroleum resources are developed responsibly in a way that creates benefits for our people and communities and protects our environment. I am guided in my decisions by a well-developed framework of legislation, regulations and policies that includes the Oil and Gas Operations Act, or OGOA, and Petroleum Resources Act. I am responsible through OGOA for ensuring human health and safety and environmental protection for all oil and gas development activities such as seismic operations, drilling of wells, construction and operations of pipelines.

I am able under OGOA to approve authorizations like geophysical authorizations, operation authorizations, geological investigation authorizations and can refer applications to environmental assessment.

Our government's commitment to environmental protection is ensured through provisions in OGOA and its regulations, particularly the spill and debris regulations which provide for the regulator to set additional security requirements for oil and gas operations which must be in place for the duration of those operations. It is important to remember that authorizations cannot be issued without appropriate security in place. This helps to ensure that projects will be well managed and the people of the Northwest Territories will not be responsible for potential liabilities.

Our government is confident that the system we have and our framework for legislation and policies will let us manage the kind of development we expect to see in the Northwest Territories and ensure it is responsible and our environment is protected.

We need to be clear about what we are talking about when we talk about hydraulic fracturing. We are looking at shale oil in the Sahtu. That is not the same as shale gas that was the subject of the Council of Canadian Academics report. Unlike some other developments that we hear about, the shale oil in the Sahtu is deep below the surface, well away from groundwater.

We also need to be clear about the scale of development we are talking about. The Northwest Territories is not the Bakken. We do not expect to see thousands of wells go into production. So far we have had applications for a small number of exploration wells. We can manage that scale of development with the tools and information we

have available. We have already committed to develop regulations that will set out information requirements for hydraulic fracturing. We will continue to refine and improve our approach to managing development to ensure that it is responsible in the health of our people and our environment is protected.

The Northwest Territories geoscience office is already collecting information to assist us in decision-making and responding to the activity. The geoscience office has installed stations to monitor seismic activity in the area, and we have the necessary tools and authorities we need to ensure the development of our territory is managed fairly and responsibly for everyone.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Ramsay. To the motion. R.C. McLeod.

**HON. ROBERT MCLEOD:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The Department of Lands was established to ensure this government is fulfilling its new obligations and responsibilities for managing public lands in the Northwest Territories. We are responsible for implementing the Land Use and Sustainability Framework and coordinating GNWT participation in project assessments.

For fracturing projects, Cabinet has identified fracturing applications as warranting a coordinated government-wide approach at the beginning of the regulatory process. The Department of Lands project assessment branch coordinates technical advice to boards for preliminary screening on hydraulic fracturing applications. The GNWT has the authority to refer applications to environmental assessment. Cabinet has decided to make referral decisions collectively. As the Minister of Lands, I would participate in any such decision.

During environmental assessments, the project assessment branch of Lands coordinates technical advice to the review board. For most projects on non-federal land, the Minister of Lands has the delegated authority to sign the final EA decision after securing consensus from all territorial and federal colleagues who are responsible Ministers for the project. The Department of Lands staff issue tenure instruments such as leases and licences of occupation, conduct compliance and enforcement activities and inspections for land use permits and tenure instruments and hold securities for land-related instruments.

The Lands department is committed to a balanced, responsible development of the NWT's natural resources according to northern priorities and values. I look forward to playing my part in developing decisions and ensuring that the North's environment is protected and that our people benefit from responsible development.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. McLeod. To the motion. Mr. Miltenberger.

**HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to do two quick things. I'd like to just give a bit more context and then speak to some of the specifics of the work that's being done.

In the last Assembly there was a recognition that we were moving towards devolution, and it was going to come and we need to get our thinking clear, and we started the work on the Land Use and Sustainability Framework, we started the work on the Water Strategy, we enhanced and increased our efforts to get the Wildlife Act done. We accomplished those things so that as we moved forward to take over the authorities we're talking about here today, we were ready. That we are not starting from a blank sheet of paper trying to get our thinking clear at a time when people expect us to be productive and ready to manage.

When we started the 17<sup>th</sup> Assembly, we laid out publicly that we were going to be working on a guidance document, what we saw as the best practices that needed to be done as we were going to take over authorities for oil and gas, and we had to deal with hydraulic fracturing. We said this publicly and we committed to timelines. There was some slippage, but the work was done. It was an intense amount of work. It was done in conjunction with working with SCEDI, and we went back and forth on the work. We resulted in what was released in this House earlier in this session by Minister Ramsay as it pertains to best practices, the commitment to go out and consult. The plan always was clear, this document with the Legislative Assembly, then we are going to go out to industry and the public, and that is what now we are intending to do.

In regard to specific things that are underway as we do this work, since we need to keep moving and we can't put everything into neutral, I just want to lay out some of the things we are doing.

The GNWT has spent, committed or facilitated third-party funding of almost \$4 million for monitoring activities focused on quantifying baseline environmental conditions in the Sahtu since 2013.

The Sahtu Environmental Research and Monitoring Forum provides a revenue for community research needs to be communicated to industry, the GNWT and Canada.

Wildlife research and monitoring is underway in the Sahtu. We have completed the first of a proposed four-year project to examine four research teams related to wildlife and wildlife habitat.

Field-based studies were done in 2013 to collect information related to forest disturbance and biological diversity. Existing research will be consolidated into a geospatial database this year.

The forum will also convene an experts' workshop and cross-cultural research camp in 2014 to

develop a database of regional traditional knowledge.

Funding was also provided for a project to consolidate all existing knowledge regarding surface and groundwater monitoring in these areas under consideration for increased oil and gas exploration activity in the Sahtu. This project will prepare a geospatial data management plan to integrate and provide the basis for mapping ground and surface water data. Traditional knowledge from the area will also be sought to gain local insights into key ground and surface water considerations. A contract has already been issued to conduct this work.

This is just some of the work being undertaken by industry, the GNWT and Canada to collect the needed baseline information for the Sahtu region. Data and information gathered through the exploration phase of shale oil extraction is vital in the collection of baseline data, which is important in determining the environmental impacts of shale oil extraction in the Sahtu. There have been, and will continue to be, numerous opportunities for the communities to engage in discussions with industry, regulators and government on hydraulic fracturing. We encourage people and need to have to be actively engaged in these discussions to ensure we are looking at the sustainable development of our natural resources for the benefit of all residents.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Miltenberger. To the motion. I'll allow the mover of the motion, Mr. Bromley, to have closing remarks. Mr. Bromley.

**MR. BROMLEY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and thanks to all my colleagues here today for their participation in this debate. I think some really cogent points were brought forward. Certainly, with the major progress we've made on devolution, the development of the MVRMA land claims legislation, that was definitely a big achievement and it was noted that it also brings a big responsibility, and to some degree, therefore, this is a test, and it calls for leadership to call a public forum, so I appreciated that point.

I heard several Members concerned about what is industry thinking. What messages are we sending to industry? My response to that is: What about the public? What messages are we sending to the public?

The timing is appropriate here, as has been brought out several times. The Premier likes to highlight how desperate industry is. The richest corporations in the world, they're going to leave and they really need to be here. I think the point is that there is a lull. They're pulling out for a while. That's not atypical. The boom and bust is characteristic of this industry. There is an opportunity here, and I suspect there would be a lot of jobs associated with a real comprehensive public review for those that

were looking for work, so what better time to do this.

I heard that there's an opportunity to do it right versus quickly. To ask the question, is fracking right for the NWT, and if so, how? That's what we're talking about here today.

The concern for local business because of this lull, again, this is just a fact of life in this industry, but again, my response to that is: What about concern for the public generally? We're hearing from the public. I hope I outlined in all the whereases that we developed here, we made clear that there is concern out there.

We know that these developments might be in one region right now, but clearly it's very likely to be occurring in other regions, the fracking activity, and impacts will also be felt both upstream and downstream. Input from all residents should, therefore, be welcomed. Certainly, the claims that there is no evidence of some case of impacts needs to be publicly evaluated, and that's what this motion is about.

I heard from a couple of Members, including the Premier, that there is a concern about people working there and that we need an economy. Well, our residents actually have many ideas about an economic path on which we can move forward to address that need, which is well recognized and which I support in ways, as I mentioned in my statement, that doesn't have big impacts on other people, their health, their land and so on.

It would halt industry for years to come. Well, how have so many other jurisdictions managed to consult with their people, and we have a parallel situation with our neighbour right next to us. They're doing a very admirable, comprehensive, public process. I do not understand the reluctance to do this at all.

So this is basically – and again, I don't want to stress that we have the two-year window to do this – a motion to hear the voice of our public. We are calling for a role in our design for exploitation of resources. This consultation would be comprehensive and include all perspectives; business would not be excluded, industry would not be excluded. This would include all perspectives and respond to any concerns brought forward.

In other jurisdictions the government plays a real role in responsibly calling for public input. Without support for this motion, it is clear that residents will have to seek a response solely through the land and water boards, and if so, so be it. Again, I look to other governments and the examples they set, the Yukon and so on.

So I do urge Members to support this and respect the public's desire to be heard. With that, I am going to stop and ask for a recorded vote, Mr. Speaker. Thank you again for this opportunity.

Thanks to my colleagues for all those points they brought forward.

#### RECORDED VOTE

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Bromley. The Member has asked for a recorded vote. All those in favour, please rise.

**PRINCIPAL CLERK, CORPORATE AND INTERPARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (Ms. Bennett):** Mr. Bromley, Mr. Nadli, Mr. Hawkins and Ms. Bisaro.

**MR. SPEAKER:** All those opposed, please rise.

**PRINCIPAL CLERK, CORPORATE AND INTERPARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (Ms. Bennett):** Mr. Yakeleya, Mr. Menicoche, Mr. Blake, Mr. Beaulieu, Mr. Abernethy, Mr. Miltenberger, Mr. McLeod – Yellowknife South, Mr. Lafferty, Mr. Ramsay, Mr. McLeod – Inuvik Twin Lakes, Mr. Dolynny, Mr. Bouchard, Mr. Moses.

**MR. SPEAKER:** All of those abstaining, please rise. All those in favour, four; all those opposed, 13; abstentions, zero. The motion is defeated.

---Defeated

Item 18, first reading of bills. Mr. Abernethy.

#### First Reading of Bills

##### BILL 29: HUMAN TISSUE DONATION ACT

**HON. GLEN ABERNETHY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I move, seconded by the honourable Member for Tu Nedhe, that Bill 29, Human Tissue Donation Act, be read for the first time. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Abernethy. Motion is on the floor.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Question.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Question has been called. Bill 29 has had first reading and is ready for second reading.

---Carried

Mr. Beaulieu.

##### BILL 30: AN ACT TO AMEND THE PUBLIC SERVICE ACT

**HON. TOM BEAULIEU:** Mahsi cho, Mr. Speaker. I move, seconded by the honourable Member for Great Slave, that Bill 30, An Act to Amend the Public Service Act, be read for the first time. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Beaulieu. Motion is on the floor.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Question.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Question has been called. Bill 30 has had first reading and is ready for second reading.

---Carried

Item 19, second reading of bills. Item 20, consideration in Committee of the Whole of bills and other matters, with Mr. Dolynny in the chair.

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

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny):** I'd like to call Committee of the Whole to order. Ms. Bisaro, wish of committee?

**MS. BISARO:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. I move we report progress.

---Carried

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny):** I will now rise and report progress.

### Report of Committee of the Whole

**MR. SPEAKER:** Mr. Dolynny, can I have the report of Committee of the Whole, please.

**MR. DOLYNNY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Your committee has been considering Bill 26, An Act to Amend the Elections and Plebiscites Act; and Committee Reports 7-17(5) and 8-17(5) and would like to report progress. Mr. Speaker, I move that the report of Committee of the Whole be concurred with. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Dolynny. Do I have a seconder to the motion? Mr. Miltenberger.

---Carried

Item 22, third reading of bills. Mr. Miltenberger.

### Third Reading of Bills

BILL 8:

WRITE-OFF OF DEBTS ACT, 2013-2014

**HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER:** Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the honourable Member for Great Slave, that Bill 8, Write-off of Debts Act, 2013-2014, be read for the third time. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Question.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Question has been called. Bill 8, Write-off of Debts Act, 2013-2014, has had third reading.

---Carried

Mr. Miltenberger.

BILL 9:

FORGIVENESS OF DEBTS ACT, 2013-2014

**HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER:** Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the honourable Member for Tu Nedhe, that Bill 9, Forgiveness of Debts Act, 2013-2014, be read for the third time. Thank you.

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

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Question.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Question has been called. Bill 9, Forgiveness of Debts Act, 2013-2014, has had third reading.

---Carried

Madam Clerk, orders of the day.

### Orders of the Day

**PRINCIPAL CLERK, CORPORATE AND INTERPARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (Ms. Bennett):** Orders of the day for Thursday, June 5, 2014, at 1:30 p.m.:

1. Prayer
2. Ministers' Statements
3. Members' Statements
4. Reports of Standing and Special Committees
5. Returns to Oral Questions
6. Recognition of Visitors in the Gallery
7. Acknowledgements
8. Oral Questions
9. Written Questions
10. Returns to Written Questions
11. Replies to Opening Address
12. Petitions
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 22, Funding to Implement Junior Kindergarten
  - Motion 23, Appointment of Sole Adjudicators
  - Motion 24, Extended Adjournment of the House to October 16, 2014
18. First Reading of Bills
  - Bill 31, Supplementary Appropriation Act (Operations Expenditures), No. 1, 2014-2015
19. Second Reading of Bills

- 
- Bill 29, Human Tissue Donation Act
  - Bill 30, An Act to Amend the Public Service Act
20. Consideration in Committee of the Whole of Bills and Other Matters
- Bill 26, An Act to Amend the Elections and Plebiscites Act
  - Committee Report 7-17(5), Report on the Development of the Economic Opportunities and Mineral Development Strategies
  - Committee Report 8-17(5), Report on the Review of the Auxiliary Report of the Chief Electoral Officer on Issues Arising from the 2011 General Election
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 Thursday, June 5<sup>th</sup>, at 1:30 p.m.

---ADJOURNMENT

The House adjourned at 5:25 p.m.

