



NORTHWEST TERRITORIES LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

5th Session

Day 46

17th Assembly

HANSARD

Thursday, October 30, 2014

Pages 5073 – 5106

The Honourable Jackie Jacobson, Speaker

Legislative Assembly of the Northwest Territories

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YELLOWKNIFE, NORTHWEST TERRITORIES**Thursday, October 30, 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. Honourable Premier, Mr. McLeod.

Ministers' Statements

MINISTER'S STATEMENT 112-17(5):
JUNIOR KINDERGARTEN IMPLEMENTATION

HON. BOB MCLEOD: Mr. Speaker, I rise today to advise this House that the government has listened to the feedback we have received to date from Members about Junior Kindergarten.

In an effort to respond to what Members have told us, while at the same time not wanting to disrupt parents and schools that are in the midst of delivering Junior Kindergarten, we have made the following decision.

Without changing the current funding approach to Junior Kindergarten, it will be completely voluntary for any of the 23 communities now offering Junior Kindergarten to continue with the program this year. If they choose, they will also be able to offer it in the next school year. Any of the 23 communities could stop offering the program now if they so choose.

The government will undertake a thorough review of the implementation of Junior Kindergarten in the 23 communities. The government will also reach out to all other education authorities, Aboriginal Head Start, licenced daycare and day home operators, parents and the general public to hear their views about whether Junior Kindergarten should be offered in the future and, if so, how.

The review will be undertaken over the next eight months and its findings will be summarized and provided to the 18th Legislative Assembly as part of transition.

Mr. Speaker, the Government of the Northwest Territories will not offer Junior Kindergarten in any of the regional centres or Yellowknife until this review has been completed and presented to the 18th Legislative Assembly for their decision. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

MINISTER'S STATEMENT 113-17(5):
SUPPORT FOR TRAPPERS HEADING INTO
THE 2014-15 HARVESTING SEASON

HON. DAVID RAMSAY: Mr. Speaker, wild fur from the NWT, branded and sold under our Genuine Mackenzie Valley Fur label, is world-renowned for its high quality and obtains top prices at auction. Our trappers are experts in proper fur handling and preparation and have earned a reputation as some of the best in their trade.

I would like to congratulate the recipients of this year's Trappers Awards. These awards include four categories: highest sales, most pelts, and the senior and junior trappers of the year. I would like to recognize the talents of the trappers who received the awards for the highest number of pelts in each region: Mr. Sheldon Boucher in the South Slave, Mr. Jimmy Pierre Mantla in the North Slave, Mr. Mark Kochon in the Sahtu, Mr. Alfred Nande in the Deh Cho, and Mr. Jim Elias in the Beaufort-Delta. I am also happy to share that this year we have also introduced a Return to Roots Award, which is presented to someone who is re-entering the trapping industry. The award recipient has not yet been notified and we look forward to making this presentation at a later date.

This year we also saw the premiere of the reality television series "Fur Harvesters NWT," which follows Hay River resident trapper Mr. Andrew Stanley. This series showcases Mr. Stanley's immense skill and increases awareness and understanding of our traditional economy.

Mr. Speaker, this government recognizes the importance of the traditional economy in contributing to a strong, thriving economy that provides opportunities and jobs for our people. We continue to support this sector by providing support to local trappers through programs and services like the Genuine Mackenzie Valley Fur Program, the Hide Procurement Program and the Take a Kid Trapping and Harvesting programs.

The Genuine Mackenzie Valley Fur Program offers NWT trappers one-window access to the international fur auction market and ITI works

closely with the Fur Harvesters Auction to promote NWT fur.

Over the past year we have seen volatility in some of our major markets around the world, including Russia and the Ukraine. Market instability demonstrates why the Genuine Mackenzie Valley Fur Program and marketing service is vital to this sector and that it works as intended by absorbing losses when necessary.

This program consists of three elements to best support trappers.

The guaranteed advance ensures trappers have sufficient funds to continue trapping while fur is awaiting sale at auction. ITI provides trappers with advances based on anticipated market performance. If the furs sell for less than the advance at auction, the program absorbs the cost.

The prime fur bonus is an additional payment that trappers receive if their furs sell for more than the advance. It provides an incentive to deliver high quality, well-handled pelts.

Annual grubstakes are provided to defray start-up costs at the beginning of each trapping season. The amount provided to each trapper is determined by the previous year's pelt numbers. This year over \$100,000 in grubstakes was delivered to eligible trappers in the NWT.

Mr. Speaker, with each passing year the Hide Procurement Program continues to evolve to better support our hardworking trappers. In May the program was expanded to include muskox hides and qiviut. More recently, we have increased the price paid for seal skins from \$55 to \$70 per skin.

The increased price paid for seal skins is in response to the recommendation in the Economic Opportunities Strategy to expand procurement to support growth in the arts and crafts sector. While the European Union has a ban on seal skins, here in the NWT we cannot keep up with the demand for seal pelts from our talented arts and crafts community.

In order to pass skills and knowledge on to the next generation, we are working to introduce youth to the traditional practices of hunting, trapping, fishing and outdoor survival. The Take a Kid Trapping and Harvesting programs, offered in partnership with the Department of Municipal and Community Affairs and the Department of Environment and Natural Resources, were developed out of concern that the average age of a trapper/harvester was 60. Today we are proud to say that just over 1,700 students took part in these programs in the 2013-14 fiscal year.

Mr. Speaker, our people have a long, proud history of self-reliance and self-sufficiency. The sustainable harvest of renewable resources for domestic consumption and use is a leading economic activity

in the NWT. ITI continues to support and promote excellence in our traditional economy to strengthen and diversify our economy, a priority of this Assembly. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Ramsay. Before we go on, I would congratulate all trappers, too, but the one I really want to congratulate is Jim Elias, top trapper from last year and for all the great fur from across this territory. Not only that, he's my relative from back home in Tuk.

The honourable Minister of Public Works and Services, Mr. Beaulieu.

MINISTER'S STATEMENT 114-17(5):
UPDATE ON PUBLIC WORKS AND SERVICES
ENERGY CONSERVATION PROJECTS

HON. TOM BEAULIEU: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As we head into this year's heating season, I would like to take this opportunity to update Members on the energy conservation work that the Department of Public Works and Services has been doing.

As Members know, with our northern environment, energy conservation and management are important elements in controlling costs and supporting effective and efficient program delivery in all communities of the Northwest Territories. Our government's investments in energy efficiency and alternative energy solutions are reducing our dependence on fossil fuels, lowering our operating costs and are helping us meet our greenhouse gas emission reduction goals. Public Works and Services helps the GNWT achieve its energy efficiency goals by leading the adoption of energy conservation and renewable energy technologies.

Earlier this year we published our 2013-2014 Energy Conservation Projects Annual Report and I would like to share some of the highlights from that report.

Last year, Mr. Speaker, the GNWT reduced its consumption of fossil fuels by over 2.8 million litres, with 33 percent of the total energy being used in public buildings managed by the department coming from renewable energy sources. We have done this primarily through early adoption and continued support of biomass technology.

In keeping with commitments to bring biomass systems to our communities and further support the sustainability of this emerging industry, I am happy to report that three new wood pellet boiler systems are now up and running in Norman Wells, including at the Mackenzie Mountain School, the air terminal building and the Department of Transportation's combined services building. With these systems, the GNWT is ready for this year's heating season and is supporting the adoption of wood pellet technology in the Sahtu region.

New biomass projects are in the design and construction phases for Hay River, Yellowknife,

Norman Wells, Fort Resolution and Fort Providence. In addition, the biomass systems approved for the Chief Albert Wright School in Tulita and the Chief T'Selehye School in Fort Good Hope are moving to the design phase while feasibility studies to identify other potential biomass projects are also underway at the ?ehtseo Ayha School in Deline and the Deh Cho region education building in Fort Simpson.

It's not enough to switch to biomass, Mr. Speaker. We also need to conserve energy. To that end, we are doing envelope upgrades and energy-efficient lighting projects in schools in Ulukhaktok, Hay River and Sachs Harbour. We also just completed energy retrofits to the Chief Jimmy Bruneau School, the Milton Building and the Mackenzie Mountain School and have pilot projects for LED lighting at the GNWT warehouse in Yellowknife and LED runway lights in Lutselk'e.

I am pleased to advise Members that 40 percent of the utility savings generated in 2013-14 were a result of energy conservation and building retrofit activities completed by Public Works and Services under the GNWT's Capital Asset Retrofit Fund program over the past five years. Permanent savings generated through these energy conservation initiatives will continue to be used to fund the Capital Asset Retrofit Fund program and future investments in energy reduction projects.

Mr. Speaker, I am proud of our government's continued commitment to pursue energy efficiency and reduce our greenhouse gas emissions. Since 2007, energy conservation projects delivered by Public Works and Services have reduced the government's need for the equivalent of 12.85 million litres of heating oil in total. This equates to a reduction of more than 35,000 tonnes of greenhouse gas emissions. Conservation efforts have allowed us to re-profile \$1.48 million in utility funding and we are projecting to reach \$1.72 million by the end of 2014-15.

I look forward to building on this success by finding more opportunities to expand the use of renewable energy, such as biomass for space heating of public infrastructure, wherever feasible. Not only are we saving the government money but we are supporting the development of a viable market for alternative energy in our territory that could help to lower energy costs for the private sector and homeowners. We are also helping reduce the NWT's dependence on expensive diesel and reducing associated greenhouse gas emissions. Our focus on energy efficiency and renewable energy makes the GNWT a more effective and efficient government. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Beaulieu. Item 3, Members' statements. Member for Hay River South, Mrs. Groenewegen.

Members' Statements

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON SOUTH SLAVE DIVISIONAL EDUCATIONAL COUNCIL LEADERSHIP AWARDS

MRS. GROENEWEGEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. With all the challenges that we face, it's a sincere pleasure when I have the opportunity to stand in this House and celebrate outstanding success and achievement.

Today I want to give recognition to the South Slave Divisional Education Council for taking top honours in the Education category at the National Public Sector Leadership Awards given out earlier this year for achievement in 2013.

These awards celebrate innovation and excellence in the public sector, and this achievement marks the first time a school board and an organization from the NWT has won an IPAC leadership award.

The South Slave Divisional Education Council took home this top honours award for its groundbreaking Leadership for Literacy Initiative which has increased academic results for students and resulted in leading-edge Aboriginal language instruction. This award was accepted in Toronto by SSDEC superintendent Curtis Brown and assistant superintendent Brent Kaulback on behalf of the staff, DEAs and council members of our region.

There is an overview of the Leadership for Literacy video available online, and I encourage my colleagues and the public to go online and see the work that's being done in this area by the SSDEC. This is a very inspirational video – I watched it again today – and it concludes with commendations from the Governor General of Canada to our education council in the South Slave.

In addition to this recognition of excellent leadership at the SSDEC, I would also like to acknowledge Brent Kaulback, assistant superintendent for the SSDEC. He has been honoured by the Canadian Association of School System Administrators as both the NWT and Canadian Superintendent of the Year. This prestigious award, known as the EXL National Award, was accepted by Mr. Kaulback in Calgary this past July.

Brent Kaulback is an amazing individual who has designated 40 years to education. Most of these years have been in the North and most of his work has been in Aboriginal education initiatives on promoting resources for Aboriginal students to learn in their own languages.

Over the course of the past seven years, Mr. Kaulback has helped and organized the publication of over 250 Aboriginal language books, including dictionaries, children's books, graphic novels and stories of legends as passed down by community elders.

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

---Unanimous consent granted

MRS. GROENEWEGEN: Mr. Kaulback was a keynote speaker at an educational conference in South Africa last year and is presently working on an iPad app, called "Bush Cree," that acts as a First Nations storybook.

I want to ask Members of this House today to join me in congratulating Curtis Brown and Brent Kaulback for their achievements and thank them for their dedication to our students. When people of this calibre put their heart and soul into their work, it is our children that are the winners. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mrs. Groenewegen. Member for Range Lake, Mr. Dolynny.

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON JUNIOR KINDERGARTEN FUNDING MODEL

MR. DOLYNNY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Today we heard from the Premier that a more thorough and rational approach for Junior Kindergarten is to be undertaken. I, like many in this room, welcome this more sobering and rational approach and question why did it take so long to realize.

That said, Mr. Speaker, I have spoken many times that this Junior Kindergarten approach had an ill-conceived funding model, and yet today, while listening very attentively, this very important issue was clearly pointed out as "no change in funding" approach. Mr. Speaker, I need to know why.

To remind the department as to this important question, we need to go back to the tug-of-war, or some of us called it the "poaching methodology," used to take some hard-earned surpluses from mostly larger municipal school boards and authorities in order to fund the rollout of Junior Kindergarten.

We have heard from the department, they felt by reconfiguring the pupil-teacher ratio, they were well-justified to exercise their statutory authority under law to reclaim these surpluses. All along, this has been well-demonstrated. This PTR fiasco is going to mean an increase in class sizes and more job losses and increased pressure on special needs students for those boards and authorities affected. But most importantly, these documented shortfalls are going to forcefully trigger a higher mill rate for the larger taxed-based communities, and I can tell you this is not welcome at all.

So again, how does the department expect larger community taxpayers to have their taxable mill rates and their school board surpluses used elsewhere in the territory? This is the crux of the issue still left unresolved and is still a linchpin of concern.

This JK initiative, although brilliant in concept, has created unneeded strain with school boards, DEAs, DECs, licenced daycares, day homes, Aboriginal Head Start, teachers and parents. Today's announcement does take some stress away and is welcoming. However, without a clear mandate for a new funding model, this momentary pause in program rollout is perceived as nothing more than a deferral tactic for the 18th Assembly to deal with, and this does not sit right with me.

Since this recent JK message came from the Premier earlier today, I will be addressing this shortfall with him. Thank you.

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

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON ARCTIC ENERGY ALLIANCE SOUTH SLAVE REGIONAL OFFICE

MR. BOUCHARD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise today to talk about a very exciting new office that's opening in Hay River. Arctic Energy Alliance has announced the opening of a new South Slave regional office in Hay River.

Arctic Energy Alliance is a non-profit society mandated to reduce costs and environmental impacts of energy and utility services in the Northwest Territories, a very big subject that's been going on through this session.

It's very exciting that the Arctic Energy Alliance has announced the new person at this office will be Tom Gross, a long-time Hay River resident. This office will be serving the South Slave; the community of Hay River, obviously; Enterprise; Fort Providence; Fort Res; Fort Smith; K'atloodchee and Kakisa. This is very exciting news for the South Slave area.

We need to look at the cost of energy, like we've talked about amongst ourselves here in this session. We're going to have an Energy Charrette. It's very timely with the announcement of this office opening up.

We're looking forward to the new office there and we're obviously looking forward to the efficiencies and looking at the cost of living in the Northwest Territories. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Bouchard. Member for Deh Cho, Mr. Nadli.

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON INVESTMENTS IN SOCIAL PRIORITIES

MR. NADLI: Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. We hear a lot in the House about the need for better accountability mechanisms. With that in mind, I'd like to offer some observations on how the government is measuring up against its own priorities.

At the outset of the 17th Assembly, the government identified the goal of having healthy, educated people free from poverty. It subsequently developed strategic initiatives in four broad areas: to alleviate poverty, to enhance early childhood development, to renew the education system, and to better address mental health issues.

Regrettably, actual spending on these initiatives is staying on the ground. All combined, the government has allocated about \$6.5 million to the current fiscal year. I did the math and it amounts to about \$150 for NWT residents. That's equivalent to the cost of a child's winter coat or a basket of groceries, or even half of the basket of groceries, depending upon where you live.

Far too many NWT residents are not healthy, well-educated or free from poverty, and yet looking at actual spending to improve people's well-being, there's not much meat on these bones. In stark contrast, let's consider spending on a different 17th Assembly priority: making strategic infrastructure investments. If spending is a measure of success, then this area of the government is winning. One infrastructure project alone, the Inuvik-Tuk highway, will see the government spend about \$110 million in the current fiscal year. Again, I did the math and it works out to \$2,600 per NWT resident.

So a single highway, which won't even be regularly used by most NWT residents, is gobbling up 17 times more than the combined new spending on poverty, young children, education and mental health.

On the matter of translating priorities into meaningful action, this government's approach is not one to emulate. Mahsi.

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

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON REGIONAL ECONOMIC PLANS

MR. HAWKINS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I want to talk today about a very important subject, and that subject is jobs. Jobs are critical no matter where you live. They help your family, they help you and they make sure that the economy runs. Economic opportunities are absolutely critical throughout our Northwest Territories because they do bring those jobs so we can have Northerners working. A Northerner working is certainly a much happier one than one living on the system.

With true employment rates as low as they truly are, we cannot wait for the federal government to step in or some other person such as a false deity making uneducated promises that they really don't understand. We must step down from these platitudes when it comes to economic investment. We must find a way to have a real impact. In a lot of ways, I actually really believe in the Economic

Opportunities Strategy because I truly think that that might be the right path. A lot of work has gone into developing that. Now it's about the proper implementation.

This is work that can only be done by the territorial government, and I'm confident with the path led forward by the Economic Opportunities Strategy, this is one critical way that we can go that should deliver results. But knowing the right path often isn't enough. It's about real investment into the economy, supporting industries in a meaningful way, and meaningful industries that provide economic growth that drives new jobs. It's also about a willingness to look into the regions and asking them what they want rather than this government or even the federal government telling them this is the way it's going to be. Would the fishing industry work in Tulita? Probably not the same way it works in Hay River. That's not to say they couldn't have a fishing industry, it's just it's not a straight line application.

It's easy to make slogans and statements by saying we need jobs everywhere, but the truth is it's actually tough to do. I think that the reason we meet these challenges is not because they're easy. We do them because they're hard and they have to be done.

I look forward to talking more about the Economic Opportunities Strategy about how we get into the regions, because when I talk to Northerners in Yellowknife, Fort Simpson, Norman Wells and even Inuvik, they truly have the keys to what will make their region work. Again, we have to get the Economic Opportunities Strategy working from a territorial level into the region. Quite often I hear from businesses that it's not just about money. Sometimes it's about policy, and most of the time it's about governments staying out of their way so they can get the job done.

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

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON ROLE OF KEVIN O'REILLY ON GIANT MINE REMEDIATION PROJECT

MS. BISARO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Yellowknife has a great legacy of mining. The city is here because of mining, particularly gold mines. With the two mines in our city limits now closed, we've been gifted with one huge liability at the Giant Mine site, and after the mine's abandonment by Royal Oak Mines, the federal government took over responsibility for cleanup and remediation of that site. Their proposed remediation plan didn't really address the problem. Not surprising, when the planners were thousands of miles away and the threat not in their backyard. But it is in our backyard and today I want to thank a Frame Lake constituent, Mr. Kevin O'Reilly, for his tireless

efforts to ensure the remediation of the Giant Mine site, including the thousands of tons of arsenic stored underground there. His work is going to be a reflection of what the communities of Yellowknife, Ndilo and Detah and their residents want and need.

Mr. O'Reilly has been in Yellowknife since 1985. His passion and commitment to the principles of accountability, transparency and sustainability are well known and respected. Perhaps the greatest of his commitments has been to the Giant Mine Remediation Project and the environmental assessment of that project by the Mackenzie Valley Environmental Review Board. He's been at it, one or the other, since 1988.

During the development of the remediation plan for Giant, Kevin was an active participant in workshops and meetings. Along with the Yellowknives Dene First Nation, he successfully encouraged the City of Yellowknife to make a mandatory referral of the Giant Mine Remediation Plan for an environmental assessment. During the Mackenzie Valley Environmental Impact Review Board, MVEIRB, assessment hearings, Kevin was ever present, making submissions, asking hard questions of the proponents, supporting other respondents. His work on behalf of Yellowknife and our environment cannot be understated.

The review board made 26 recommendations for changes to the proposed remediation plan, recommendations which addressed many of the area's residents' concerns, and those concerns had been expressed at the hearings. With the decision last December by the AANDC Minister, Minister Bernard Valcourt, Kevin's work paid off. Seventeen of the 26 mandatory measures in the MVEIRB report were accepted outright, with suggestions for minor changes in wording to the remaining nine.

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

---Unanimous consent granted

MS. BISARO: AANDC has agreed, as well, to change the project time frame from perpetuity to 100 years and to investigate and report on long-term funding options. The acceptance of the AANDC Minister for the recommendations in the MVEIRB report confirm the public wishes and they signified a major change from the proposed remediation plan for Giant. That acceptance was due in no small part to the work of Kevin O'Reilly.

One Yellowknifer has commented, "Kevin really deserves widespread and heartfelt recognition for achieving the deal on Giant. It wouldn't have happened without his initiative and tireless work." I cannot do anything but agree, and I ask Members to join me in recognizing this huge contribution of Frame Lake resident Kevin O'Reilly. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Ms. Bisaro. Member for Inuvik Boot Lake, Mr. Moses.

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON INCENTIVES FOR SCHOOL ATTENDANCE

MR. MOSES: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to talk today about our attendance rates in our schools across the Northwest Territories. Recently, the Minister of Education, Culture and Employment tabled and brought out this new Education Renewal and Innovation Framework document, called "Direction for Change." Actually, when we look through some of the statistics, one of the reasons we're taking a new direction in our education system is because of low attendance.

In 2011-12 the NWT average for student attendance was 84 percent and it was even lower in the smaller communities at 80 percent. That's, on average, missing one day of school per week, and when you get to about Grade 10, a student might miss about two years of school. So that's a lot of education that our students aren't getting and we're not having quality students graduate when they get through this school system.

We can have the best programs, we can have the best teachers running the best programs in the nation, in the territory in some of the communities, but if we don't get those students in their seats, what good is it?

In the community of Inuvik, I know at the East Three Elementary School – I'm not sure what they do at any other schools across the Northwest Territories – students who get perfect attendance for the month get their names put into a draw where they end up winning a prize. It could be a lunch; it could be a video game or something. So there's an incentive there for the students to make sure that they have perfect attendance for the whole month.

Most recently, we found out that Canadian North has incentives for schools as well. If a student has perfect attendance for the year, I believe, they get their names put into a draw where they get money, and that money can go into a school program or into a community program that that student chooses.

I want to ask the Minister today, what are we doing for our students in the Northwest Territories to get them into the seats, into the schools, and what incentives do we have planned in this new document "Direction for Change"? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON INTERGOVERNMENTAL COUNCIL ON LAND AND RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

MR. BROMLEY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Longstanding questions about the Intergovernmental Council on Land and Resource Management provided for under devolution remain

unanswered. There remains an apparent and disturbing lack of responsibility regarding the mandate of the House and the mandate of the Intergovernmental Council, given that the council is supposed to respect the autonomy and authority of each government over its own lands.

On February 14th I asked the Premier how Regular Members would have input into the terms of reference for this administrated structure. The Premier replied, "Thank you, Mr. Chair. I don't think setting up an Intergovernmental Council is going to change any constitution or any construct. Members here represent all the people in the Northwest Territories and, as I said, the legislation that would set up the Intergovernmental Council. I would welcome input from Members as to providing input in terms of our participation with the Intergovernmental Council."

When asked to take the lead in ensuring the council's proceedings would be public and transparent, the Premier said he would be pleased to do so. Seven months later, and just before the inaugural meeting a few weeks ago to set the terms of reference for the council, I again raised the matter. I asked for MLA input into the draft terms of reference before they were finalized and observer status at council meetings. Days later, when a draft was to be available, the Premier informed me that the terms of reference had already been finalized and were available to anyone who wanted them.

Opportunity for input? Zip. Terms of reference provided to date? Zip. MLA observer status? No way. So much for consensus government. So much for the people's representatives participating in governance and setting priorities.

I asked the Minister recently what the department's legislative priorities were, and incredibly, I was informed that this depended on the Intergovernmental Council. The Members of this House have an obligation to the people who elected them and a duty to set the priorities of this House.

To what degree has the Premier arbitrarily undermined our responsibilities and authorities through the apparent powers of the Intergovernmental Council? I am very concerned that the mandate of Regular MLAs is becoming superfluous to some degree in the decisions regarding legislation and other MLA roles could be usurped by the Intergovernmental Council.

Transparency is one of the cornerstones of consensus government. What other decisions, properly belonging to the House, are the Premier and Intergovernmental Council making without the participation of MLAs? If the Premier has his way...

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

---Unanimous consent granted

MR. BROMLEY: Transparency is one of the cornerstones of consensus government. What other decisions, properly belonging to the House, are the Premier and Intergovernmental Council making without the participation of MLAs? If the Premier has his way, and without even observer status for elected representatives of the people, we may never know. Mahsi.

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

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON CELEBRATING EDUCATIONAL SUCCESSES IN THE SAHTU REGION

MR. YAKELEYA: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Earlier this month educators around the world celebrated Teachers' Day on October 4th. That's the most honourable job ever held in any position by our people.

Today I rise in the House to discuss the status of education in the Northwest Territories. As our Assembly of First Nations National Chief Sean Atleo said, "Education is detrimental to social and economic health and creates key links to our other priorities, governing capacities and sustainable economic development." Two large areas, Mr. Speaker. One I think we're doing very well within the Sahtu; the second we're still grappling with. But if the feasibility study for a technical institute in the Sahtu comes to fruition – because today we're still sending them to the Aurora College campus – we will become masters of our own destiny, tackling sustainable economic development in our region, for the NWT and for Canada.

For the NWT to succeed in building the workforce and benefit from resource development, we must create an environment for learning, an environment for builders, an environment with a "yes, we can" attitude.

Our youth want to enter the workforce. They want to learn a trade and find a career path that wouldn't take them away from their families and communities. Our First Nations and Aboriginal youth need to be motivated, to be inspired so they can dream and imagine possibilities that are endless. The world doesn't end at Grade 12 nor does it end with a welding certificate or a bachelor's degree or a science degree.

We have five great schools in the Sahtu: Chief Albert Wright School, Chief T'Selehye School, Colville Lake School, ?ehtseo School and the Mackenzie Mountain School, all powerful names for our students to be reminded of who we are and where we come from. For example, two of our junior volleyball teams captured first place last weekend at the Junior Spike It. I'm sure we'll see more athletes from the Sahtu in town this weekend for the Senior Spike It Volleyball Tournament.

While we heard about the challenges of our educators in the small communities, let us also celebrate our successes across the Northwest Territories and tell them, yes, you can succeed and that we are 100 percent behind them.

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

---Unanimous consent granted

MR. YAKELEYA: Thank you, colleagues. Education is important because, for example, in Deline the first-ever community self-government is a reality. It means it is now our responsibility to succeed. Yes, we can succeed, providing the changes to education in this government do happen and it happens with our people's consent. Thank you.

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

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON FORT LIARD SCHOOL COUNSELLOR

MR. MENICOCHÉ: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. My statement today is about Fort Liard, which sorely needs a full-time school counsellor. The community currently receives only monthly drop-in service from a regional school counsellor. With a population exceeding 500 people, Fort Liard is large enough to warrant an RCMP detachment, nursing and basic health infrastructure, a social service office, a fire hall and schools from K-12, yet today it has no full-time school counsellor.

Fort Liard has more than its share of social problems. We can get a glimpse from the Frontier Foundation, an Aboriginal non-profit organization whose mission it is to support socially disadvantaged communities. They recently were in Fort Liard, and during a brainstorming session with Fort Liard teenagers, the Frontier Foundation volunteers recorded a staggering litany of social problems. The list included stealing, drinking, smoking, drugs, bullying, drug dealing, bootlegging, break and entering, drinking and driving, violence, violent crime and parents abusing kids.

You may counter by saying these are subjective descriptions, but plenty of cold hard facts can make these descriptions plausible. Consider these numbers. The violent crime rate in Fort Liard is double the territorial rate. The hamlet's employment rate is 10 percent lower than the territorial rate. Average family income in Fort Liard is approximately 65 percent of the territorial average. Forty-seven percent of Liard's households are core need, a figure well above the NWT rate. This means that nearly half of the hamlet's households meet a low-income threshold and occupy a dwelling that fails in the areas of sustainability, adequacy and affordability, and there is indeed a lot of overcrowding there.

Last, but not least, territory-wide graduation rates hover about 50 percent, far below the national rate, but graduation rates in small communities are closer to 40 percent. Now we add to this GNWT Early Development Instrument report in 2014 that shows 50 percent of our children in the small communities are significantly behind in their development and this probably has been this way for many years.

I seek unanimous consent to conclude my statement.

---Unanimous consent granted

MR. MENICOCHÉ: To be sure, Fort Liard youth are up against an awful lot. How can we expect them to thrive without consistent, dedicated support from a school counsellor? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Menicoche. The Member for Mackenzie Delta, Mr. Blake.

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON DEADLINE EXTENSION FOR INDIAN RESIDENTIAL SCHOOL PERSONAL CREDITS

MR. BLAKE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Tomorrow is the deadline to apply for the \$3,000 IRS personal credit, as mentioned by my colleague Mr. Nadli. For background, IRS refers to the Indian Residential School Settlement Agreement.

Under the agreement, the common experience payment was the primary form of compensation. The common experience payment process ended two years ago. Now \$40 million remains in the pot of money. So in January 2014, the federal government announced an extension, offering the one-time personal credit for anyone who already qualified for a common experience payment. Throughout Canada there are 80,000 eligible individuals and as of today only 10,000 have applied.

According to Dene National Chief Bill Erasmus, there is also a lot of confusion and mistrust because the application process is so stringent. There's also confusion about how these personal credits can be used. The credits can be used for a range of educational activities; for example, programs at university, college or trade schools. The money can also be approved and put toward any activity that promotes knowledge of our history, languages, artistic activities, or that build skills in the areas of hunting, trapping and fishing. Credits can also be transferred to family members.

The process hasn't been clearly explained. It has too many hoops and hurdles. Unless the deadline is extended, many eligible former students in the Northwest Territories will not receive their \$3,000 credit to which they are entitled.

Along with Chief Erasmus, I am calling on this government to request that the federal government extend the October 31st deadline.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Blake. Item 4, reports of standing and special committees. Item 5, returns to oral questions. Item 6, recognition of visitors in the gallery. Mr. Yakeleya.

Recognition of Visitors in the Gallery

MR. YAKELEYA: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I have the surprise and pleasure of recognizing the chief from Deline, Leonard Kenny, and also the chief self-government builder, Danny Gaudet, to the Assembly. I also recognize, I think I see Chief Eddie Sangris from Detah. He's not my constituent, but it's also my recognition to him. I'm not too sure of the third fellow in between Leonard and Danny, so I'd like to also recognize an unknown name at this time.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Yakeleya. Mr. Lafferty.

HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY: Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. [Translation] We have Bobby Weyallon in the gallery. I would like to recognize him in the House.

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

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would just like to quickly recognize the two Pages from Fort Smith, Mackenzie Villeneuve and Pyper Rehm, and Ms. Rehm's mother, Gladys Rehm, who are here for the week, and I thank the Legislature for the opportunity to have them here.

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

MR. BOUCHARD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to recognize Danny Gaudet and Leonard Kenny, as well, from Deline.

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

MR. BROMLEY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I have a constituent here today who we rarely get to see in this House because of his busy schedule, but he is here today. Mr. Edward Sangris, chief of the Yellowknives Dene First Nation.

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

MS. BISARO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to recognize two members of Yellowknife Education District No. 1, if they are still up there behind me, Mr. Al Cook and Ms. Heather Clarke. There were here earlier. Welcome to the Assembly. I'd also like to recognize two Pages who are here today from

Range Lake North School, but they live in the riding of Frame Lake, Brian Johnston and Elijah Lange.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Ms. Bisaro. Mr. Ramsay.

HON. DAVID RAMSAY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I too want to recognize some visitors in the gallery today. From YK1, I know we have Al Shortt. I think Ms. Bisaro referred to him as Al Cook, but it's Al Shortt. Heather Clarke, as well, welcome. I also want to recognize Chief Leonard Kenny from Deline, Danny Gaudet from Deline, also Ed Sangris, chief of the Yellowknives Dene, and also David Wasylciw who is with us today as well. Welcome to all the visitors in the gallery today.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Ramsay. I'd like to welcome everybody here in the public gallery. Thank you for taking an interest in our proceedings here today. Item 7, acknowledgements. Item 8, oral questions. The Member for Hay River South, Mrs. Groenewegen.

Oral Questions

QUESTION 474-17(5):

JUNIOR KINDERGARTEN IMPLEMENTATION

MRS. GROENEWEGEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. First of all I would like to thank the Premier, the Minister of Education and the Cabinet very much for their appropriate response today through the Premier's statement in the matter of Junior Kindergarten. Mr. Speaker, putting this rollout on pause for now until we are certain that we have checked out all the possibilities is welcomed and appreciated very much.

On the topic of going forward and doing the assessment and a thorough investigation of how we're going to roll this out eventually, I'd like to ask, what are the chances that we could put this under a different title than Junior Kindergarten? Junior Kindergarten speaks to basically adding a grade to a public school system, and really I think what we are trying to do is build on community infrastructure where that's appropriate. In other cases, where there may already be developed early childhood development opportunities in that community, perhaps it might be the role of this government to enhance those. So I'm just wondering: is there any flexibility for putting this under some other guise than just Junior Kindergarten, which speaks to an additional grade. Thank you.

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

HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY: Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. Those are discussions that we had just a while ago about the title, Junior Kindergarten, versus potential other names. We are going through a comprehensive review, as the Premier

indicated. We do have some time to discuss those matters. Right now we are currently delivering into 23 communities. The title, obviously, is Junior Kindergarten, so those are just some of the discussions that we need to have as a department and with the communities as well. Mahsi.

MRS. GROENEWEGEN: I will take comfort in the words the Minister used, "a comprehensive review." Because I think if we are comprehensive, we have to look at the existing infrastructure, facilities, programing in the communities and decide what is best on a community-by-community basis.

In the statement today it indicates that communities who have already begun the Junior Kindergarten program, and we hear that there's everything from some communities where there's one little person taking that, to communities like Mr. Blake's, where there are 14 four-year-olds that have entered the school system. So in those communities where they may wish to dial back the rolling out of this program in one of those 23 communities, I could see it being difficult for the school board and the DEAs or DECs to say, hey, you know what, we really can't do this, we don't have the resources, it's effecting our teaching complement, for whatever reason, and dialing that back. It may be problematic for them to communicate, like, you know, come and get your kids now, we've decided we're not going to do this.

So I'd just like to ask the Minister, what kind of support could the department offer in the way of communication with those communities that may want to withdraw from this, to support them to work their way through that process? Thank you.

HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY: Mr. Speaker, as I stated in this House, we do have a steering committee, a dedicated team that provides support to these 23 communities and we'll continue to provide that through my department just based on the announcement today. Those are the communities that we need to focus on. Whether the option of continuing or not, as the Premier indicated, that's a decision that we've made, and at the same time, those are some of the reviews that we'll be undertaking, as well, throughout the next eight months that we have. So that's what we'll be focusing on. Mahsi, Mr. Speaker.

MRS. GROENEWEGEN: When the original Junior Kindergarten plan and program was ruled out, it caused, I guess, some instability and uncertainty, insecurity in the way of programs on private operators, NGOs. So, just to be clear, all of those folks, as a result of this announcement today, should not be looking for other jobs or moving on or making plans to dispose of their assets, that seriously, they can stop today and wait now until they have a chance to have input into what the program will look like going forward.

I just want that message to be very clear because I'm afraid about the fallout from the original plan.

When people aren't certain of things, sometimes they make other plans. So I'd just like to reiterate and have the Minister confirm himself that these people that are listed here, the education authorities, Aboriginal Head Start, licenced day home operators, that these folks should hold on, that they will have an opportunity to be consulted before anything further happens. Thank you.

HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY: As I stated in this House, I did make a commitment to reach out to those operators and the stakeholders and that's exactly what we're doing through the Premier's statement. The review, obviously, will go beyond the 23 communities and engage the education authorities, licenced daycare centres, day homes, Aboriginal Head Start programming and stakeholder groups. We also have to keep in mind there are parents we have to engage with, as well, and the general public over the coming months. Mahsi, Mr. Speaker.

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

MRS. GROENEWEGEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I just want to again say thank you to the Minister and his department for putting this on pause until we can get it right.

Will the Minister keep us apprised? I will be very interested to see what the 23 communities do, and I'd like to ask the Minister if he'd keep us apprised of the feedback he gets from those communities. Thank you.

HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY: That is obviously part of our goals and objectives, to keep Members informed on our progress of our review of the 23 communities where JK is being delivered over the coming months. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Lafferty. The honourable Member for Range Lake, Mr. Dolynny.

QUESTION 475-17(5):

JUNIOR KINDERGARTEN FUNDING MODEL

MR. DOLYNNY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Earlier today Members alluded to what I like to refer to as a small sliver of success for the stakeholders of Junior Kindergarten. The Executive Council, led by our Premier, has failed to address the most important aspect of the current rollout of Junior Kindergarten. Who is going to pay for this? Although a recent dispute on the actual financial impact of Junior Kindergarten rollout has been occurring publicly between both Yellowknife school boards and the department, the issue, Mr. Speaker, is not the mechanics of the calculation but the final agreed to amount. In the end, the three-year cumulative funding reduction of just under \$2 million is hitting the mill rate taxpayers of Yellowknife. This is the real issue. Since this

announcement came today from the Premier, it is to him I will be addressing my questions.

We know the original rollout to the 23 communities for Junior Kindergarten was done with an ill-conceived funding model, with no new money from the GNWT budget and cleverly funded with surplus monies from school boards and authorities.

Can the Premier tell us why the funding component for today's announcement was purposely referred to as a "no change approach"? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Dolynny. Honourable Premier, Mr. McLeod.

HON. BOB MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As the Member knows, when the Program Review Office reviewed the education budgets, they determined the education system was over-funded by \$17.5 million a year. The Yellowknife school boards had large, accumulated surpluses such as \$2.5 million with YK1 and Yellowknife Catholic School Board had a \$1.4 million surplus. So the funding model at this time that we put forward is it would not change for this year and next year. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. DOLYNNY: Can the Premier assure the House that there will be a moratorium and all changes to the pupil-teacher ratio affecting all schools, that all surpluses, monies from school boards, authorities and councils not be clawed back and that this year's Yellowknife funding reduction of \$649,000 be returned to the rightful school boards? Thank you.

HON. BOB MCLEOD: The funding for the 23 Junior Kindergarten programs for communities will be absorbed by all education authorities through the re-profiling of existing funding, as I indicated in the letter to the standing committee. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. DOLYNNY: I'm not quite sure what we just heard, but I assume that was a "no" response to my earlier question. To be clear, it appears the Premier is okay that both Yellowknife school boards be saddled with funding reductions every year while we delay the evaluation of Junior Kindergarten well into the 18th Assembly. Again, is this what the Premier clearly supports? Thank you.

HON. BOB MCLEOD: The Member wants to focus on Yellowknife, but all schools will see the re-profiling of existing funding. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

MR. DOLYNNY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I will make the last one easy for the Premier. With the end of this session, we know the GNWT is about to embark on next year's main estimates for operational expenditures. The GNWT has a golden

opportunity to place new budgetary dollars towards existing rollout of Junior Kindergarten.

Can the Premier assure this House that new money will be set aside for Junior Kindergarten? Thank you.

HON. BOB MCLEOD: We are talking about one-time impacts. I will focus on the two Yellowknife school boards. The two boards will have to pay in 2014-15 and 2015-16. These one-time amounts are for 2014-15: YK1, \$372,000; YCS will be \$277,000; and in 2015-16: YK1, \$274,000; YCS will be \$525,000; keeping in mind the surpluses that YK1 has of \$2.5 million and Yellowknife Catholic School Board has \$1.4 million. Assuming the review comes out very positive and assuming in the 18th Assembly the two school boards will decide to go forward, the ongoing impact, as we see it, would be \$100,000 for YK1 and \$436,000 to YCS. If you look at YK1 whose budget is \$31 million a year, their ongoing reduction – and we're only talking about year one and two – is about 0.3 percent of their total budget. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. McLeod. The honourable Member for Deh Cho, Mr. Nadli.

QUESTION 476-17(5): INVESTMENTS IN SOCIAL PRIORITIES

MR. NADLI: Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. My questions are for Premier McLeod. We all acknowledge, here in the North, that we need to bolster the economy here to ensure we have a vibrant society. At the same time, there are also dire social needs at the community level. As I stated a few minutes ago, new spending to address the goal of healthy, educated people free from poverty is meager next to the spending on the Inuvik to Tuk highway.

How does the Premier justify the gross discrepancy between spending on infrastructure and spending on our people's well-being? Mahsi.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Nadli. Honourable Premier, Mr. McLeod.

HON. BOB MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I think the last time I checked, this government spends about 70 percent of our budget on social programs. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. NADLI: The basic needs of people in the communities are ensuring they have food and shelter. My colleague just expressed a need for school councillors. School boards' budgets are being shifted towards communities. This week in the House, the supplementary appropriation requests are being considered. The government is asking for an additional \$40 million for the Inuvik to Tuk highway and \$20 million for offsetting energy costs.

Why is it so easy for the Premier to find money for these projects while other pressing issues are left completely unaddressed? Mahsi.

HON. BOB MCLEOD: I believe the Member is referring to our capital budget. We spend \$1.6 billion on programs, so we are spending a lot of money in all of those areas the Member identifies. Thank you.

MR. NADLI: My final question relates to the results of the Early Development Instrument, or EDI. I mentioned the EDI results because they're a decisive measure of whether our people are healthy, educated and free from poverty. Mr. Speaker, on indicators of things like communication skills and physical well-being, our smallest communities are challenged. They are miles behind their peers in other parts of Canada.

How does the Premier balance his unbalanced focus on infrastructure when our children are so ill-prepared to face the world? What is the Premier doing to ensure people in small communities are healthy, educated and free from poverty? Mahsi.

HON. BOB MCLEOD: As a government, we just rolled out a number of policies. We came out with an Anti-Poverty Strategy where we provided \$500,000 to address this. We are spending money on housing. We're going to spend \$21 million on housing over the next three years, and we continue to provide support in all of the 33 communities in the Northwest Territories. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

QUESTION 477-17(5): REGIONAL ECONOMIC PLANS

MR. HAWKINS: I'm going to use the opportunity of oral questions here to talk about the issue I raised in my Member's statement, which is the regional economic plans and how will they be implemented throughout the Northwest Territories.

My question to the Minister of ITI is as such, as I've already stated. I want to know a little detail about these particular plans before we get into, sort of, the harder types of questions. I think we need to know how much money is being spent on each plan and which regions will be focused in on these plans in this budget cycle. Let's start with that. Thank you.

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

HON. DAVID RAMSAY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I don't have the detail the Member is requesting on what is going into each region. I do have figures on what the government is spending on the Economic Opportunities Strategy this year. It is just about \$2.5 million. Last year it was \$1.5 million. But for the detail, I can get that to the Member. Thank you.

MR. HAWKINS: Mr. Speaker, it's my understanding that we were going to work on about three Economic Strategy plans and it was my understanding that they would be at least in the range of about \$50,000 each. I'm doing that off memory, so it may not be the exact number for each plan, but I'm sure it's a close number bracket.

That said, I'm trying to source out which particular regions this government is going to help focus in on and what type of discussion are we going to have to ensure that we focus in on those regions that need a lot of help and see if we can get their economies bustling so they can work in and get people employed. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

HON. DAVID RAMSAY: Mr. Speaker, each region in the Northwest Territories is going to get the required help and assistance. Of course, we do have that available. We do have regional offices around the Northwest Territories that are ready, willing and able to help communities and help regions develop plans. Our goal is to do just that. Thank you.

MR. HAWKINS: I can appreciate from the very first response from the Minister that he's maybe not able to fully answer the question, so maybe I'll take a slightly different tact.

Does the Minister agree that regional grassroots input is important so each region can identify what's critical to them to help spark their individual economy?

The example I gave in my Member's statement, I'm sure you'll recall, Mr. Speaker, was I mentioned how maybe in Tulita the fishing industry isn't quite the same as it is in Hay River, where we need to support Hay River slightly differently because they have a big fishing economy and they do a lot of work there. But on the local level, it's slightly different in Tulita.

I guess the bottom line I'm getting at here is, how does the Minister envision that we're going to get grassroots input to ensure that we target things but serve every economy slightly different throughout the Northwest Territories? We can't expect one mould to work through, roll through and give us the exact same results. If they don't connect with the regional people with the regional needs, then they're a waste of time. So I want to hear how we plan to do that or how does the Minister envision that. Thank you.

HON. DAVID RAMSAY: Mr. Speaker, that was the genesis of the whole Economic Opportunities Strategy, was to get that grassroots look, to build partnerships around the Northwest Territories. We have the Northern Aboriginal Business Association; we have the Chamber of Commerce; we've talked to communities; we've talked to the public. All of that work went into the development of the Economic Opportunities Strategy, and the

implementation plan you see today reflects all of that good work that we put in the early days of developing the strategy that the Member talks of.

That work was done. That's why we believe strongly that the Economic Opportunities Strategy that we have and the implementation plan is going to benefit all regions across the Northwest Territories. Thank you.

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

MR. HAWKINS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. That's exactly why I'm asking about the implementation plan, how we get this into the input of those regions into this plan so we actually get developing business, because business is the right people to help create the economy. That's the detail I've been trying to get here today and I look forward to what the Minister is now going to say. Besides the plan, besides the implementation plan, let's hear the details of how we're going to get there and get people working. Thank you.

HON. DAVID RAMSAY: Mr. Speaker, whether it's agriculture... I know the Member is the chair of the Standing Committee on Economic Development and Infrastructure. We've had a great deal of success in agriculture. We think we can do a lot more there. So, we're poised to do some big things in agriculture.

On the tourism side, I just read a statement in the House earlier this week, talking about tourism numbers being up. The fact that we have put more marketing into our efforts in places like China is paying off, and we continue to see our numbers increase there. Also, the investment that we are making in the commercial fishing industry and the partnership that we're going to build to see a new export-grade fish plant constructed and operated in Hay River are very important things.

Again, we need to continue to support the regions. Not all regions are created equal, obviously. There are opportunities that vary from region to region. But our goal is to diversify the economy, and we believe the plan we've put in place will allow us to do that. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Ramsay. Member for Inuvik Boot Lake, Mr. Moses.

QUESTION 478-17(5):

INCENTIVES FOR SCHOOL ATTENDANCE

MR. MOSES: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As I mentioned earlier, we do have some attendance rate issues in our communities, especially the small communities. With this Education Renewal and Innovation Framework document, entitled "Direction for Change," it doesn't really speak too much on how we're going to try to get our students into the seats and into the classrooms.

So I'd like to ask the Minister of Education, Culture and Employment, what is his department doing to increase attendance in schools across the Northwest Territories? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Moses. Minister of Education, Mr. Lafferty.

HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY: Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. The whole Education Renewal and Innovation will obviously capture that. The attendance issue has been at the forefront of our discussion through the Aboriginal Student Achievement Initiative in which we've engaged with the general public over the years since 2010, and we had a forum on education renewal. The poor attendance, obviously, is a symptom of underlying issues where students are disengaged in our school system.

Examples of our ERI that I can share with the Member, one of the focuses is student well-being through safe and caring school practices and also providing nutritious foods in our school system and enhancing our community relations through elders in schools, residential school resources and staff training, and also providing personalized and quality education through focused inclusive learning supports, career orientation and distance learning. Those are some of the areas we are continuing to focus on. Mahsi.

MR. MOSES: I understand the well-being of the students as well as the teachers is very important to the department.

One of the things in the document talks about well-being in terms of safety, nutrition and making sure that our students are fed before they go in the classrooms, and that's another ongoing issue. That in itself can be an incentive for students to go to school first thing in the morning, is a breakfast program.

I'd like to ask the Minister if he has any funding for schools to look at creating breakfast programs in the schools. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY: Mr. Speaker, through our contribution to the district education councils and authorities, we provide funding as part of our contribution. It's at their discretion whether it be spent on a food basket or early learning breakfast in our school system. We, as a department, are working very closely with the school boards to have those students ready to learn in our school system so they're not coming to school hungry.

Some of the schools have been very creative, having a breakfast program in our school system, and we provide funding towards that as well. Not just my department but there is Health and Social Services and MACA. This is a coordinated approach. We will continue to provide that support to our school system. Mahsi, Mr. Speaker.

MR. MOSES: Mr. Speaker, I recently had a meeting with Canadian North and talked about some of their programs that they're running in some of the northern communities specifically around attendance and around best marks. They have really good incentives to get the academic grades that they need but also just making it to school.

Is the Minister familiar with this program that Canadian North runs and is he willing to also partner up with such an organization to look at getting some type of incentive program for student attendance? Thank you.

HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY: Mahsi. Obviously, we welcome any organizations, any industries coming to our schools to provide incentives, whether it be focusing on attendance or on-the-land programs. There are all these different partnerships out there that come into our school system and do partner up and contribute towards our programming or students' well-being. So, we'll continue to push that forward, seeking out partners, and we'll do our part as the Department of Education, working again, with the DECs and DEAs as well. Mahsi.

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

MR. MOSES: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Once again focusing on attendance, has the Minister worked with the DEAs and the DECs to find a position within the schools for any students, because attendance rates are pretty serious here, 80 percent in the small communities. Is he working with the DEAs to look at creating a position for any students who are continually missing school on a regular basis to find a way to interact or make phone calls to the houses so that those students have that contact with the school and develop that relationship? Is he working with the DEAs to develop something like that? I know they do something similar in Inuvik and I just want to know if he's working with other communities to implement a similar program. Thank you.

HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY: Mahsi. Those are just some of the options that we are currently working with. There are some best practices in other larger centres, as well, that can be carried out to the smaller communities. Whether it is positions in the communities, again, we contribute directly to the district education councils and they decide how many positions should be hired and what kind of positions should be hired. But yes, I will take that message to the DECs and work with them to identify these key areas. Mahsi.

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

QUESTION 479-17(5):
SAHTU EDUCATIONAL FACILITIES

MR. YAKELEYA: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. There's a saying in Quebec, a child without an education is like a bird without wings. I'm glad to report that the staff and students at the Colville Lake School now have running water and fully functioning bathrooms.

---Applause

Since October 10th. That's 18 days ago. Can the Minister of Education, Culture and Employment tell me that since the community has been asking for a brand new school in their community, can the Minister update the House as to where that issue is at with the community of Colville Lake? I had a meeting this morning with Chief Alvin Orlias and the SAO band manager, Joseph Kochon, and that's the first question they asked, where is our brand new school that we've been asking for?

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

HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY: Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. Colville Lake's school has been in the discussions for a number of years now, even through the local DEAs and at the regional level with DECs. We have to go through, obviously, the capital planning process where we have all these different areas of capital infrastructure coming forward. We, as a department, hope to get those key initiatives such as Colville Lake into the hopper. So based on that, we're following through on what will be approved through this Assembly and moving forward. Part of that, obviously, is the Colville Lake School that we've been talking about for a number of years. Mahsi.

MR. YAKELEYA: Thank you. I'll meet with the chief later on and have more discussions on their wish for a new school.

My questions are going to be all on the education in the Sahtu. So, I'm finally getting to see our schools moving into the 21st century with the fully function of running water and toilets. Yesterday I addressed the needs assessment and we're showing there's a great need for these programs in our region. Also, I understand there is a feasibility study underway in regards to a Sahtu tech, preparing our students for the labour force.

Based on the needs of a Sahtu technical institution, is that something that's going to be reported by the end of this Assembly in regard to the outcome of this feasibility study, planning a Sahtu technical institution in the Sahtu?

HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY: Mahsi. Yes, we've just completed the Sahtu feasibility study, the needs assessment, I should say. Based on that, it will give us a tool to work with for analyzing training

institute requirements for the Sahtu region. There is a process that we still have to go through, as well, but this is just a preliminary discussion that we've been having. We involve the stakeholders and they provide us with a needs assessment of the community. Now the next step will be focusing in those areas where the information has been provided to us and how can we work with that. So we will be working closely with the region of Sahtu as well. Mahsi.

MR. YAKELEYA: Thank you. My questions on the education of the Sahtu people, we have students going out of jurisdictions for long periods of time, out of our communities. We have a great need for seeing a Sahtu tech in our region. So my third question, I understand from the information I got from the department, impressive facts, that we have 30 students from our Sahtu communities attending the Thebacha Campus in Fort Smith. In total, we have 79 students attending some form of college programs in the Northwest Territories. In regard to our students at Aurora College in Fort Smith, yesterday I was shocked to hear that the students who are in that residence have no study desks, no lamps.

What is the Minister doing to ensure that our students who are coming down from the Sahtu to attend these college institutions have the basic supports for a good learning environment and these dorms are being fully equipped with the proper supports? Thank you.

HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY: Mahsi. Yes, we need to provide as much support to our students as we possibly can, especially students coming from the remote communities, and all communities as well.

This is an area that I need to address with the college because the college dorms are under their umbrella. So, that message will be relayed to the board chair and president, what's the status on that and how can we assist those individuals, the students, if they're struggling. I will get the status for the Member. Mahsi.

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

MR. YAKELEYA: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In my Member's statement I talked about the self-government realities of Deline.

Will the Minister be creating a K-12 trades program with the shop that they're planning to build in Deline?

HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY: Mahsi. When we talk about those areas of academic studies, whether it be regional schools or even technical schools, obviously we have to work with the community of Deline. Even through their school boards as well. As you know, there has been self-government arrangements being discussed and

eventually these educational authorities will fall under them as well. So we're very much looking forward to working with those parties as we move forward, discussing the future prosperity of educational facilities in the Sahtu region. Mahsi.

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

QUESTION 480-17(5):
FORT LIARD SCHOOL COUNSELLOR

MR. MENICOCHÉ: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Earlier I spoke about the need for a full-time student counsellor in the community of Fort Liard. So I'd like to ask the Minister of Education, as I laid out the case clearly that there's a need for a full-time counsellor in Fort Liard.

What formula is used by the Department of Education, Culture and Employment to determine whether a community merits a full-time school counsellor, and does the community have to meet a particular threshold?

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Menicoche. The Minister of Education, Mr. Lafferty.

HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY: Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. Obviously, there is a school funding framework that we follow through with and it does consist of various categories for individual school boards to qualify for. Some of the areas for counselling, obviously, the funding would be for school community counsellors, inclusive schooling, that there is funding for counsellors and inclusive schooling and funding for counselling and healing. These are just some of the areas that we'll be capturing what the Member is referring to as community school counsellors. Part of the Dehcho Divisional Education Council, we are contributing up to \$537,000 a year to capture the school community counsellor positions, but at the same time, it is at their discretion to hire those individuals as well as from the communities' perspective.

MR. MENICOCHÉ: Of course, a student's well-being is one of the Education Renewal Initiatives, and I'm pleased that the Minister brought out some other funding areas, so if the Minister can bring that document to me. Also, pooling all this money, does the Minister think that the Dehcho Education Council can translate the resources available into a full-time counsellor for the Fort Liard youth?

HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY: That \$537,000 to the Dehcho Divisional Education Council, they decide where the money should be expended, whether it be in Kakisa or another small community. It would be up to their discretion to deal with that. These are just some of the positions that have been highlighted, such as Fort Liard, Fort Providence, Fort Simpson, Jean Marie, Kakisa, Nahanni Butte, Trout Lake and Wrigley. Some of them are half-time positions, three-quarter positions based on the

funding that has been allocated to them. But again, at the end of the day, it will be up to the district education authority, working with the district education council, to decide how many positions should be hired in their school system.

MR. MENICOCHÉ: I continue to reiterate that we certainly need these types of supports for kids with complex needs. Once again, our at-risk youth in all our small communities, we need a wraparound approach that involves school counsellors and teachers working closely with other mental health and social services professionals.

As an MLA who represents some of the smallest and least resourced communities, can the Minister commit to bringing this wraparound approach to Fort Liard?

HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY: Within our Government of the Northwest Territories, we've been talking about, just recently, the wraparound, the services. That has been in discussion. Obviously, this will be a topic of discussion that the Member alluded to when I meet with interagency and other departments here when we talk about the funding itself. Yes, this will be, obviously, part of the discussion that we'll be having.

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

MR. MENICOCHÉ: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Just for clarity, if he's working with the Department of Health and Social Services, as well, is he able to work with them to see if there are some resources to help with the need of filling this gap in the Fort Liard school system?

HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY: Any funding that Health and Social Services can provide to us is greatly appreciated. At the same time, it is an interagency meeting that we need to have with the Department of Health and Social Services and my department because we talk about the school community counsellors and also counselling and healing. There are separate pots that we provide, as the Department of Education, Culture and Employment, to Fort Liard and other communities. Yes, I did commit to working with the Department of Health and Social Services. They have been our partner along the way and they will continue to do so.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Lafferty. The Member for Mackenzie Delta, Mr. Blake.

QUESTION 481-17(5):
DEADLINE EXTENSION FOR INDIAN
RESIDENTIAL SCHOOL PERSONAL CREDITS

MR. BLAKE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My questions are for the honourable Premier. With respect to the IRS personal credit, will the Premier act swiftly on behalf of the residents and request

that Minister Valcourt, who is on the file, extend the October 31st deadline?

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

HON. BOB MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I too have IRS personal credits that I have not had the opportunity to use up, so I would be pleased to call on the federal Minister to extend the time period so that we can maximize the healing required for some residential school students.

MR. BLAKE: Within my riding we've had a lot of assistance from both the Inuvialuit and the Gwich'in helping our residents work closely to fill out these forms. I'd like to ask that the Premier also request that the federal government provide additional support for eligible applicants.

HON. BOB MCLEOD: As the Member indicates, the Indian Residential School Settlement Agreement is administered by the federal government and, as I understand it, a component of this agreement relates to personal credits that individuals may be eligible to put towards educational, cultural projects, skills development or other related purposes. I think that we would want to see that information available to survivors, and the concern that has been raised by former eligible students that have not had adequate opportunity to apply to this program, so I would be pleased to include that in the request.

MR. BLAKE: I'd like to ask the Premier, if the deadline is extended, will the Minister commit to helping NWT residents maneuver through this application process? For example, with the communities that have government service officers.

HON. BOB MCLEOD: We have those community liaison officers for that exact purpose, to help people in the communities access benefits that they are entitled to, and we would work with the federal government to make sure that if it is extended that they be provided with the requisite information so that they can assist those former residential school students that would like to take advantage and benefit from these personal credits so that they can maximize their healing.

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

QUESTION 482-17(5):
INTERGOVERNMENTAL COUNCIL ON
LAND AND RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

MR. BROMLEY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My questions today are for Premier McLeod, following my Member's Statement where I spoke about my disappointment that yet again this government has acted in a way inconsistent with the tenets of consensus government, this time in the formation and work of the Intergovernmental Council on Land and Resource Management. Despite assurances

from the Premier, MLAs had no input into the terms of reference and have no observer status.

Why, despite specific requests to and obligations of the Premier, were MLAs left completely outside of the room of the Intergovernmental Council discussions on terms of reference when these important items were discussed?

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

HON. BOB MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I did bring forward a request from the MLAs to the Intergovernmental Council. I think it's important to recognize that the Intergovernmental Council is intended to foster improved cooperation and collaboration on land and resource management issues, and each government will continue to represent its own interests and the independent jurisdictions of each government are untouched. So, ultimately, the accountabilities of each government must remain. So on this Intergovernmental Council there's the Government of the Northwest Territories and at least seven Aboriginal governments, and when the question was posed to them, the council felt that it would not be beneficial for them to have observers. They asked if they could have observer status in our committee meetings. So, as I indicated to committee, the Intergovernmental Council is very interested in meeting on an annual basis with standing committee or Caucus or what have you.

MR. BROMLEY: The Premier just explained how he contravened the consensus government, given that the mandate of this council is that every government sticks to their own authorities, and the authority of the Premier is to require a consensus approach.

He also mentioned that others requested observer status, and I have absolutely no problem and we told the Premier this – I certainly told the Premier this – that the meetings should be open and transparent for any elected officials. So why did he not say yes?

I spoke about the apparent overlap of responsibility of the Intergovernmental Council and this House. Given that the Intergovernmental Council is making decisions such as priority of legislation, apparently, and who knows what else behind closed doors, the authorities and MLAs are being arbitrarily usurped or undermined. Decisions are now apparently made on behalf of this House by a brand new quasi-government structure that has had essentially no democratic review, the Intergovernmental Council.

How does the Premier see the mandate of Regular Members vis-à-vis the decisions of the Intergovernmental Council?

HON. BOB MCLEOD: The Member is suggesting that there is conspiracy behind every door, but that's certainly not the case. The Intergovernmental

Council, as we've laid out, will take a lead on legislative and policy matters related to land that they identify. These are issues that the Aboriginal governments feel are important for them to understand may emanate from their land claim agreements, because in order to be part of the Intergovernmental Council you have to be recognized as an Aboriginal government and to be an Aboriginal government you have to have a land claim or be negotiating at a land claim table.

So the way it works is that the Intergovernmental Council is not a replacement for the processes governments have and which governments must follow when it comes to legislative or policy development. So I don't see it interfering in any way with the work of the Legislative Assembly or consensus government. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. BROMLEY: I should be clear that I support the concept of an Intergovernmental Council if it's transparent and clear. It's not transparent and clear, and the Premier's minions do not understand, because they're telling us that the Intergovernmental Council is setting priorities which are the responsibility of this House. That's the example I raised.

As an elected representative of the people, when I look at the Premier's push to give away and limit our right to authority without any democratic review still, I have concerns about the opportunity to meet the expectations of the public for MLA involvement and representation in the regular day-to-day decisions of the House.

What other decisions are the Premier and Intergovernmental Council making without the input of MLAs? Mahsi.

HON. BOB MCLEOD: As I explained to committee and as the Member will be very pleased to know, all of the members of the Intergovernmental Council are very committed to transparency and all of the intergovernmental leaders have agreed to make meeting outcomes available, and leaders also recognize the need to be open and transparent and available and open to the press, their constituents and their fellow leaders within their governments. As I offered, there are ways around this observer thing. All of the governments have agreed to limit their participation to three members at the council. As I suggested in the briefing, our government could have, perhaps, the chair of the Standing Committee on Priorities and Planning sit in on the meetings as an observer for all of the MLAs that are interested. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

MR. BROMLEY: Thanks, Mr. Speaker, and thanks for that offer from the Premier. I assume he would be willing to present that in writing. I'm sure that

committee would respond positively to that, had we received that.

Given that the Premier has told us that other governments would be open to observers if they also had the opportunity to have observers, would the Premier go back to them and take them up on that offer and push for observer status for elected representatives of any of the governments participating in the Intergovernmental Council? Mahsi.

HO. BOB MCLEOD: I'm always pleased to communicate any request of Members of this House to the Intergovernmental Council. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

QUESTION 483-17(5):

JUNIOR KINDERGARTEN FUNDING MODEL

MS. BISARO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My questions today are addressed to the Premier and I want to follow up on some questions that my colleague Mr. Dolynny asked earlier following up on the statement of the Premier today. I want to, at the outset, indicate that I am very pleased and was pleased to hear the statement from the Premier. It is good news. But one of the things Mr. Dolynny asked had to do with funding and the funding ongoing. The Premier indicated in one of his answers that there were funding reductions for education authorities in this fiscal year, 2014-15, that there would be reductions in 2015-16 and there would be reductions in 2016-17. If phase two and three of the Junior Kindergarten program is not going to be happening, I need to get confirmed from the Premier whether or not there will be reductions to education authorities in 2015-16 and 2016-17. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Ms. Bisaro. Honourable Premier, Mr. McLeod.

HON. BOB MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As I indicated in the letter, I said the funding model would remain the same for years one and two, which is 2015-16 and 2016-17. The reason for that is we have 23 communities that have implemented Junior Kindergarten. As the Members have requested that we review that immediately and so we have to determine how many of those will no longer participate in the Junior Kindergarten program. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MS. BISARO: Thanks to the Premier for clarifying that. It doesn't make me happy, however. We are now targeting regional centres' education authorities and Yellowknife education authorities in a second year for a program which presumably is fully funded in this first year. We have 23 communities now ongoing for Junior Kindergarten. We had reductions from education authorities to

fund the first year and the reduction in the second year was supposed to fund the second year, from what I understand.

The other concern that I have is that this funding is only coming from authorities who have schools greater than 120 students. So we are totally targeting larger schools and larger authorities. Is that correct, that we will be doing reductions in 2015-16 from education authorities who will get nothing for at least another two or three years? Thank you.

HON. BOB MCLEOD: As I've indicated in my previous responses, we will be re-profiling from all authorities. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MS. BISARO: I don't think I heard an answer to my question, so I guess school boards are looking forward to reductions in 2015-16 and they aren't going to get anything back for at least another two or three years.

The Premier referenced surpluses and he referenced the need for particularly the two boards in Yellowknife to use up their surpluses. There are other boards with surpluses. I'd like to ask the Premier if the need to use up surplus to deal with the funding shortfall because of the reductions that are happening, is the need to use up surpluses the same for every education authority or is he looking specifically at Yellowknife? Thank you.

HON. BOB MCLEOD: As I said, we would have to revisit it depending on how many of the 23 communities determine that they will not be continuing with Junior Kindergarten. Thank you.

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

MS. BISARO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's hard to be short when I get an answer that doesn't reference my question. The Premier says that all the schools are over-funded. Our legislation says our PTR is 16 to 1. I want to say that the only schools which are meeting that 16 to 1 PTR are in Yellowknife. I would like to know whether or not the Premier intends to enforce or reduce dollars so that we are 16 to 1. Is he going to enforce a ratio of 16 to 1 in every school across the territory? We now have some that are funded at less than 5 to 1. Thank you.

HON. BOB MCLEOD: We're hearing that we have to adhere to our legislation. Obviously, as a government, we take that very seriously. We've indicated that we are doing a very comprehensive review and I think we would revisit it at that time. So we expect the review will take a period of time, but I've written to committee and indicated that we will seek input from every MLA on how this review should work, so that everybody will have input into it. Everybody, at the end of the day, will be happy with the outcome of the review. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

QUESTION 484-17(5):
MOULD INSPECTIONS IN
PUBLIC HOUSING UNITS

MR. HAWKINS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I love asking questions and I certainly enjoy the answers that I sometimes get. Mr. Speaker, my questions today are for the Housing Minister.

We all know mould is a serious issue in the Northwest Territories, certainly in public housing. Quite often we hear a lot about it. I want to know how often public housing units are tested for mould, who does the testing, what skills do they have, how do we ensure authorities are testing them properly and what expertise do we use. Those are the bulk of the questions and, well, let's find a way to get through them.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Hawkins. The honourable Minister of Housing, Mr. McLeod.

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I can answer them all at once or take them all as supps. Units are condition rated every year. We have qualified folks from our local housing authorities who go in and do the inspections, if mould is found and identified or if mould is found and suspected. Most of our regional staff are getting trained in mould identification and remediation, so they have an opportunity to go in and confirm it and take the necessary steps to deal with the situation. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. HAWKINS: I think I got most of them. Just to drill down slightly deeper, how many people are actually qualified at his point? I think the Minister had said they are training some folks, so let's get that on the record. How many people are specifically qualified to identify mould and send it out for testing? Nobody can just stand there and say it's this type of mould. It has to be sent out.

That said, what regions do they typically work? The Minister said just a moment ago, every public housing unit is condition rated every year, so I just want to make sure we're doing this regularly and in which regions. It's very important. Thank you.

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: I appreciate the Member's interest in the state of housing across the Northwest Territories. I can assure him that our folks on the front lines are fully trained, that they are all qualified. As far as who is qualified or how many there are, that's more of an operational question. I can get the information for the Member and share it with the Member and committee. The condition ratings, again, those are inspections we do every year with the local housing authorities. I can get the information as to how many individuals are actually

qualified and which region they work in. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. HAWKINS: I want to give deep and sincere thanks to the Minister for recognizing my concern about public housing. It's an important issue for me. I will accept every offer he just made about providing that information.

In the spring I was asking some details about certain public housing units and they were in the Nunakput region, interestingly enough, the one that you represent, Mr. Speaker. I had some concerns about the particular condition rating. I drilled down a little further later on, asking about if they were as qualified to do it as such and was the information fully contained.

I'd like to know, maybe, an update on this particular scenario. When has the condition rating been reviewed in those communities and what skills are the people using? In other words, what expertise are going into these units and assessing these units so we make sure we do them properly? Thank you.

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: Mr. Speaker. our maintenance people in the communities are fully qualified to carry out the inspection. This is unit condition rating, so they go into the unit; they inspect all the components of the unit. If they suspect mould might be present, if they're not qualified to identify and remediate it, they then will pass that information on. We will get people into the community to identify and remediate the mould.

As far as this particular unit goes, I'm not quite sure if it's a public housing unit. I'm suspecting it might be a private homeowner unit. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

MR. HAWKINS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Maybe for the benefit of the public – I've heard this answer before, and I'll explain it when I say it – maybe the Minister can help us understand what "fully qualified" means.

As we all know, things like housing maintainers are not Red Seal tradespersons, so I want to make sure we have the right people on the ground making the assessment. The only thing I would say, Mr. Speaker, is a housing maintainer – this is my last question, Mr. Speaker – cannot go in and identify an electrical problem. They can suspect there's an issue there, but they're not qualified to say it truly is a problem. So a housing maintainer probably doesn't have the skills, in most circumstances, to identify mould, electrical problems or things like outside of what is obviously a typical problem.

I just want to make sure we have the right people with the right skills assessing these properly because, frankly, they're territorial assets. We have

every duty to ensure that they're safe and we certainly have a social responsibility to make sure they're healthy for the tenants who live there. Thank you.

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: Mr. Speaker, we know exactly what our responsibilities are, that's why we have these people go and take care of these units. On behalf of all housing maintainers across the Northwest Territories, I take offence to the Member's comments, because it is a full apprenticeship, they do three years of training and a lot of it is basic home repair. But I would challenge the Member to write the test if he thinks they're not qualified.

I say, Mr. Speaker, I challenge the Member to write the test if he thinks they're not qualified. For him to stand over there and question the ability and the qualifications of these people who have been working in the fields for 20, 25, 30 years I think is unfair and they take a lot of pride in their work. I say again, they do have the qualifications. They have the experience that's needed to identify a lot of these issues. If they can't repair it, then they will get someone in who's qualified to repair it.

They have electrical inspections every year. They contract it out. They get an electrician to come in and inspect a lot of the units as far as the electrical issues go. So there are a number of inspections they do on the units. I can assure the public out there that our units are condition rated and they're well maintained and they have regular inspections by qualified people. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. McLeod. Time for oral questions has expired. Item 9, written questions. Item 10, returns to written questions. Item 11, replies to opening address. Item 12, petitions. Item 13, reports of committees on the review of bills. Mr. Nadli.

Reports of Committees on the Review of Bills

BILL 12: NORTHERN EMPLOYEE BENEFITS SERVICES PENSION ACT

MR. NADLI: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The committee would like to report on its consideration of Bill 12, Northern Employee Benefits Services Pension Act.

Bill 12, sponsored by the Minister of Finance, sets out the legislative framework for the Northern Employee Benefits Services Pension Plan to continue as a multi-employer, multijurisdictional public sector pension for employees of approved public employers in both the Northwest Territories and Nunavut.

Bill 12 received second reading in the Legislative Assembly on February 27, 2014, and was referred

to the Standing Committee on Government Operations for review. At the same time, our counterparts in the Legislative Assembly of Nunavut have been considering Bill 1, which largely mirrors the provisions of Bill 12.

Earlier this week the Nunavut Legislative Assembly adopted a motion to extend the period of time for their standing committee to consider Bill 1 by a further 120 days.

Today I am advising this House of our committee's wish to join our counterparts in Nunavut and to extend our review of Bill 12 by the same amount of time, 120 days.

Mr. Speaker, we find ourselves in a unique situation whereby two distinct and independent Legislatures are considering amendments to two pieces of mirrored legislation governing a body that conducts businesses in both jurisdictions.

Given the shared nature of the pension plan between the two jurisdictions, it is essential that the two bills that will emerge from the two Legislatures be harmonized to the greatest extent possible.

Given the interest already expressed by constituents, the unique nature of this bill and the challenges proposed by its multijurisdictional nature, it will take time to do this job properly. I believe that lawmakers from the Northwest Territories and Nunavut would agree that this is the best way to ensure that NEBS gets the clear legislative framework that they need and the balanced one they deserve.

MOTION TO EXTEND REVIEW PERIOD OF BILL 12, NORTHERN EMPLOYEE BENEFITS SERVICES PENSION ACT, CARRIED

Therefore, Mr. Speaker, in accordance with Rule 70(1) of the Rules of the Legislative Assembly of the Northwest Territories, I move, seconded by the honourable Member for Frame Lake, that the review period of Bill 12, Northern Employee Benefits Services Pension Plan Act, be extended for a further 120 days. Mahsi, Mr. Speaker.

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

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Question.

MR. SPEAKER: Question has been called. The motion is carried.

---Carried

The review period for Bill 12, Northern Employee Benefits Services...

---Interjection

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, guys. Order!

The review period for Bill 12, Northern Employee Benefits Services Pension Plan Act, is extended for 120 days.

Item 14, tabling of documents. Mr. Ramsay.

Tabling of Documents

TABLED DOCUMENT 156-17(5):
ANNUAL REPORT ON THE
ACTIVITIES OF THE RENTAL OFFICE,
APRIL 1, 2013, TO MARCH 31, 2014

HON. DAVID RAMSAY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I wish to table the following document, entitled "Annual Report on the Activities of the Rental Office, April 1, 2013, to March 31, 2014." Thank you.

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

TABLED DOCUMENT 157-17(5):
NORTHWEST TERRITORIES HERITAGE FUND
ANNUAL REPORT FOR 2012-2013

TABLED DOCUMENT 158-17(5):
NORTHWEST TERRITORIES HERITAGE FUND
ANNUAL REPORT FOR 2013-2014

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Mr. Speaker, I wish to table the following two documents, entitled "Northwest Territories Heritage Fund Annual Report for 2012-2013" and "Northwest Territories Heritage Fund Annual Report for 2013-2014."

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Miltenberger. Ms. Bisaro.

TABLED DOCUMENT 159-17(5):
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION, CULTURE AND
EMPLOYMENT PROJECTED FUNDED PUPIL-
TEACHER RATIO (PTR) BASED ON
SEPTEMBER 2013 ENROLMENT DATA

MS. BISARO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I wish to table a document from the Department of Education, Culture and Employment, "Projected Funded Pupil-Teacher Ratio (PTR) Based on September 2013 Enrolment Data." Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Ms. Bisaro. Mr. Dolynny.

TABLED DOCUMENT 160-17(5):
YELLOWKNIFE CATHOLIC SCHOOLS AND
YELLOWKNIFE EDUCATION DISTRICT NO. 1,
CORRECTION: OCTOBER 24, 2014,
MEDIA RELEASE

TABLED DOCUMENT 161-17(5):
YELLOWKNIFE CATHOLIC SCHOOLS AND
YELLOWKNIFE EDUCATION DISTRICT NO. 1,
CORRECTED (OCT. 28, 2014) JOINT MEDIA
RELEASE, YK SCHOOL CHAIRS DISAPPOINTED
WITH CABINET'S RESPONSE TO MLA MOTIONS

MR. DOLYNNY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I wish to table two documents today in the House. One is a Yellowknife Catholic Schools and Yellowknife Education District No. 1 joint media release, October 24, 2014, that talks about the reduction in funding for YK1 and YCS at a combined level of \$1,983 million and \$969,000.

The next one is a tabled document from Yellowknife Catholic Schools and Yellowknife Education District No. 1. Again a joint media release, titled "YK School Chairs Disappointed with Cabinet's Response to MLA Motions." Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

TABLED DOCUMENT 162-17(5):
LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY RETIRING
ALLOWANCE FUND FINANCIAL STATEMENT
FOR THE YEAR ENDED MARCH 31, 2014

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Dolynny. Pursuant to Section 21 of the Legislative Assembly Retiring Allowances Act, I wish to table the Legislative Assembly Retiring Allowances Fund Financial Statement for the Year Ended March 31, 2014.

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

Notices of Motion for First Reading of Bills

BILL 35:
SUPPLEMENTARY APPROPRIATION ACT
(OPERATIONS EXPENDITURES),
NO. 2, 2014-2015

BILL 37:
FINANCIAL ADMINISTRATION ACT

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Mr. Speaker, I give notice that on Monday, November 3, 2014, I will move that Bill 35, Supplementary Appropriation Act (Operations Expenditures), No. 2, 2014-2015, be read for the first time.

I also give notice that on Monday, November 3rd, I will move that Bill 37, Financial Administration Act, be read for the first time. Thank you.

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

BILL 36:
HEALTH AND SOCIAL SERVICES
PROFESSIONS ACT

HON. GLEN ABERNETHY: Mr. Speaker, I give notice that on Monday, November 3, 2014, I will move that Bill 36, Health and Social Services Professions Act, be read for the first time. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

BILL 38:
AN ACT TO AMEND THE JURY ACT

HON. DAVID RAMSAY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I give notice that on Monday, November 3, 2014, I will move that Bill 38, An Act to Amend the Jury Act, be read for the first time. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Ramsay. Item 17, motions. Item 18, first reading of bills. Item 19, second reading of bills. Item 20, consideration in Committee of the Whole of bills and other matters: Bill 25, An Act to Amend the Education Act; Bill 27, Miscellaneous Statute Law Amendment Act, 2014; Bill 29, Human Tissue Donation Act; Bill 30, An Act to Amend the Public Service Act; Bill 32, An Act to Amend the Pharmacy Act; Bill 33, An Act to Amend the Elections and Plebiscites Act, No. 2; Committee Report 7-17(5), Report on the Development of the Economic Opportunities and Mineral Development Strategies; Tabled Document 115-17(5), Northwest Territories Capital Estimates 2015-2016; and Tabled Document 154-17(5), Supplementary Estimates (Operations Expenditures), No. 4, 2014-2015, with Mr. Dolynny in the chair.

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

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): I call Committee of the Whole to order. What is the wish of committee? Ms. Bisaro.

MS. BISARO: Thank you, Mr. Chair. We wish to continue with Tabled Document 154-17(5), Supplementary Estimates (Infrastructure Expenditures), No. 4, 2014-15, and, time permitting, Tabled Document 115-17(5), NWT Capital Estimates, Department of Transportation and, if we finish that, then Bill 33. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Thank you, Ms. Bisaro. Does committee agree?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Thank you, committee. We'll commence after a short break. Thank you.

---SHORT RECESS

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Thank you, committee. I'd like to call Committee of the Whole

back to order. With that, I will go to the Minister of Finance who we're dealing with the Supplementary Estimates (Infrastructure Expenditures), No. 4, 2014-2015. Minister Miltenberger, do you have any witnesses you'd like to bring into the House? Thank you.

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Yes, I do, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Thank you, Minister Miltenberger. Does committee agree?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Thank you, committee. Sergeant-at-Arms, if you could please escort the witnesses inside the Chamber.

Minister Miltenberger, if you could please introduce your witnesses to the House.

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I have with me the deputy minister of Finance, Mike Aumond; deputy minister of the Department of Transportation, Russ Neudorf; and the director of the Management Board Secretariat for Finance.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Thank you, Minister Miltenberger. Mr. Aumond, Mr. Neudorf, Mr. Lovely, welcome to the Chamber here this evening. Committee, we are on general comments. Does committee agree, if there are no further general comments, committee is prepared to go into detail?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Thank you, committee. Committee, I'll ask you to turn to page 5 of the Supplementary Appropriation, 2014-2015. Supplementary Appropriation, No. 4, infrastructure expenditures, Finance, capital investment expenditures, office of the comptroller general, not previously authorized, \$125,000. Total department, not previously authorized, \$125,000. Does committee agree?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Thank you, committee. Turning to page 6, Public Works and Services, capital investment expenditures, asset management, not previously authorized, \$1.395 million. Total department, not previously authorized, \$1.395 million. Does committee agree?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Thank you, committee. Page 7, Education, Culture and Employment, capital investment expenditures, education and culture, not previously authorized, \$330,000. Mr. Bouchard.

MR. BOUCHARD: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I just have a question. Obviously, with the news today about JK and the assessment, have these

expenditures already been done or are they being done in the next little while? Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Thank you, Mr. Bouchard. For that, we'll go to Deputy Minister Aumond.

MR. AUMOND: Thank you, Mr. Chair. For the projects in Fort McPherson and in Tuktoyaktuk, those projects are complete. For the one in Colville Lake, I'm not sure at this point if it's complete or it's still to be completed this fiscal year. I'd have to get back to the Member on that. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Thank you, Mr. Aumond. Mr. Bouchard.

MR. BOUCHARD: Obviously, I guess we would need to assess whether Colville is one of the 23 that is going to continue with Junior Kindergarten, and if it hasn't been spent, would they still like to be invested in that? I mean, I think that's relative to today's statements in the House and maybe clarification where they're at status-wise and where they want to be going forward as well.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Thank you, Mr. Bouchard. Minister Miltenberger.

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. We will double check that, but I understand, talking to the Member for Sahtu, that Colville Lake is very pleased with the Junior Kindergarten and is intent on keeping it operational.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Thank you, Mr. Miltenberger. Committee, we are on page 7, Education, Culture and Employment, capital investment expenditures, education and culture, not previously authorized. Ms. Bisaro.

MS. BISARO: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I just want to make the same comment on this page that I made yesterday in talking about the operations expenditures. These projects have been completed and yet we are only now being asked to appropriate the funds. I won't say more than that, but we have violated, I guess, for lack of a better word, a policy that we have as a government, that we don't spend money until it has gone through an appropriation in this House, and all three of these projects are completed at this point and yet the money is only just now being approved. Just a comment.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Thank you, Ms. Bisaro. I'll take it as a comment, but if Mr. Miltenberger has any comment to that.

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The comments that we made yesterday in response to the concerns raised by Ms. Bisaro I'll let stand so we don't take up too much needless space in Hansard and chew people's cabbage twice.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Committee, we're on page 7, Education, Culture and Employment, capital investment expenditures, education and

culture, not previously authorized, \$330,000. Total department, not previously authorized, \$330,000. Does committee agree?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Committee, continuing on to page 8, Transportation, capital investment expenditures, airports, not previously authorized, \$700,000. Highways, not previously authorized, \$40.1 million. Total department, not previously authorized, \$40.8 million. Mr. Bouchard.

MR. BOUCHARD: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I, obviously, had some questions about the highway, the Tuk to Inuvik highway, and the expenditures there. I guess we should be celebrating the fact that we're going to look to accelerate this project and move forward. It sounds like the project could be moved forward and get done earlier than expected. I'm assuming with that we're on budget, as well, but the difficulty comes in the fact that we're asked to approve these budgets, and the Tuk to Inuvik highway was one of those dilemmas.

As a Member from the south, is that a project that we would support or not support? We ended up supporting the project because we knew there was going to be economic benefit to the region, which all indications are that the economic opportunities there were limited. There are a lot of people unemployed, and this was going to provide an opportunity for those people. Now that we're in the midst of the project, now we get the department coming to us and saying, well, we just need to get the job done, the contractor agrees that we can move it forward and get it done. Now we're wiping away those issues of economic development, the training, the implications of how this project will affect the Beaufort-Delta, and not only the individuals but the companies that are involved.

I guess my concerns are the fact that yes, I'm happy to hear that, but on the other hand, it seems like when we do these projects it's just "let's get it done." We're seeing some of that dilemma in big contracts, even construction of our hospital in Hay River. It's a big contract. It seems like we just need to get it done. We have a contractor that seems to push our subcontractors, some of the local and northern contractors, to go let's just get it done. We need to get this done. You need to put more money to it. We have a schedule but now we need you to ramp it up because we want to get done early and we want to maximize our potential and maybe even take on more profit. My concerns are that we are accelerating this not to the benefit of the Northwest Territories but the benefit of just getting it done and the benefit may be potentially to the contractors.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Thank you, Mr. Bouchard. Minister Miltenberger.

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Having lived through the

construction of the bridge, I can assure the Member that getting it done on time has very many benefits, and preferably on budget, because the Legislature clearly takes a dim view of projects that came in over budget and over time. This particular project has been, from the start, a four-year project, with the first three years focusing where the majority of work is on the building of the embankments and the final year of the finishing and putting in the top layer of gravel. While we are attempting to accelerate the project, the intent is to catch up with what didn't get built last year so that we can still hit that three-year major embankment work time schedule. There will be no loss of opportunity to anybody affiliated with the project, either the employees or the owners of the company. The whole intent is to still work within that four-year period with the money that's available.

MR. BOUCHARD: I guess going forward with this project, obviously, now it seems like we're accelerating the funds anyway. Maybe the project is going to be close to the anticipated schedule, but I mean, we're actually accelerating the payment and the funds. Have we talked to the federal government about trying to accelerate payments and will our commitment and the federal government's commitment match up as far as accelerating now?

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: There is an arrangement with the federal government where we can put in for payments for every 10 kilometres completed, and the arrangement is quite timely. There is a two to three week turnaround. The \$40 million will only be drawn down based on progress, so for every 10 kilometres we'll go back and we'll get a payment. I'll get the deputy minister just to reiterate for us the percentage. The majority of the money that's going to be coming forward, at least 60 percent will be coming from the federal government. But with your agreement, Mr. Chair, I would ask the deputy minister to speak to that.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Thank you, Minister Miltenberger. Mr. Aumond.

MR. AUMOND: Thank you, Mr. Chair. With the \$40 million that's under discussion today, the department has about \$24 million remaining in its budget this year to expend for a total expenditure between now and March 31st of about \$64 million. Based upon the progress that will be made, it is anticipated that we will get just over \$71 million recovery from the feds which would include the work that was done now and for some previous work, so just over \$71 million in federal recoveries.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Thank you, Mr. Aumond. Mr. Bouchard.

MR. BOUCHARD: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Obviously, as we go through this project, one of the concerns when we first started when we were looking to approval was procurement of northern

contractors. Has the department kept up with reporting of how many northern contractors are benefiting from the project, and can we get any of that type of information to date?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Thank you, Mr. Bouchard. For that, we'll go to Mr. Neudorf.

MR. NEUDORF: Thank you, Mr. Chair. The contractor has done a good job in both maximizing local northern employment opportunities and in subcontracting opportunities. Last year he had 338 workers hired, and of that, 78 percent were local and northern workers. At the peak of construction going forward, the contractor anticipates up to 600 workers on site and he is estimating that 70 percent of those will be local and northern.

In terms of subcontractors, last year he had 41 subcontractors hired to various levels and doing various things. About three-quarters of those, 75 percent, were northern local subcontractors. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Thank you, Mr. Neudorf. Mr. Bouchard.

MR. BOUCHARD: Yes, thank you, Madam...Mr. Chair. I had it all day yesterday; you can get it today.

I guess the concerns are that we continue to hear a lot of things from contractors and from individuals of the opportunities that are there. I guess these anticipated numbers that we were given when we first got the proposal and the numbers, have we met any of the expectations? They predicted they were going to be hiring 90 percent contractors and 90 percent Northerners. Were there any indicators like that and agreements in place?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Thank you, Mr. Bouchard. Minister Miltenberger.

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. This project has met our expectations and was a construction project with a finite timeline. If we could have that same type of success with a lot of the other, say, operating mines, they would be happier and so would we. So the project has met expectations. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Thank you, Minister Miltenberger. Mr. Bouchard.

MR. BOUCHARD: That's good. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Thank you, Mr. Bouchard. Continuing on with the questions here, I have Ms. Bisaro.

MS. BISARO: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I want to say at the outset – and I'm speaking of the Inuvik to Tuk Highway Project – that I support this project but I have serious concerns about the ask that we're being asked to consider here in this budget. That's the \$40 million change in cash flow to

accommodate the new construction schedule and timetable that has been put before us.

I expressed my concerns the other day. Our cash position is going to require us to do some borrowing that's going to add to our expenses. It seems to me that this is being done with little regard for our fiscal strategy and our fiscal position. Members are constantly being told there's no money, there's no money, there's no money, and we ask for \$100,000 for a particular program or service that we think is important and we're told there's no money, and yet it seems that we can turn around and find \$40 million or borrow \$40 million and find or borrow \$20 million pretty much at the drop of a hat. So, it's not so much the project that I'm concerned about but the way that it's now being proposed to be funded.

My first question to the Minister is: When did the Minister and government know that there was going to be a need to change the cash flow payments for this project? This \$40 million is an increase over what was projected for this budget year. There's an increase projected for the next budget year as well. So, when did the department or when did the Minister or the government know that there was going to be the need to change how the money was flowing to the contractor? Thank you.

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

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. First I just want to reassure the Member and the people listening in here that we do all this money management with complete regard for our fiscal situation, which is why we get the clean audits and which is why we have the Aa1 credit rating and we managed to absorb some of these unexpected shocks because we always keep in mind looking after the taxpayers' dollars as if it were our own. So I want to reassure the Member of that.

When the project was started, it was flagged right from the beginning that cash flow adjustment would probably be required, we just didn't know how much. With a year under our belt, it became clear, once we actually moved dirt, built some roads, put in a lot of culverts and bridges, that we needed to adjust this cash flow to enable us to meet the schedule, the three years of embankment work followed by the fourth year.

Of equal importance is to keep this project on budget. So this is the most economical way to move forward. If we were to have the project run out of money and lay down tools and go away for the rest of the winter after starting up and they're done in January and we end up paying \$30 million to \$40 million in fees and extra costs, the contractor's lost opportunity to meet the targets, the budget, then indeed we would be a case of being penny wise and pound foolish where we would have a few dollars saved maybe in interest, but it would cost us \$30 million to \$40 million extra not

budgeted for. This \$40 million is part of the project cost. So it would indeed be an unfortunate circumstance and a bad fiscal decision not to keep this project going. To put a stick in the spokes of the project and the very issues that MLA Bouchard talked about, for example, about all the local employment and local business, that would be a distinct disadvantage for the project and a negative impact on all the workers, all the businesses that are doing business right now. This is, we believe, necessary to keep this project solvent and alive.

MS. BISARO: I know the Minister said that they knew early on, but I think again this is a situation where Regular Members weren't advised and if we were advised, it certainly wasn't spelled out to us that this was going to be coming at us later down the line. The department may have known, the Minister may have known, but I don't think Regular Members were advised and told this contract is in flux, we're going to be coming back at you probably at some point in time to ask for a change in how we're cash-flowing the money. I certainly don't remember that we got that kind of a firm explanation of the need to change things. It's one more thing adding up to a list of things that I feel I'm not getting advised of.

My other question has to do with the cost of borrowing this money. I think we determined yesterday that it's somewhere around \$50,000 all told with all the extra amounts we need to borrow. For this particular project, whatever interest is attached to the borrowing of this \$40 million for this project, that's an increase in cost for this project. Is this a cost that the contractor is going to bear because it is a benefit for the contractor for us to speed things up or is this a cost that the government bears? Thank you.

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: It's a cost that the government bears. Thank you.

MS. BISARO: Thank you, Minister, for that. Maybe the Minister doesn't see it this way, but I get the sense that the contractor is running us and that the contractor is telling us I need to change my schedule and it's going to cost you an extra whatever, \$20,000 or \$30,000, but it doesn't seem as though the government is in control of, not the contract per se, but the way the contract is being managed. I suspect that the government would disagree with me, but I am saying this is the perception that I get, this is the feeling that I get. We are bending over backwards to do what the contractor wants us to do and it's costing us money. I have a bit of a problem with that. Thanks, Mr. Chair.

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: This is a design/build contract road project. It's the set price, \$230 million. We need to make sure that we give the contractor all the tools, both fiscal and otherwise, that he needs to get the job done so he

can move the design requirements and stay within budget.

This allows us to catch up to the road that wasn't constructed last year because it was a slow start. This is not a gift or benefit to the contractor. That's the only reason we are doing it. It's not because he just decided it would be better off for him just because.

We are all very, very conscious of our obligation and the scrutiny on this project and the need to bring it in on budget, on time and of high quality. To do that, we have to be flexible. We knew right from the start there would be an adjustment required because this was the type of road construction and it hasn't been done anywhere in this country before. We have a year under our belt. We have a seasoned team of road builders now at both ends working towards the middle. The expectation, I would assume – I assume, we assume, I think the people of the Northwest Territories assume – is that we want this project built on time and on budget.

After, like I said, we lived through the bridge construction and it had its challenges and it was very problematic for all of us, now we have an opportunity in a project that we want to bring in on budget and on time. In order to do that we have to move money within the approved project cost to get that done. Thank you.

MS. BISARO: One last question. The Minister mentions that it's a design/build project. It's a set price. I have great difficulty with these statements for many projects where it's a set price. I have to ask, if it's a set price, why are we having to eat the interest cost? Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Thank you, Ms. Bisaro. Mr. Aumond.

MR. AUMOND: Thank you, Mr. Chair. So, as the Minister said, it's a design/build process and we want the contractor to be efficient and give him the flexibility and the tools to meet the agreed upon price. It was our original budget cash flow before the project got started that's resulting in the requirement to adjust the cash flow. So, as the Minister said earlier, our choices are to adjust the cash flow and bring in the project on time and on budget or face delay claims from the contractor because we are deciding we don't want to progress the project in a manner that would be efficient to do so. So while we are incurring incremental borrowing costs close to the amount the Member has stated, the alternative is to face delay claims in the neighbourhood of between \$30 million and \$40 million, as the Minister stated earlier. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Thank you, Mr. Aumond. Continuing on with questions, I have Mr. Yakeleya.

MR. YAKELEYA: Thank you, Mr. Chair. This road from Inuvik to Tuk certainly has some national

significance. The Member spoke about the support for this road. We're talking about the request before us. The people up in the Beaufort-Delta certainly did their part with regard to grabbing the federal government's attention to see this road get started. Today I should talk about building this road.

The federal government, you know, dropped a few million into our pockets to get it going and made arrangements. No small, easy task, considering how difficult at times it is for our government to get funding from the federal government. It was all due to some strong support by the people in the Beaufort-Delta.

As I was looking through this budget, I'm trying to figure out what is the message here. What message are we sending our people? We clearly heard from various sources that the feds want to build one road at a time. We really want to push strong for the Mackenzie Valley Highway. We heard that they are interested in building one road at a time.

This is an unprecedented area. If you look at Russia, they have a similar terrain. They're building roads in the North and we're also building roads in the North here. The message is: Can we do this within the prescribed budget that we have and the accounting is set in place? More importantly, we're building and we're advancing skills like trades to build those. That's most important for me, is that we're developing the young people up there with skills and, looking at that area, how much better off it will be in the future if we continue to build that skill. It's no different than us building the Deh Cho Bridge or when you have highways down in the southern part here. People benefit from it.

Looking at this road here, what is the message? The federal government is certainly watching us. They're saying, here, I've given you \$200 million. We've given you money. The next big project, if it goes well and goes through, is \$700 million, then so on and so forth.

Can you, as a government, really take on the task of building infrastructure in the Northwest Territories? Do you have it? I know they're watching. The Prime Minister especially is looking at it.

So I look at this and I'm going to be asking in the future, what have we learned from this experience. There is certainly a lot of experience being learned in the Tuk-Inuvik road. There must be so many checks and balances that it's crazy. But it's there because of all the process and regulations. We certainly want to take this learning experience and use it in the Sahtu and build from Norman Wells south to Wrigley and Wrigley to the north. So we want to look at both ends. We want to start, also, but we have to wait. That's a matter of fact. So we're looking at this experience.

I'm happy to hear that there are contractors and subcontractors. There were 44 subcontractors. Seventy-five percent were northern subcontractors. We can dig into the details of that and dig into the workers.

The Minister made a comment that we're looking at this project with the dollars and we'll look after these dollars as if it were our own. Well, we approved these dollars, so it is our own, on behalf of the taxpayers of Canada and the Northwest Territories. So there's no higher level to request a \$40 million accelerated advance, because these dollars are our own and it comes through the process here.

I've been thinking about that and I'm thinking about this road here and I'm looking at our past experience on multi-million dollar infrastructure in the Northwest Territories and bringing that experience to this forefront here and what are the lessons learned about whatever infrastructure we're going to have. Our regions are going to have millions of dollars of infrastructure money from one department or the next. Here we are asking to accelerate this. I'm hoping that the department is working in conjunction, in partnership, with the contractors, and that we are doing this, because we are at the forefront.

My colleague Ms. Bisaro asked if the contractors were taking the lead. If that's the case, we need to have a little more discussion, but I'm hoping the government can say we're working in partnership with them. We are the one taking...because this money is being approved at this level here, the \$40 million, to accelerate and to speed it up.

I wanted to make that comment. But overall, the whole infrastructure of the Tuk to Inuvik road, number one, we're building skills and we're building opportunities. In Inuvik and Tuk the economics are not very good right now. As my friend Mr. Bromley said earlier, zip is happening in that region, and zip is happening in the Sahtu now.

In the smaller communities and the Inuvik-Tuk road, I'm going to support this infrastructure request because I think it's very important in the bigger picture. But I also want to say, because I'm just specifically focusing on this road here, all the requests and needs that Ms. Bisaro talked about should also be in the forefront of the minds when there are requests for other regions. This is a huge chunk of money to accelerate the project. I believe the staff are doing the best they can to explain it to us, given the moving project that we have, that it will be okay and the other regions with their infrastructure also being considered that we can look at work at how we support other regions that have similar requests.

So I want to say that I'm going to support the people up in that area and I think they're doing a good job. I think they have a lot to learn and they

have done a lot of work to bring this to the forefront. We would have never done it unless the federal government was involved, and they became involved because of such strong work done by the leadership up there. So we should celebrate them.

Not all things are as smooth as we think sometimes, you know? So I hope we get the same support when we start looking at the Sahtu roads. Let's celebrate the people. Good on them. We should be working with them. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolyunny): Thank you, Mr. Yakeleya. Minister Miltenberger.

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I appreciate the Member's comments and support and his strategic, broad view of the project and how it's going to fit into the broader road development and how we are cutting our teeth and earning our spurs on this particular project, when we work things out, and we'll be taking that experience with us. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolyunny): Thank you, Minister Miltenberger. Continuing on with questions on this page, I have Mr. Bromley.

MR. BROMLEY: Thank you, Mr. Chair. To cut to the chase for the record: imprudent, premature. Thank you.

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

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. For the record, I appreciate the Member's comments. We had a fairly lengthy discussion about this yesterday. The comments I made yesterday I just leave stand on the record with regard to the Member's concerns. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolyunny): Thank you, Mr. Miltenberger. Committee, we are on page 8, Transportation, capital investment expenditures, airports, not previously authorized, \$700,000. Highways, not previously authorized, \$40.1 million. Mr. Hawkins.

MR. HAWKINS: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I'm not going to spend a lot of time on this issue. I am going to support the \$40 million, but I do that with sort of the side comment of saying I feel that we have little choice. By obstructing the \$40 million, I feel that we put the project and other types of headaches for us and we view them as let's frustrate the process by causing a delay, I guess, in some manner or form.

Members have been very unhappy with the \$40 million and how it has come about, but at the same time, I'm a realist and know that if we struck this \$40 million, what frustrations have we caused? We're following someone else's schedule; that seems to be the fact. If we cause delay by stifling this money, stalling it, deleting it, whatever the case

may be, we may be on the hook for more money, and in the end, it's almost like our hands are tied.

I want this road built. It's going to be on the books sooner than later, we're committed to this project regardless of how the money flows and I think it's important to let people know that I don't think at this point, I'm going to say, and I'm qualifying it in my perspective as opposed to the exact Member for Member, but I'm saying generally Members are in support of this initiative and it's a reality. That's just the way it is. But just sort of the way this has come about has caused some concern and frustration and it's difficult to articulate fully, but many people sort of feel the pressure of, well, if we support the way it has been delivered, what have we done. Are we doing our job, or are we not doing our job, and it has been a challenge. But I'm not any fool on the area that I know that we really just don't have any other choice but to support the money. I worry about how much more this would cause the process by any potential delay.

I'm going to say, as I finish up here, that I'm hopeful the money will be used. I have no doubt that there's excellent scrutiny on this project by our team and I have no doubt that they will only let the money flow when it's necessary. So when this money is authorized, it will be authorized over the period to use it, and I know that it will only be used when it's needed. So the process is a little frustrating on this one and I think the Minister and certainly his staff got it.

That said, I'm happy to support it to the principle that it has to be done anyway. So that's sort of my position and I do want to see the eventuality of this highway built and I wouldn't want us to see any unnecessary hurdles put in front of it.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolyunny): Thank you, Mr. Hawkins. I'll treat that as a comment. Thank you. Committee, again, page 8, Transportation, capital investment expenditures, airports, not previously authorized, \$700,000. Highways, not previously authorized, \$40.1 million. Total department, not previously authorized, \$40.8 million. Does committee agree?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolyunny): Thank you, committee. Page 9, Industry, Tourism and Investment, capital investment expenditures, minerals and petroleum resources, not previously authorized, \$3.139 million. Total department, not previously authorized, \$3.139 million. Ms. Bisaro.

MS. BISARO: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I have a couple of questions here. The first one has to do with the funding for the construction of a geological collection storage facility. I see we're being asked to approve \$500,000. I don't have any problem with this project, but I recall from our discussion of the operations expenditures that under the Executive

there is a negative amount of \$4.206 million for the same thing to re-profile expenditures for the construction of a geological collection storage facility. So these two numbers don't jibe and I'd like to know where the extra \$3.7 million is going to be if we're only spending \$500,000 on this particular project but the Executive is giving up \$4.2. Where's the other \$3.7 million? Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolyunny): Thank you, Ms. Bisaro. For that, we'll go to Mr. Aumond.

MR. AUMOND: Thank you, Mr. Chair. The \$3.7 million that the Member referred to will be in '15-16 to complete the project. The \$500,000 for '14-15 is the capital costs and reflects the expenditures that will be undertaken between now and March 31 and the \$3.7 million will be undertaken in '15-16. Thank you.

MS. BISARO: Thanks to Mr. Aumond for the explanation. It's very clear, but again, it confuses me. Why do we not transfer what we're going to be spending? Why not transfer the other devolution money, the \$3.7 million from our devolution money, in the year in which it's going to be spent? Thank you.

MR. AUMOND: Thank you. We try to undertake the multi-year project and explain those costs as they occur. So the intention would be to raise the \$3.7 million that the Member referred to in an infrastructure supp in the February/March session. Thank you.

MS. BISARO: Okay. I had to think about that. We've passed the '15-16 infrastructure budget. So I guess it's just anybody looking at it from the outside would have a difficult time following these numbers. I guess it would help, I don't know if it's allowed, but I guess it would certainly help if that explanation was included in the text that we have on this page. It would certainly make it easier to understand.

My other question has to do with the transfer, and there are a couple of them in this budget, the transfer of federal buildings to us from devolution and we're accounting for these. I'd like to know, we see that they're here as an expense, but I'd like to know from the Minister or from the department how we account for these capital assets that we've taken over. There's an expense here, but are we shelling out money, or where is the revenue coming from, I guess. Is there revenue from the feds to account for this expense that's recorded here? Thank you.

MR. AUMOND: Thank you. So, for the three buildings that are coming over, including the C.S. Lord geosciences building for ITI, these buildings were assets of the federal government and came over to the GNWT on April 1st when devolution was implemented. So the process we use to transfer those was to get an independent appraisal of the buildings. So for the C.S. Lord, it is the number that

we're considering here and we will book that number and we will amortize that asset and the value of that over the remaining life of the building and that's how we would account for those assets on our books. Thank you.

MS. BISARO: Thanks to Mr. Aumond. So there is no revenue anywhere. Like, the funding that we got from the federal government for devolution, was any of that for these capital assets? Thank you.

MR. AUMOND: Thank you. No, it's non-cash item transfer. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Thank you, Mr. Aumond. Committee, again, we're on page 9, Industry, Tourism and Investment, capital investment expenditures, minerals and petroleum resources, not previously authorized, \$3.139 million. Total department, not previously authorized, \$3.139 million. Does committee agree?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Thank you, committee. Page 10, Environment and Natural Resources, capital investment expenditures, wildlife, not previously authorized, \$43,000. Water resources, not previously authorized, \$3.096 million. Total department, not previously authorized, \$3.139 million. Does committee agree?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Thank you, committee. Ms. Bisaro.

COMMITTEE MOTION 94-17(5):
CONCURRENCE OF
TABLED DOCUMENT 154-17(5),
SUPPLEMENTARY ESTIMATES
(INFRASTRUCTURE EXPENDITURES),
NO. 4, 2014-2015,
CARRIED

MS. BISARO: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I move that consideration of Tabled Document 154-17(5), Supplementary Estimates (Infrastructure Expenditures), No. 4, 2014-2015, be now concluded and that Tabled Document 154-17(5) be reported and recommended as ready for further consideration in formal session through the form of an appropriation bill. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Thank you, Ms. Bisaro. Motion is being circulated. Motion is in order. The motion is carried.

---Carried

Committee, Tabled Document 154-17(5) will be reported and recommended as ready for consideration in formal session through the form of an appropriation bill.

With that, I'd like to thank our guests here this afternoon. Mr. Lovely, Mr. Neudorf, Mr. Aumond,

thanks for joining us. Sergeant-at-Arms, if you could please escort the witnesses out of the House.

In keeping with direction provided by committee, we will now return to Tabled Document 115-17(5), NWT Capital Estimates 2015-2016. We do have one department remaining, the Department of Transportation. With that, we'll go to Minister Beaulieu to see if he has any witnesses he'd like to bring into the House. Mr. Beaulieu.

HON. TOM BEAULIEU: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Yes, I do.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Thank you, Minister Beaulieu. Does committee agree?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Thank you, committee. Sergeant-at-Arms, if you could please escort the witnesses into the House.

Minister Beaulieu, if you'd be kind enough to introduce your witness to the House, please.

HON. TOM BEAULIEU: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. With me today is the deputy minister of the Department of Transportation, Mr. Russell Neudorf.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Thank you, Minister Beaulieu. Mr. Neudorf, again, welcome to the House this evening. Committee, as we have agreed upon with convention, we will forego any opening comments and we will go straight to general comments. Seeing that there are no general comments, does committee agree to go into detail?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Committee, we'll defer page 71 of the Capital Estimates and we'll go directly to page 72, airports, infrastructure investments, \$2.879 million. Does committee agree?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Page 74, marine, infrastructure investments, \$400,000.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Page 76, highways, infrastructure investments, \$107.6 million. Mr. Bouchard.

MR. BOUCHARD: I had a question about, obviously, the Tuk to Inuvik highway, and this being the budget after we're expecting an accelerated amount. What is the department's consideration if the estimated or the projected volume of road we're supposed to complete isn't done? Would this money be deleted from the budget or would it just be a carryover to the following year? I'm just wondering about the scheduling. We're talking about an accelerated schedule. If we don't meet those accelerated dates, what does that do to this budget? That would be basically the third year, right?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Thank you, Mr. Bouchard. Minister Beaulieu.

HON. TOM BEAULIEU: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The money would be carried over to the next year.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Thank you, Mr. Beaulieu. Mr. Bouchard.

MR. BOUCHARD: That's it, Mr. Chair. I think we've discussed most of the issues tied to the acceleration and our concerns there.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Thank you, Mr. Bouchard. I'll treat that as a comment. Again, committee, page 76, highways. Mr. Bromley.

MR. BROMLEY: Just a comment. I think we have covered this to a good degree. Obviously, I don't think we've come up with a response, but I would just note that highways, this division is accounting for 44 percent of our infrastructure budget. That's probably almost the definition of putting all our eggs in one basket and I don't think it's a wise use of our resources.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Thank you, Mr. Bromley. Again, I'll treat that as a comment. Mr. Bouchard.

MR. BOUCHARD: Along with the comments my colleague just made, I guess, we had the opportunity to meet with NTCL today, and they were obviously concerned about this volume, as well, the fact that I think there are some deficiencies in the marine industry that the Department of Transportation will be looking at and investing money into as opposed to doing it all on highways. Obviously, that's a concern for them as a company that's committed to marine, and they see the government investing in highways and roads, basically, supporting the diminishing amount of their market, so I guess they definitely had some concerns there. I'm just wondering if the department is looking forward to some of those discussions with marine companies. We've obviously brought up the issue of dredging, but there are also issues of docking and dock maintenance in several of the communities in order to get the goods and services into the communities. If I can get some comments from the department on that.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Thank you, Mr. Bouchard. Minister Beaulieu.

HON. TOM BEAULIEU: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The responsibility for navigable waters and dredging and so on in any of the waters is the responsibility of the federal government. However, we have invited NTCL, the main carrier that goes from Hay River up the Mackenzie along the Arctic Coast to participate in our multi-modal Transportation Strategy.

As far as the docks go, we used to receive money for docks. We don't receive that anymore. We do

put some money into docks through our Community Access Program and help some small communities with docks.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Thank you, Mr. Beaulieu. Committee, page 76, highways, infrastructure investments, \$107.6 million. Does committee agree?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Page 78, road licensing and safety, infrastructure investments, \$1.05 million. Does committee agree?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Committee, I'll get you to return to page 71. Transportation, total infrastructure investments, \$111.929 million. Does committee agree?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Does committee agree that consideration of the Transportation capital budget is concluded?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Thank you, committee. I'd like to thank the Minister here for us today. I'd like to thank Deputy Minister Neudorf for joining us. If I can get the Sergeant-at-Arms to please escort our witness out of the House.

Does committee agree that consideration of Tabled Document 115-17(5), Northwest Territories Capital Estimates 2015-2016, is also concluded? Ms. Bisaro.

COMMITTEE MOTION 95-17(5):
CONCURRENCE OF
TABLED DOCUMENT 115-17(5),
NORTHWEST TERRITORIES
CAPITAL ESTIMATES 2015-2016,
CARRIED

MS. BISARO: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I move that consideration of Tabled Document 115-17(5), Northwest Territories Capital Estimates 2015-2106, be now concluded and that Tabled Document 115-17(5) be reported and recommended as ready for further consideration in formal session through the form of an appropriation bill.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Thank you, Ms. Bisaro. We're just going to circulate the motion. The motion is in order. The motion is carried.

---Carried

Committee, Tabled Document 115-17(5) will be reported and recommended as ready for consideration in formal session through the form of an appropriation bill.

As agreed upon earlier, we will now turn to Bill 33, An Act to Amend the Elections and Plebiscite Act, No. 2, and we'll go to the sponsor of the bill, deputy

chair of Caucus, Mr. Moses, to see if he has any opening remarks.

MR. MOSES: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Yes, I have some opening remarks. On behalf of the Board of Management of the Legislative Assembly, I'm pleased to present Bill 33, An Act to Amend the Elections and Plebiscites Act, No. 2.

This bill includes a number of changes to our elections legislation that were recommended by the Chief Electoral Officer and the Standing Committee on Rules and Procedures following their respective reports on the 2011 General Election.

These changes will result in:

- a new advanced voting opportunity for smaller communities;
- changes to the vouching rules, so that a voter can vouch for more than one elector and so that candidates cannot vouch for electors;
- a limit of \$1,500 in total anonymous contributions;
- greater clarity about the rules on election advertising and campaign finance.

The bill will also strengthen the integrity of our electoral process by allowing deputy returning officers to be appointed and trained before an election as well as by granting new investigative powers to the Chief Electoral Officer.

Those are my opening comments on Bill 33. I welcome any comments or questions Members may have.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Thank you, Mr. Moses. Do you have any witnesses you'd like to bring into the Chamber today?

MR. MOSES: Yes, I do.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Thank you, Mr. Moses. Does committee agree?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Thank you, committee. Sergeant-at-Arms, if you could please escort our witnesses into the Chamber.

Mr. Moses, if you'd be kind enough to introduce your witnesses to the House.

MR. MOSES: Thank you. I have our Chief Electoral Officer, Mr. David Brock; and from the Department of Justice, Mr. Ken Chutskoff.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Thank you, Mr. Moses. Gentlemen, welcome to the Chamber this evening. Committee, we'll go to general comments. General comments, Bill 33. Mr. Hawkins.

MR. HAWKINS: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I just want to use this opportunity to maybe have our very sturdy Member over there provide some detail on what campaign advertising is. I want to get some detail on that. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Thank you, Mr. Hawkins. Mr. Moses.

MR. MOSES: Thank you, Mr. Chair. For that, I'll go to our Chief Electoral Officer Mr. David Brock.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Order! Thank you, Mr. Moses. Mr. Brock.

MR. BROCK: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Indeed, thanks to the Member for the question. One of the changes in this bill is a change to the definition of campaign advertising, to provide greater clarity around what is and is not campaign advertising. So I think this also speaks to what is not included in that, and that includes the production of editorials, columns, speeches for the purpose of a genuine news programs, the distribution of a book or sale of a book that was planned prior to a campaign period, the transmission of a document directly by a person or group on behalf of their members to the shareholders or to their employees and the transmission by an individual of their own personal views. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Thank you, Mr. Brock. Mr. Hawkins.

MR. HAWKINS: I want to thank Member Moses for his very ministerial technique of dealing with that.

---Laughter

It's funny no one on the Cabinet side is laughing. The only other thing that I think, I think pretty much it's self-explanatory on some of the changes that folks who do read this very closely will probably figure out. Maybe we could get Mr. Moses, or if he would again use his technique to help us find out why we're repealing some of the prohibitions on broadcasting. I think that a bit of a detailed answer on that would probably help the general public. It's probably the only area that I show interest, so I'm really looking forward to Mr. Moses' answer on this question. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Thank you, Mr. Hawkins. We'll actually go to Mr. Brock for that response. Mr. Brock.

MR. BROCK: Thank you, Mr. Chair, for the question. Indeed, as the Member pointed out, one of the provisions in this bill is to repeal the prohibition on broadcasting. This initially was a recommendation that I made following the 2011 election. It has been discussed thoroughly by committee, the Committee on Rules and Procedures, on a couple of occasions during public reviews.

One of the complicating factors that arose after the 2011 election was we recognized that while many forms of campaign advertising were allowed on the day of polling and the day immediately prior to polling, one that wasn't was broadcasting as it was technically defined by the federal Broadcasting Act. This led to confusion on the part of some as to what

was allowed and what was not allowed. By repealing the prohibition on broadcasting, not only does it mitigate that confusion and make for an easier campaign process but, in addition to that, it allows for the greater dissemination of messages about voting and about campaigns which are particularly important on the day of voting and the day immediately prior to voting, particularly in light of declining voter turnout rates in the Northwest Territories and indeed across democracies in the western world.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Thank you, Mr. Brock. General comments. Mr. Blake.

MR. BLAKE: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Just under 17, a little clarification. What is the reason for the decision to be conducted over four consecutive days rather than only on one day?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Thank you, Mr. Blake. Mr. Brock.

MR. BROCK: Thank you for the question, Mr. Chair. Provision 17 establishes new advanced voting opportunities for small communities. As Members know, we have 10 days of continuous voting in those communities that have a resident returning officer. In those communities without a resident returning officer, some communities under the law, as it currently stands, would have a single day advanced voting opportunity and some other communities likely would not. What this change does is it establishes an advanced voting opportunity for all small communities so that there's a greater equality or fairness across all our communities in the Northwest Territories. The reason for the four days of continuous voting, we recognized in a proposal that 10 days would likely be too much for small communities, recognizing they have smaller populations than many of our regional centres, but at the same time wanted to have a continuous opportunity to reflect the manner of continuous voting, recognizing that people may not be able to attend to the poll on that day or on polling day, but if they had more opportunities to vote then I think there's a greater probability that they'll cast a ballot. The four days in particular where we'll have advanced voting mirror those four days where we have voting at multi-district polls.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Thank you, Mr. Brock. General comments. There is agreement there are no more general comments. Does committee agree to go through a clause-by-clause review of the bill?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Does committee agree to review clauses in groups of five this evening?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Thank you, committee. Clauses 1 to 5.

---Clauses 1 through 5 inclusive approved

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Clauses 6 to 10.

---Clauses 6 through 10 inclusive approved

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Clauses 11 to 15.

---Clauses 11 through 15 inclusive approved

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Clauses 16 to 20.

---Clauses 16 through 20 inclusive approved

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Clauses 21 to 25.

---Clauses 21 through 25 inclusive approved

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Clauses 26 to 30.

---Clauses 26 through 30 inclusive approved

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Clauses 31 to 35.

---Clauses 31 through 35 inclusive approved

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Clauses 36 to 40.

---Clauses 36 through 40 inclusive approved

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Clauses 41 to 45.

---Clauses 41 through 45 inclusive approved

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Clauses 46 to 49.

---Clauses 46 through 49 inclusive approved

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): The bill as a whole.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Does committee agree that Bill 33 is ready for third reading?

---Bill 33 as a whole approved for third reading

Bill 33 is now ready for third reading. Before we say our good-byes here this afternoon to the colleagues, I'd like to thank, on behalf of the Legislative Assembly, Mr. Brock, our Chief Electoral Officer. Thank you for all the wonderful and many years of service. We appreciate your stewardship, and we wish you well on your future endeavours.

---Applause

I'd like to thank Mr. Chutskoff, as well, this evening. If I can get the Sergeant-at-Arms to please escort our witnesses out of the Chamber. Ms. Bisaro. What is the wish of committee?

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

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Thank you, Ms. Bisaro. There is a motion on the floor to report progress. The motion is in order and not debatable. The motion is carried.

---Carried

I will now rise and report progress.

Report of Committee of the Whole

MR. SPEAKER: Good evening. Can I have the report of Committee of the Whole, Mr. Dolynny?

MR. DOLYNNY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Your committee has been considering Tabled Document 154-17(5), Supplementary Estimates (Infrastructure Expenditures), No. 4, 2014-2015; and Tabled Document 115-17(5), Northwest Territories Capital Estimates 2014-2015; and Bill 33, An Act to Amend the Elections and Plebiscites Act, No. 2; and I would like to report progress with two motions being adopted and that Bill 33 is ready for third reading and that consideration of Tabled Document 154-17(5) and Tabled Document 115-17(5) are concluded and that the House concur in those estimates and that appropriation bills to be based thereon be introduced without delay. Mr. Speaker, I move that the report of Committee of the Whole be concurred with. Thank you.

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

---Carried

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

Orders of the Day

CLERK OF THE HOUSE (Mr. Mercer): Orders of the day for Friday, October 31, 2014, at 10:00 a.m.:

1. Prayer
2. Ministers' Statements
3. Members' Statements
4. Returns to Oral Questions
5. Recognition of Visitors in the Gallery
6. Acknowledgements
7. Oral Questions
8. Written Questions
9. Returns to Written Questions
10. Replies to Opening Address
11. Petitions
12. Reports of Standing and Special Committees
13. Reports of Committees on the Review of Bills
14. Tabling of Documents
15. Notices of Motion
16. Notices of Motion for First Reading of Bills
17. Motions
18. First Reading of Bills
 - Bill 34, 2015 Polling Day Act
19. Second Reading of Bills
20. Consideration in Committee of the Whole of Bills and Other Matters
 - Bill 25, An Act to Amend the Education Act

- Bill 27, Miscellaneous Statute Law Amendment Act, 2014
- Bill 29, Human Tissue Donation Act
- Bill 30, An Act to Amend the Public Service Act
- Bill 32, An Act to Amend the Pharmacy Act
- Committee Report 7-17(5), Report on the Development of the Economic Opportunities and Mineral Development Strategies

21. Report of Committee of the Whole

22. Third Reading of Bills

- Bill 33, An Act to Amend the Elections and Plebiscites Act, No. 2

23. Orders of the Day

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Clerk. Accordingly, this House stands adjourned until Friday, October 31st, at 10:00 a.m.

---ADJOURNMENT

The House adjourned at 5:07 p.m.

