



# **NORTHWEST TERRITORIES LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY**

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

## **HANSARD**

**Thursday, November 6, 2014**

Pages 5257 – 5290

**The Honourable Jackie Jacobson, Speaker**

# Legislative Assembly of the Northwest Territories

## Members of the Legislative Assembly

### Speaker

**Hon. Jackie Jacobson**

(Nunakput)

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(Great Slave)

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*Minister responsible for*

*Persons with Disabilities*

*Minister responsible for Seniors*

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**Mr. Robert Bouchard**

(Hay River North)

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(Thebacha)

*Government House Leader*

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**Mr. Michael Nadli**

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*Minister responsible for the*

*Public Utilities Board*

**Mr. Norman Yakeleya**

(Sahtu)

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Box 1320

Yellowknife, Northwest Territories

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

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**YELLOWKNIFE, NORTHWEST TERRITORIES****Thursday, November 6, 2014****Members Present**

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 1:28 p.m.

**Prayer**

---Prayer

**SPEAKER (Hon. Jackie Jacobson):** Good afternoon, colleagues. Before we get started today, I'd like to pay tribute to and acknowledge my elders who live a healthy lifestyle and are resilient role models. In Paulatuk, Marcus and the late Ida Ruben celebrated their 54<sup>th</sup> anniversary, May 5, 2014. In Sachs Harbour, Frank Kudlak will turn 85 on December 24, 2014. In Tuktoyaktuk, Persis Gruben turned 96 on October 20, 2014; Bill and Lucy Cockney celebrated their 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary on May 1, 2014; and Adam and Annie Emaghok celebrated their 63<sup>rd</sup> anniversary on August 24, 2014. In Ulukhaktok, Jean Kagyut turned 94 in September 2014. We're not sure of the exact date; her parents told her it's when it snows and melts. Andy and Mary Akaokhion will celebrate their 51<sup>st</sup> anniversary on December 15, 2014.

My riding of Nunakput is blessed to have the knowledge, culture, language and wisdom of my elders.

Item 2, Ministers' statements. Honourable Premier, Mr. McLeod.

**Ministers' Statements**

**MINISTER'S STATEMENT 125-17(5):  
2014 NORTHWEST TERRITORIES  
ENERGY CHARRETTE**

**HON. BOB MCLEOD:** Mr. Speaker, over the last few days, the future of energy and the approach of the Government of the Northwest Territories to energy in the Northwest Territories has been explored, deliberated and discussed at length.

The 2014 Northwest Territories Energy Charrette has generated a great deal of interest throughout our territory and beyond. Over 120 people participated in the entire charrette and there were many more who attended the public discussion held on Monday, November 3<sup>rd</sup>.

We had representatives from communities and Aboriginal governments from every region of the territory and attracted experts in the field of

renewable and sustainable energy from across Canada and even as far away as Germany.

The focus of discussions was on what we can do today to address the high energy costs that contribute to our cost of living and the approach we need to take to ensure we have sustainable energy systems in the long term.

I would like to emphasize that there was a strong project focus to these discussions. This is why the Government of the Northwest Territories invited Mr. Axel Lambion from Germany, whose company specializes in biomass energy systems. Lambion Energy Solutions has been operating for 100 years and has developed over 3,000 projects across the world. Other participants, such as Marlo Reynolds from BluEarth Energy and Anouk Kendall from Decentralized Energy Canada, provided their perspectives and experience with regard to renewable energy projects on the ground today. These include projects that could be built in the short term, including solar, biomass and combined heat and power systems.

I would like to thank all Members of the Legislative Assembly who participated in these discussions. I would also like to acknowledge Minister Miltenberger for his efforts to ensure this charrette was a success and his commitment to change our approach to energy in the short term to ensure communities have access to affordable and sustainable energy systems in the long term.

Mr. Speaker, there will be outcomes from the 2014 Energy Charrette. A report on the charrette discussions will be released within a month. The government will circulate the report widely and ask for additional input and include residents who expressed an interest but were unable to attend the charrette.

The government will then look at developing a response to the charrette report that could include changes to the current Energy Plan early next year. We would like to work with all Members of the Legislative Assembly on this initiative and will be following up through the standing committee process to further engage Members in the discussion. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. McLeod. The honourable Minister of Lands, Mr. McLeod.

MINISTER'S STATEMENT 126-17(5):  
ESTABLISHMENT OF THE LIABILITIES AND  
FINANCIAL ASSURANCES DIVISION

**HON. ROBERT MCLEOD:** Mr. Speaker, as part of devolution, the Government of the Northwest Territories took over responsibility for the management of environmental liabilities and securities for resource development projects in our territory.

The regulatory system in the Northwest Territories provides for environmental protection, including terms and conditions within various authorizations. Security provides additional protection to ensure that there are funds to address environmental liabilities if proponents fail to take remedial action.

Several departments are responsible for managing financial securities under individual licences, leases and permits. Our government recognizes that these responsibilities must be closely coordinated and effectively managed on a whole-of-project and territory-wide basis in order to have a full picture to reduce financial risk to the GNWT and to protect our land for generations to come.

On September 12, 2014, I announced the establishment of a dedicated division in the Department of Lands to oversee the management of financial securities. The liabilities and financial assurances division will provide for strong and effective collaboration between departments with legislated responsibilities for security deposits, as well as central agencies such as the departments of Finance and Justice. This division will also lead and coordinate short and longer term policy development concerning the government's management of securities.

Mr. Speaker, the establishment of this new division is well underway and it has already taken steps towards providing support to other departments managing environmental liabilities and financial securities.

Our government has reviewed the fall 2012 Report of the Commissioner on Sustainable Development and the Environment, which considered the federal government's management of securities that were transferred to us under devolution. The audit provided practical recommendations on improving governance, risk management approaches and controls. The report provides a useful starting point where we can learn from federal experience and build approaches to improve securities management and protect the GNWT from financial risks.

Mr. Speaker, the Department of Lands has already initiated the development of a securities information management system for the GNWT. This system will address the handling and processing of securities and support departments' analysis of ongoing reviews of financial security. This analysis

is necessary for evidence-based policy development and securities interventions which will balance the needs of government, taxpayers and proponents.

In the interim, the department is leading and coordinating the establishment of a cross-departmental interim protocol for security management addressing the operational handling requirements for securities.

Mr. Speaker, it is essential that our government also have the right tools to support informed decision-making. To this end, the division has started the necessary baseline policy reviews to inform both short- and long-term policy development.

Although individual GNWT departments continue to develop interventions and review proposals with significant reclamation obligations, the Department of Lands is taking on the additional responsibility related to security management and assessment for individual projects. By doing so, Mr. Speaker, it is gaining valuable insight that will lead to an informed policy baseline that considers both operational realities and the needs of our government.

In addition, we are developing important partnerships with our industry, academic and public sector counterparts, including resource management boards. These partnerships will also help support a broad-based and informed policy basis for our government moving forward.

We also need to make sure our investment climate is attractive, while our environment is protected. The GNWT has noted industry's concerns about the risk of double bonding if there are potentially overlapping securities requirements. Our new division will help ensure we can address this concern, while managing any potential environmental liabilities and, at the same time, encourage sustainable land use to ensure strong economic development in our territory.

Mr. Speaker, our government is committed to protecting the land and environment of the Northwest Territories while supporting responsible, sustainable development consistent with our Land Use and Sustainability Framework. Consistently assessing appropriate securities for developments is one of the ways we will do that. The creation of the liabilities and financial assurances division will support us in this goal and ensure that potential environmental liabilities can be remediated so the northern environment is protected. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. McLeod. The honourable Minister of ENR, Mr. Miltenberger.

MINISTER'S STATEMENT 127-17(5):  
TRANSBOUNDARY WATER

**HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER:** Mr. Speaker, as a result of devolution, much of the lands and waters of the Northwest Territories are now the responsibility of our government. We had prepared for this eventually by getting our policy house in order through the development of the NWT Water Stewardship Strategy and its action plan. We built these documents collaboratively with our partners, in particular the Aboriginal governments of the NWT. They represent a huge success, and they demonstrate how innovative we are here in the North.

I am very pleased to report another critically important success.

Our post-devolution responsibility for water and our commitment made in the NWT Water Stewardship Strategy was to negotiate transboundary water management agreements with our neighbouring jurisdictions in the Mackenzie River Basin.

As of yesterday, our negotiating team has reached a stable intentions document with Alberta. This is following having reached agreement on an intentions document with British Columbia earlier this year, in June. So, we have now accomplished a critical stage with the two key jurisdictions upstream of us. These two agreements cover over 85 percent of the Mackenzie River Basin. With these two agreements in place, we can confidently say that we are protecting the vast majority of the Mackenzie River Basin, and because the Mackenzie River Basin is about 20 percent of the land mass of Canada, these agreements are of also national and international significance.

Both intentions documents meet the strategic outcomes for these agreements that were approved by Cabinet in 2012.

First and foremost, they are ecological agreements that protect the health of the aquatic ecosystem while allowing for development by both parties. This has only been negotiated in one other place in the world, in Australia, and in the face of drought they were not able to maintain their commitments to the aquatic ecosystem. Because we will absolutely fulfill our commitments, we will be the first jurisdiction in the world to demonstrate how to truly protect the health of the aquatic ecosystem while allowing for development.

Further, the Alberta and BC intentions documents also create an adaptive framework for cooperative management of transboundary waters, set out cooperative decision-making processes and create clear notification, consultation and information-sharing requirements. With these agreements in place, we will no longer find out about upstream developments and events in the newspaper. We are building a much closer, more productive

working relationship with our Mackenzie River Basin neighbours.

Throughout the negotiating process, the opinions and values of Aboriginal governments and other stakeholders were critical. Environment and Natural Resources has engaged deeply with Aboriginal governments over the last seven years as we worked together in meetings and regional workshops throughout the NWT to develop the NWT Water Strategy, and we worked even more closely over the last three years as negotiations proceeded.

We continued to engage repeatedly with Aboriginal governments, updating and briefing them, and then revising our positions to take into account their views. The NWT Water Strategy Aboriginal Steering Committee was also updated regularly on the progress of the negotiations. Just last month, on October 6 and 7, we brought all Aboriginal groups to Yellowknife to consult on the NWT-BC Intentions Document, and we received strong support that we will continue to build upon as we work with Aboriginal governments in implementing the agreements. Following that meeting, we met with regulatory boards and NGOs from both within and outside of the NWT.

Traditional and local knowledge workshops and community-based monitoring have added valuable information to the engagement and consultation process. People in the NWT are experts on the place where they live and work, and we have and will continue to ensure they have a voice and opportunity to speak during this process.

We have discussed different elements of the intentions documents with governance and ecosystem science experts from across Canada. They have all expressed strong support for what we have accomplished.

Aboriginal consultation and public engagement regarding the BC and Alberta agreements are coming to an end. A highlights document that includes the comments and concerns we heard during consultation meetings and responses to those concerns is currently being distributed to Aboriginal groups. A FAQ document has been published recently to provide residents of the NWT with additional information to better understand concepts included in the intentions document.

We will continue to pursue transboundary water management agreements with Saskatchewan and the Yukon and are also planning on beginning the discussion with Nunavut.

Both Alberta and British Columbia are committed to signing these agreements in February, after they have completed their consultations. This will be a highly anticipated celebration, one we hope to host here in Yellowknife.

I want to recognize our small but very powerful and effective water team that got us these agreements, one of the best water teams in the country. They drove the process and showed the other jurisdictions just how things are done here in the North.

Mr. Speaker, we are on the verge of taking a major step towards achieving the vision we developed for the NWT Water Stewardship Strategy: to develop transboundary water agreements that ensure the waters of the NWT will remain clean, productive and abundant for all time. We did this by working together. I am proud of the work we have done, and I believe that this work will be a legacy for future generations. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Miltenberger. Honourable Premier, Mr. McLeod.

MINISTER'S STATEMENT 128-17(5):  
RECOGNIZING FRANCIS ANDERSON  
AND SAVILLE ENTERPRISES

**HON. BOB MCLEOD:** Mr. Speaker, entrepreneurs and small business owners in the Northwest Territories are committed, passionate and extremely hard working.

I would like to take the opportunity to recognize a particularly dedicated business owner, Mr. Francis Anderson. Mr. Anderson has been the owner and operator of Saville Enterprises, a thriving hardware store in the Hamlet of Tuktoyaktuk, since the age of 19.

Maintaining a business in one of the most northern communities in the Northwest Territories may have its challenges, and Mr. Anderson's business is a great example of how they can be overcome. His work to provide the products, services and knowledge needed by his community is renowned.

Mr. Anderson opened his business over 30 years ago and his is a success story and part of the foundation of the made-in-the-NWT business community.

Business people like Mr. Anderson empower the entrepreneurial spirit of the Northwest Territories. Those who are starting in business or thinking of following the path to entrepreneurship will benefit from his leadership.

With the construction of the Inuvik to Tuktoyaktuk highway, access to these communities will improve and opportunities to invest and grow our economy will be realized, particularly in our small business and tourism sectors. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

MINISTER'S STATEMENT 129-17(5):  
MINISTER ABSENT FROM THE HOUSE

**HON. BOB MCLEOD:** Mr. Speaker, I wish to advise Members that the Honourable Glen Abernethy will be absent from the House today to attend the Canada Northwest FASD Partnership Ministers' meetings in Winnipeg, Manitoba. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. McLeod. Item 3, Members' statements. The honourable Member for Deh Cho, Mr. Nadli.

**Members' Statements**

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON  
TRIBUTE TO LATE ELDER JIM LAMALICE

**MR. NADLI:** Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. [Translation] Did you know a Dene man passed away suddenly on Sunday, November 2<sup>nd</sup>? He was born and raised in the Hay River area. "Watch, learn and teach" was his motto. He was taught traditional survival skills by observing, getting involved and practicing bush skills from the time he was 10 years old

He came from a family of 17. He often talked about how his dad made him a boat and bought him two hunting guns when he was 15 years old. He lived outdoors all the time, working, hunting and trapping. Jim believed that if you watched and listened to your elders, you would live a good and long life. That was self-discipline and being resourceful.

Mr. Speaker, Jim worried about his grandchildren and younger generations losing their ancestral language. Children need to listen and understand their language so they can keep their language and speak it. Jim, Daniel Sonfrere, Pat and Ted Buggins first started the Katlodeeche First Nation to establish the Hay River Reserve in 1972.

Funeral services for the late Jim Lamalice is today at 2:00 p.m. in the town of Hay River at the Pentecostal Church. The feast is at the Chief Lamalice Complex following the laying to rest at St. Peter's Cemetery on the Hay River Reserve. Mahsi.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Member for Mackenzie Delta, Mr. Blake.

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON  
CONGRATULATIONS TO NEWLY ELECTED  
COMMUNITY LEADERS IN FORT MCPHERSON

**MR. BLAKE:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I am taking this time today to congratulate the newly elected leaders from the community of Fort McPherson. Elections for one president and four councillors were held in 2014 and I look forward to working with the new community leadership in the coming year: President William Firth and his council Glen Alexie, David Krutko, Abe Wilson and Leslie Blake.



This new council will oversee daily operation of the Designated Gwich'in Organization which is a community organization operating under the guidance of the Gwich'in Tribal Council. I trust that our territorial and community governments will work positively towards a healthier and stronger community and territory.

Mr. Speaker, I want to extend best wishes to all communities throughout the territory. Let's continue to work together as leaders. As leaders in today's economy, we pledge to our people that we will serve them in our upmost dignity. I look forward to working with you on community issues, concerns and comments. Congratulations and all the best for you and the community.

Also, Mr. Speaker, on November 17, 2014, the Gwich'in Nation will elect a president for the Gwich'in Tribal Council. I would like to wish both candidates, Richard Nerysoo and James Wilson, all the best, and I look forward to working with you in the future. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

#### MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON AGREEMENT WITH BC HEALTH

**MR. MENICOCHÉ:** Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. Today I want to continue a familiar theme: health care for my people. I don't want to give the impression that our health care system is fundamentally flawed. It isn't, Mr. Speaker. But as the Minister of Health says himself, there's definitely room for improvement.

One of the goals of our health system is to deliver services as close to home as possible, and I'm all for that. A simple change would really help out the people of Fort Liard and, at the same time, probably lower the costs of health in my region.

People of Fort Liard are already getting some of their health services in Fort Nelson, British Columbia. Liard residents often use their own resources and drive south for certain services. It's only 210 kilometres from Fort Liard to Fort Nelson, compared to 284 kilometres towards Fort Simpson and then an additional airplane ride to Yellowknife. The road to Fort Nelson is in better shape, too, because it's Highway No. 7, Mr. Speaker.

What's more? Fort Nelson is triple the size of Fort Simpson, so it has more services. It is not uncommon for Fort Liard patients to be flown to Yellowknife, which is almost 800 kilometres away. Instead, why not send patients south to Fort Nelson General Hospital?

Each year, tens of thousands of Canadians cross provincial or territorial borders to receive health care. Oftentimes it is a simple matter of patient choice because it is more convenient to skip across

the border. This is made possible by the in-Canada portability provisions of the Canada Health Act.

I would like to see a formal agreement between the Department of Health and Social Services and the BC Ministry of Health that allows Fort Liard residents to receive health care in Fort Nelson.

Across the country, agreements of this kind are very common. With expanding the use of electronic medical records, it should be easier than ever to manage this type of arrangement. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

#### MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON HAY RIVER MANURE COMPOST FACILITY

**MRS. GROENEWEGEN:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In the fall of 2012, Choice North Farms of Hay River began exploring the option of developing a manure compost facility. The facility would see the composting of approximately 5,700 tonnes of manure annually. In addition to the manure composted, there would be a significant amount of paper and cardboard required to mix in the manure that's reducing the amount being sent to our landfills each year.

After selecting the site with the assistance of AANDC, the first federal application was sent directly to Lands administration office in Yellowknife in early 2013, but the application was rejected for lack of an agricultural policy in the Northwest Territories. I want to stress that.

A second federal land application was made to the office of Municipal and Community Affairs in Fort Smith. That application was rejected for lack of an agriculture policy in the Northwest Territories. Further discussion around the issue identified that MACA should have sent their own application to the federal department, not the application from Choice North Farms, and then have worked to establish a lease agreement between Choice North and the territorial government. There seemed to be confusion as to how the process worked and this was the first application of this kind. There was further concern about the lacking agriculture policy to allow MACA to lease land for this purpose.

Mr. Speaker, there is a few more paragraphs here about the long, convoluted path that my constituents had in trying to secure land, but in 2014, October 2014, just recently, my constituent attended the NWT Lands administration office in Yellowknife to discuss property that he had applied for. Because the land was unavailable, they were willing to look at another parcel but they had been informally told that if they continued to pursue a new site for this compost project, the application will be turned down because there is no mechanism to develop agricultural lands outside of municipalities.

Until the NWT Lands or the Commissioner or Lands department establish a mechanism, Choice North Farms can expect the same results.

The situation has been communicated up through the department by the lands officers that have they have been working with, so there is an awareness of the issue.

Currently, they are working with Ecology North and GNWT ITI waste management on a pilot project. Technical requirements for this project have been completed. The manure is ready for compost, and they are prepared to move forward with this project, pending access to land.

The compost could and would be used for agricultural small scale farming, landscaping, mine reclamation and a host of other land and food-based projects. This compost could be shipped to other communities that are unable to grow food due to soil restraints, and Choice North Farms sees this as a vital...

**MR. SPEAKER:** Excuse me, Mrs. Groenewegen. Time for your Member's statement has expired.

**MRS. GROENEWEGEN:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. May I please seek unanimous consent to conclude the last little bit of my statement? Thank you.

---Unanimous consent granted

**MRS. GROENEWEGEN:** This compost could be shipped to other communities that are unable to grow food due to soil restraints, and Choice North Farms sees this as a vital support piece for local food production in all communities.

This is a viable project and much has gone into it. I will have questions later today for the Minister of MACA and maybe the Minister of ITI, I'm not sure, but I can think of a whole lot of topics, a whole lot of titles for this Member's statement on manure composting. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mrs. Groenewegen. Member for the Sahtu, Mr. Yakeleya.

#### MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON REFLECTIONS ON REMEMBRANCE DAY

**MR. YAKELEYA:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Next Tuesday is November 11<sup>th</sup>, Remembrance Day. The year of 2014 also marks the 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Great War, the war to end all wars is what they said back in the early 1900s. Unfortunately, Mr. Speaker, they were wrong.

While we have no veterans from the First World War in the Sahtu, and few from the second, I wish to pay tribute to all the veterans and those who bravely served in the Canadian Armed Forces including people from the Sahtu: Swaine Bavard, Wilbert Cook, Darrel Cook, Wayne Lennie, Hughie Kenny, Stanley Cook, Tim Cook and countless others I have not named today.

I would also like to salute our Canadian Rangers and the Junior Canadian Rangers patrols across the Sahtu and the North, and to encourage all the little Cadets in our communities to keep up the good work and your training. Volunteering and services are where you learn the most as a leader. These men and women, whether at the Battle of the Somme, Juno Beach, Korea or Afghanistan, have suited up and some have paid the supreme sacrifice.

This year Remembrance Day will have an even deeper meaning for Canadians after two tragic attacks in Quebec and Ottawa that have taken two of our soldiers from us. As Northerners and Canadians young and old don their poppies, we are taking part in a national display of pride and respect, a visual pledge to never forget those who made the ultimate sacrifice. According to the Royal Canadian Legion, more than 18 million Canadians wear a poppy to honour, thank and remember Canadian fallen veterans and those who continue to serve today.

I would also like to salute our First Nation Aboriginal vets from coast to coast to coast. Some lost their status, like the late Tom Eagle. We must pressure Ottawa to continue to overturn that injustice. In fact, it was the veterans of World War II who fought Ottawa to give the Aboriginal people the right to vote in the '60s.

While poppies are free, the Legion poppy campaign supports retired members...

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Yakeleya. Sorry; your time for your Member's statement has expired.

**MR. YAKELEYA:** I seek unanimous consent to conclude my statement.

---Unanimous consent granted

**MR. YAKELEYA:** Our donations directly support Canadians serving and retired veterans and their families by ensuring we never forget the horrors of war but remember what they stood and did for all of us. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Yakeleya. The Member for Range Lake, Mr. Dolyunny.

#### MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON MESSAGE OF THANKS AND GRATITUDE

**MR. DOLYNNY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I wanted to keep my last sessional statement of 2014 with a simple message of thanks and gratitude. First and foremost, we've just heard Mr. Yakeleya mention a very beautiful rendition for our fallen soldiers, and as we approach November 11<sup>th</sup>, it's important that we give thanks to our fallen heroes, past and present.

Our success as a nation stands on the shoulders of their sacrifice. Let's unite as an Assembly and grant them a moment of silence.

---Moment of silence

Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and colleagues. It's hard to believe that this will be the last Christmas holiday season for the 17<sup>th</sup> Legislative Assembly. I wanted to send an early and heartfelt season's greetings to all residents of the Northwest Territories, and for my hardworking colleagues in this Chamber, I wish you a special time of meaning and cultural tradition with your family and friends. Thank you, colleagues. Mahsi cho, Mr. Speaker.

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

#### MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON NWT ARTS CENTRE

**MR. BROMLEY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. A diverse and committed arts community exists in the Northwest Territories with literally dozens of groups in the areas of dance, theatre, music, film, visual arts, crafts and many more. Organizations may be small, but they are big on hard work, enthusiasm, commitment and inclusive programs that reach out across our communities.

Artists understand and acknowledge how the arts function to support our social strengths, our health and well-being. Hill Research Strategies in Ottawa reports reveal the link between the arts and student engagement and education, positive economic impact and cultural tourism, improved quality of life, importance in Aboriginal health and well-being, the list goes on.

Beyond these, at a time when social changes and challenges are many, the arts provide a valid way to engage community learning, exploration, idea exchange and critical dialogue that ground our culture and identity. These same artists are seeing gaps, key gaps, that are limiting the role the arts can play in diversifying and strengthening our territorial economy. One is the lack of a properly funded arts hub, typically found in every other capital in Canada. Another is a fine arts school. The two could easily go together. A proper gallery could showcase the work made in the regions as well as a place to foster and develop a more sophisticated arts discourse. A place for research, exhibition, education, and documentation of contemporary and modern visual arts. A place to attend screenings, to learn how to felt, paint, sculpt, to participate in group shows, to see contemporary art exhibitions, to hear artists speak and participate in group projects. A place where artists can learn, inspire and be inspired; a place that can expose and motivate people through art made here and elsewhere in the world. An arts hub would enrich our community by celebrating what we do while displaying great works from the past and present, from near and far.

Exhibition opportunities absolutely essential to an artist from the NWT are woefully lacking. We need to develop an NWT arts centre from the grassroots, with guidance from the diverse arts community already here, and developed through partnership and vision from our vibrant community. An NWT arts hub is a place that will require start-up costs and financial support. It can move forward through partnerships of public, governmental and private funding. This is a huge opportunity and the time is right, the players are ready.

Will the Minister take this as a priority, lead the conversation towards realizing this goal, filling this gap and strengthening the NWT community and economy with an arts centre? The talented bunch of artists across this territory, our society and our people deserve it.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Bromley. Colleagues, before we hear our next Member's statement, I would like to draw your attention to the presence in the gallery this afternoon of Mr. Jean-Christopher Fleury, Consul General of France. Welcome to the Assembly.

The honourable Member for Frame Lake, Ms. Bisaro.

#### MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON NATIONAL ADDICTIONS AWARENESS WEEK

**MS. BISARO:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Each year the Canadian Centre on Substance Abuse, CCSA, joins organizations across the country in observing National Addictions Awareness Week. Organized by CCSA, National Addictions Awareness Week highlights issues and solutions to help address alcohol and other drug-related harm. It provides an opportunity for Canadians to learn more about drug prevention, to talk about treatment and recovery, and to bring forward solutions for change.

In 2014, National Addictions Awareness Week will be held November 17<sup>th</sup> to the 21<sup>st</sup>, a little over a week from now. CCSA will also mark the National Day of Remembrance for Road Crash Victims on November 19<sup>th</sup>, during National Addictions Awareness Week, by drawing attention to the growing problem of drug-impaired driving.

Preventing youth from using drugs is a priority for CCSA and our partners, so this year's theme for National Addictions Awareness Week is youth drug use prevention, especially addressing the use of alcohol, cannabis and prescription drugs among our youth.

I encourage Members and NGOs to join the dialogue, a dialogue to help create a healthier society, one free of harms of substance abuse and misuse. You can follow CCSA on Twitter – some of us are doing that – @CCSACanada, and you can use the hashtag #NAAWCanada to help support this year's activities during National Addictions

Awareness Week. You can also share resources on your social media channels.

There are several activities that I am aware of that are planned for Yellowknife during National Addictions Awareness Week. One is the kickoff of National Addictions Awareness Week: a sober walk. Students, staff and community members will march through the downtown streets of Yellowknife on Monday, November 17<sup>th</sup>. As well, the Tree of Peace will be hosting an information fair on the first day of National Addictions Awareness Week. Many organizations around Yellowknife that deal directly and indirectly with addictions will be there at the fair.

I invite everyone to take part in National Addictions Awareness Week events in your community, and remember, if you need help, it is available to you. Take advantage of it.

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

#### MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON NWT PARKS AND RECREATION – WALK TO TUK CHALLENGE

**MR. MOSES:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to finish off this session with a real good, feel good news story. It's about a small office in the Northwest Territories that has been doing great work in getting Northerners very active and can potentially have a big impact across this nation.

The most recent Walk to Tuk Challenge involved over 1,600 NWT participants from 17 communities on 102 teams. Seventy-three of those teams were successful in reaching Tuktoyaktuk, walking a grand total of 207,808 kilometres. Calculating in hours of exercise equalled about 48,918.5 hours of exercising. On average, each participant accumulated 245 minutes of weekly exercise, which is 95 minutes more exercise than the 150 minutes that are recommended by the Canadian Physical Activity Guidelines for adults aged 18 to 64. This was all done during the darkest and coldest times of the year.

As the NWT embarks on the fifth anniversary of this successful program, it is my pleasure to announce that the NWT Rec and Parks Association's Walk to Tuk Challenge has been selected as one of six finalists in the Play Exchange program and will be showcased on a national television show in January 2015 and will be eligible for up to \$1 million to launch this program nationwide.

This is huge not only for the NWTRPA and addressing active living in some of our health issues but it also has a big impact for possible tourism in the Northwest Territories.

The Play Exchange is a national online challenge that was launched in February of 2014, to fund and support creative ideas to get Canadians living

healthier lifestyles. Some highlights of this Play Exchange challenge, in fact the Walk to Tuk Challenge was chosen out of over 400 submissions from across Canada, and the top six finalists each receive mentoring and support from the LIFT Philanthropy Partners to develop a strategic plan for their idea.

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

---Unanimous consent granted

**MR. MOSES:** As I said, the challenge will be featured on a CBC Television program and it will be won by voting online.

This is a made-in-the-NWT event that can affect all Canadians from coast to coast to coast.

I would like to personally encourage all Northerners and friends of the NWTRPA to vote when voting starts. I would also like to thank Sheena Tremblay, Geoff Ray and all the staff and volunteers of the NWT Rec and Parks Association who have made this challenge a success. We should support this program and be the national leaders in addressing high obesity rates and mitigate the high chronic diseases and conditions that affect all Canadians. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

#### MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON DECENTRALIZATION

**MR. BOUCHARD:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. When we started the 17<sup>th</sup> Assembly, we set up some priorities, and one of those priorities was decentralization. Yesterday Mr. Bromley referred to decentralizing his position to Hay River.

---Applause

Seriously, I know Mr. Bromley works hard in Detah and Ndilo, small communities that need his support.

When we started this journey about decentralization, the government gave us issues that we had: housing issues in small communities, office space requirements and residential issues. The government has indicated to me and given us some stats that they've created 158 jobs outside of Yellowknife. Mr. Speaker, we would be celebrating that if those were all the facts.

The other facts are we know they started and devolved over 200 in Yellowknife, so decentralization is not happening, Mr. Speaker.

We need to be committed to decentralizing, putting more jobs out into the communities, not only to the regional centres but some of the smaller communities. We need to solve those issues of housing and office space. We need to know the next phase. We've had our three phases, but what's the next phase? What's happening next

year? We still don't have a plan coming forward, and we know that this is the last statement for 2014. What is going to happen in February and March? What are we going to hear about a continued decentralization?

We need to get this done. This is the 17<sup>th</sup> Assembly and something this Assembly set as a priority. We need to be committed to it. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

#### MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON HYDRAULIC FRACTURING TECHNOLOGY INNOVATIONS

**MR. HAWKINS:** [English translation not provided.]

I am practicing my French, and some days I practice better than others.

Mr. Speaker, what I was trying to say there was today's final statement will be on fracking technology. Our environment, our water and our land are very important.

Industry is working very hard to reduce the environmental impact of hydraulic fracturing, or fracking. General Electric and Statoil, a Norwegian oil and gas producer, are working on waterless fracking. Instead of water, these companies plan to use supercritical carbon dioxide to enable the flow of gas and oil to their wells.

Supercritical carbon dioxide is between its gaseous and liquid states. It could be supplied under high pressure in a tank. There are some challenges yet. Collecting carbon dioxide and hauling it into fracking sites is currently more expensive than using water. That statement alone probably says we might not be putting the right price or the right value to what our water really is worth.

GE and Statoil hope to actually inject carbon dioxide into the well and then recapture it at the wellhead. It would then be used again at the next well. If this technology was used widely, much more carbon dioxide would be needed than is readily available. That probably means we could find new ways to capture carbon dioxide from those coal-fired power plants and we'd have a reason to put it somewhere else rather than flaring or venting it.

Two companies have just started a three-year project that would cumulate in a technological demonstration before full commercial launch. This strikes as very promising to me, because with the exploration efforts involving fracking currently on hold in the Northwest Territories, time will be certainly on our side.

It may be that fracking might be done here one day, and perhaps this is the technology for the North. This may not be the complete answer or the only solution, but what it does is it demonstrates that

people are looking in the right direction to the right types of solutions. They're putting the environment first.

So as I said... [English translation not provided.]

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Hawkins. Your time for your Member's statement has expired. Thank you, Mr. Hawkins. Item 4, reports of standing and special committees. Item 5, returns to oral questions. Item 6, recognition of visitors in the gallery. Ms. Bisaro.

#### Recognition of Visitors in the Gallery

**MS. BISARO:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to recognize a Page, Diana Rockwell. I recognized her yesterday, but she pulled a fast one on us and wasn't here, so I would like to recognize her for her work for the past couple weeks. Thank you.

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

**MR. MOSES:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to take this opportunity to recognize Ms. Sheena Adams. She's the regional energy project coordinator for the Beaufort-Delta and she's also worked in the past with the Great Northern Arts Festival and also at the Inuvik Community Greenhouse. She did great work there and most likely will do a great job in her current position as well.

I'd also like to take this opportunity to recognize two Pages that have been with us this week: Ms. Britany Gabriela Prieto and Julia Rogers. I'd like to thank them for all their hard work this week and I hope they've enjoyed their experiences helping out Members of the Legislative Assembly. As in the past, I've always asked them what they liked best about being a Page at the Legislative Assembly, and they said meeting new people, and they said they'd also recommend the Page Program to all students in the Northwest Territories. They're also interested in the upcoming Youth Parliament and they're also very intrigued with the work that goes on in this Chamber. I'd like to thank them for all their work that they've done this week. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Moses. The honorable Premier, Mr. McLeod.

**HON. BOB MCLEOD:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I am very pleased to recognize two Pages from Yellowknife South: Bryanna Steele and Emma du Plessis. They are from Yellowknife South. I also recognize all the Pages who are here. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. McLeod. Mr. Ramsay.

**HON. DAVID RAMSAY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I too wanted to recognize the Consul General from

France, Monsieur Fleury. Bienvenue. I also wanted to recognize Andrew John Kenny, former chief and well-respected elder from the community of Deline. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Ramsay. Mr. Dolynny.

**MR. DOLYNNY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to introduce, to you and through you, someone who is very familiar to the House and a resident of Range Lake, Ms. Carmen Moore. Thank you for joining us. [English translation not provided.]

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Dolynny. Mr. Yakeleya.

**MR. YAKELEYA:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to recognize the elder from Deline, Andrew John Kenny, known as the Don Cherry of Deline, coming from the birthplace of ice hockey in Canada. Welcome, Andrew John. Andrew John is also my constituency assistant as an elder in the Sahtu region. I would also like to say welcome to Josh Campbell, the CA for the Sahtu, to the office. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Yakeleya. Mr. McLeod.

**HON. ROBERT MCLEOD:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I just wanted to use this opportunity to recognize and thank the Pages for the work they have been doing. Alfred already recognized Sheena and I would like to recognize Sheena as well. I would also like to recognize one of our hardworking interpreters, in the back there somewhere, Lillian Elias, who is doing the Inuvialuktun from Inuvik. Oh, there she is. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. McLeod. Mr. Blake.

**MR. BLAKE:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I too would like to recognize Mr. A.J. Kenny. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Blake. I would like to welcome everybody here in the public gallery today. Thank you for taking an interest in our proceedings here today.

Item 7, acknowledgements. Item 8, oral questions. Member for Weledeh, Mr. Bromley.

### Oral Questions

QUESTION 533-17(5):  
NWT ARTS CENTRE

**MR. BROMLEY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My questions today are for the Minister of Education, Culture and Employment as the lead on the arts.

The NWT, as we know, is blessed with amazing artistic talents. Every jurisdiction in Canada has an arts centre with their artisans, and public can enjoy

art from the perspective of both the artist and the citizens. The NWT does not. Artists in the Northwest Territories have extremely limited options for the display of their finished work and very few options for collaboration and learning.

Has the Minister been hearing what I have been hearing? Is the Minister aware of this groundswell of need and support for an arts centre in the Northwest Territories? Mahsi.

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

**HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY:** Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. Those are just some of the areas of discussion that have been addressed through our department and through various venues, as well, even working with the NWT Arts Council, because we provide annual funding to them.

We, as a department, recognize that there are no dedicated public arts spaces or display in the Northwest Territories; however, there are many opportunities for art expression display in our schools and also in our communities. My department will continue to support the community-based arts and cultural organizations through partnership. Member Bromley addressed this on several occasions on partnerships. It is very key; it is very important to have partnerships in the Northwest Territories, so I am working very closely with Industry, Tourism and Investment on this particular matter as well.

Also, we are working with other agencies to improve the accessibility of art activities and facilities in the Northwest Territories. Mahsi.

**MR. BROMLEY:** Thanks to the Minister. I know in our communities we have a lot of facilities that are very supportive of their artists, but of course, their facilities are overworked and overused. What we are talking about is an NWT arts centre. I appreciate the Minister looking into this. The arts contribute to the economies, social debate, culture and identity, as we have said. In fact, in Nunavut the production of art is often the major local economic engine. Every jurisdiction in Canada seems to realize this and support their artists with a fine arts school or equivalent program. The NWT does not. Again, with the amazing talent we have, where is the fine arts school that helps people realize their gifts?

Will the Minister commit to exploring the feasibility of establishing a post-secondary fine arts school, possibly in conjunction with an NWT arts centre?

**HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY:** Mahsi. Just to touch base even further, the Prince of Wales Northern Heritage Centre also provides a public exhibition venue for NWT artists and also for temporary displays outside the NWT as well.

In the last five years, the Heritage Centre has hosted over 40 arts exhibits, with 34 of these presenting NWT artists from all regions. These are just some of the collections that we continue to promote in our schools and also with the general public.

The program that the Member is referring to is an area where I need to meet with Aurora College to see if that is part of their vision for the Northwest Territories either short term or long term. We will be addressing that with the college in the immediate future. Mahsi.

**MR. BROMLEY:** I appreciate the Minister's response there. The artist community and the public, indeed, hugely appreciate the Prince of Wales Northern Heritage Centre's display of art, both from within and outside the NWT, but of course, it's woefully inadequate for the need. That's well recognized by Prince of Wales as well as the arts community and the public. The arts community, which is a diverse one, with dozens of genres representing the various forms across the NWT, their focus varies and their voices are diverse.

The conversation acknowledging the need for an arts hub, a centre that can provide both display and education, engagement and entertainment, has gone on far too long without government acknowledgement.

Will this Minister commit to promoting and leading this conversation towards the realization of an NWT arts centre that can serve these needs, something every other jurisdiction does? I recognize partnerships could be key. Mahsi.

**HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY:** Mahsi. That is exactly what we're doing; we're promoting arts in the Northwest Territories, again, in partnership with Industry, Tourism and Investment. We are, as a department, collaboratively working diligently to implement the NWT Arts Strategy and Action Plan. Not only that but we're also working with the NWT Arts Council for the whole Northwest Territories. They are our key partners in delivering those areas of interest for the Northwest Territories when it comes to arts delivery.

So, we'll continue to play those partnerships and have ongoing dialogue with the departments of ITI and Public Works and Services and with my department and work very closely with the NWT Arts Council as well. Mahsi.

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

**MR. BROMLEY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I appreciate, again, the Minister's response and commitment there. As we know, interest and potential for partnerships to develop a strategy to build an arts hub is high, and with a clear vision, a business plan and government support, this immense opportunity indeed could be realized. It

can play a huge role in our territorial economy, and it's been proven in many jurisdictions.

Will the Minister put out a call indicating exactly how partners, the latent partners out there, the many talented NWT artists and arts organizations, the private sponsors in the NWT and the educators and fine arts professionals, can contribute to the process? How can they participate in the Minister's exercise here? Will he make that clear? Mahsi.

**HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY:** Mahsi. I did already commit that we will be reaching out to potential partners, along with ITI and Public Works and the NWT Arts Council. So those are key partners that we currently have. Through the connections with the NWT Arts Council, we have all these different agencies, as well, that are working very closely with us. We provide funding to them on an annual basis. So those are the key partners and we will be reaching out to them. I will be getting back to the standing committee on the result of our findings as well. Mahsi.

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

QUESTION 534-17(5):  
ACKNOWLEDGING THE VETERANS  
IN OUR SCHOOL SYSTEM

**MR. YAKELEYA:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As I mentioned in my Member's statement, our numbers of veterans from the Second World War and the Korean War are dropping.

Can the Minister of Education, Culture and Employment tell this House of any strategies our school divisions are doing to engage or to bring our veterans into our schools to tell our youth about these chapters in our history?

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

**HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY:** Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. It's very important that we highlight our veterans. Remembrance Day is fast approaching. These are areas that we need to continue to push into our school system, not only our school system but also our communities, the regional centres. We do have regional representatives and even those seniors that have been part of the process, if they can be visible in our community schools. There are some areas of activities and events that are happening in the various communities and the school systems. The Member is raising a really valid question that we must address with the board chairs, and I will be addressing that on how can we expedite this process and even having those veterans more visible in our school system and even presenting to our students as well.

**MR. YAKELEYA:** I'm certainly glad to hear that the Minister is thinking about expediting this process

and speaking to the board chairs. The point that I got was making it visible in our schools.

I want to ask the Minister if his department could look at school projects across the Northwest Territories to research and document in our communities all the vets that have served in the past, future and current, serving in our Canadian Armed Forces. All the vets, so that there can be a designated spot in our schools so that this could be proudly displayed as the veterinary hall of fame for our veterinarians from our communities. Can that happen?

**HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY:** Some of those projects are already happening across the Northwest Territories when it comes to career fairs. There are areas of interest, even the history, heritage display, we see students displaying the Remembrance Day. We see students displaying their ancestors or their grandfathers who have gone to, whether it be World War II or other areas of impact in the Northwest Territories, veterans, the history. It is also part of the social studies, as well, the history program that we are currently delivering as part of the northern studies. Again, it's an area that we need to address with the school system.

Just as recently there's a residential school curriculum development, there's a land claim self-government currently in the works as well. This is an area that has been brought to my attention just recently, so I will be making an effort to be part of the school process as well.

**MR. YAKELEYA:** In my excitement, I said veterinarians. I meant veterans. Veterans, for the record. I thank my honourable colleague, Mr. Hawkins, for reminding me.

The veterans in our communities that have passed have served, and they are in the community. Sometimes they are the forgotten soldiers, and it's very key and important that in our schools where the young ones look up to community members, it will be something for them to have in our schools, as the Minister, to say we want to designate a special spot in our schools for our veterans to be honoured. Young children will be proudly smiling as they see their family members honoured this way in our communities.

I want to ask the Minister to strongly push, given the time that we have today, that this piece of request could be implemented and ready for next year to open a spot in our schools to honour our veterans in the North.

**HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY:** Mr. Speaker, I agree with the Member that these veterans should not be forgotten. They are a part of our history and also our identity, so we need to honour them. This is an area that I will be pushing with my school boards, that I work very closely with, to have their

presence in our school system, some visibility of the history.

I will commit to the Member that this will be addressed. Mahsi, Mr. Speaker.

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

**MR. YAKELEYA:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I know Veteran Affairs is a federal department. We should look into working with our vets, even those who are retired from peacetime or recent servants in Afghanistan.

Are there any educational credits for retired veterans that can apply to further their education?

**HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY:** Mr. Speaker, as I stated before, there is a variety of programs within our department, not only my department but other departments as well. We need to find out if there is such a program specifically for the targeted individuals. I'm making a commitment in this House that this is an area that we should seriously look at, because we go through the process every year, remembering our veterans on Remembrance Day. There could be some sort of a...(inaudible)...that the Member is asking about. It will take some time to get to that stage, but I will be following through with the stakeholders. Mahsi, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Mahsi, Mr. Lafferty. Member for Mackenzie Delta, Mr. Blake.

#### QUESTION 535-17(5): BUILDING CANADA PLAN

**MR. BLAKE:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As we all know, at the end of March the Building Canada Plan expired and a lot of projects came to a halt.

I'd like to ask the Minister of Transportation, will the new Building Canada Plan be ready for the upcoming year and projects continuing? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Blake. Minister of Transportation, Mr. Beaulieu.

**HON. TOM BEAULIEU:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We are continuing negotiations with Infrastructure Canada on the Building Canada Fund. The thought was that this actual construction season that just went by would be at the time we would be able to roll out that money, but that didn't happen. So, we are continuing to work with them.

We're very positive, as a department and as a government, that we will be able to sign the necessary documents and roll out that money for this upcoming construction season. Thank you.

**MR. BLAKE:** I would like to ask the Minister again, come April 1<sup>st</sup>, will this new funding roll out and the project continue over the upcoming summer? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.



**HON. TOM BEAULIEU:** That's certainly our hope. We can't commit to something where we haven't signed on the dotted line at this point. But like I indicated, we continue to work – our Minister of Infrastructure and their Minister of Infrastructure – and we're sorting out the details. I feel that once all the details are sorted out and they have a clear understanding of all the projects that we presented in our plan are projects that the federal government Infrastructure is prepared to fund, I'm positive we will be able to roll out new money in the upcoming fiscal year. Thank you.

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

QUESTION 536-17(5):

JUNIOR KINDERGARTEN IMPLEMENTATION

**MR. MENICOCHÉ:** Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I want to ask Minister Lafferty, Minister of Education, Culture and Employment, a couple questions about Junior Kindergarten.

I just want to note that I feel the general population has understood the delays in the larger communities. It's still going forward in the other 23 communities for this year that want it. I also want to say that I don't believe the delays were caused by the middleclass, the low-income people and single parents out there that could not use the daycare or daycare operators anyway.

I'd like to ask the Minister, how well is Junior Kindergarten received in the 23 communities that use it? Thank you.

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

**HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The decision came down from this government to continue with the 23 communities this year and also next year. Part of the process, obviously, is to re-evaluate the programming that's going to be happening over the coming months, within eight months. The feedback we're getting to date has been positive overall, and there hasn't been major issues pertaining to delivery of JK. There were some questions about specific areas of clarification, so those are some of the information and also calls and e-mails that came to my department. There may be others out there that we may not aware of, but what came to our attention is there haven't been any major issues. Mahsi.

**MR. MENICOCHÉ:** I know that we heard that there were funding fears out there.

I'd just like to ask the Minister, with the 23 communities that are using it now, how is it being funded and what are the plans for the future? Thank you.

**HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY:** Mahsi. Part of the decision that was made by this government is to

continue with the 23 communities this year and the following year based on the funding allocations from PTR of up to \$1.8 million a year. So that will subsidize the 23 communities where the research has found it's mostly needed in the small, isolated communities. So that's where we are currently delivering Junior Kindergarten.

But keep in mind that we are in the process of re-evaluating our program delivery over the coming months as well. Mahsi.

**MR. MENICOCHÉ:** When the Minister talks about evaluating in the next coming months, does he have a time frame that he can let us know? Is it in December and once again at the end of the school year? How frequent will the evaluations be? Thank you.

**HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY:** It's very important that we reach out to the stakeholders, the parents and educators to share their perspective, the community members. Those individuals are currently delivering Junior Kindergarten, as well, in the communities. So, the Premier made a statement that within the coming months, within the eight months from now, we should have the final results of the overall review of our programming. Mahsi.

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

**MR. MENICOCHÉ:** Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I'm glad that we're working towards evaluating it, because it's a much needed program, I believe.

As we move forward, can the Minister know... Will he compile an overall report for this House? Thank you.

**HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY:** Once the review is completed, I would have to share that information with the standing committee, so that should be coming within the next coming months. Mahsi.

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

QUESTION 537-17(5):  
DECENTRALIZATION

**MR. BOUCHARD:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I will do a follow-up to my Member's statement about decentralization. My questions will be for the Premier of the Northwest Territories.

This Assembly is going into its last year. Is it a priority to do decentralization? Is the government any closer to solving some of the housing issues and some of the office space issues to do decentralization throughout the Northwest Territories?

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Bouchard. The honorable Premier, Mr. McLeod.

**HON. BOB MCLEOD:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Yes, we are. We have identified \$21 million over the next three years, and we'll be, as well, investing in the housing market in the communities, so our expectation is we will have approximately 178 new houses in the small communities that are predominantly identified for decentralized positions. Thank you.

**MR. BOUCHARD:** Mr. Speaker, from the perspective on this side of the House, we haven't seen the plan of where these jobs are going to be.

Is there a plan coming forward? We just completed phase three. Is there a plan to do a phase four and where and when will we see this plan? Thank you.

**HON. BOB MCLEOD:** The Member will be very pleased to hear that we have just started phase three and we have decentralized 141 positions in this 17<sup>th</sup> Assembly. This is the most positions that have ever been decentralized in the history of this government and we are just starting phase three. So the plan will be, when we roll out the business plans for 2015-16, they will be very clear and I am sure that the Member will be very appreciative. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. BOUCHARD:** Mr. Speaker, as I indicated in my Member's statement, I do know about those decentralized positions, and obviously the numbers in Yellowknife have grown as well.

Does the Premier have that type of information of how many jobs were created and devolved into Yellowknife, to prove that we haven't actually done any decentralization? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**HON. BOB MCLEOD:** The jobs that were devolved from the federal government, there were 135 positions that were filled that were transferred to the Government of the Northwest Territories. I would say approximately 80 to 90 of them were in Yellowknife. One of the conditions for devolution of those positions was that we could not move them within two years, so we would have to wait at least two years to even consider doing anything with those positions. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**MR. BOUCHARD:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. From the information that I received from the Premier, phase three is a '14-15. When we come back to this Assembly in February, we will be in '15. So I am looking for the next phase of what is happening in '15-16 for decentralization and what is the plan going forward.

Once we hit that two-year mark with the federal government, do we have a plan of how to implement more jobs out into the communities? Thank you.

**HON. BOB MCLEOD:** As I indicated, the business plans for 2015-16 will be rolled out early in the new

year. It's very difficult for us to be prescriptive to the next government, and certainly as part of the transitional planning, we will continue to identify decentralization as a priority and we will lay out our thinking on decentralization, but it will be up to the 18<sup>th</sup> Assembly to make those decisions subsequent to 2015-16. Thank you.

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

QUESTION 538-17(5):  
NORTHWEST TERRITORIES  
AGRICULTURAL STRATEGY

**MRS. GROENEWEGEN:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I am going to direct my questions today to the Minister responsible for Industry, Tourism and Investment. The question of an agricultural policy for the Northwest Territories is one of those things on my list that I can now say I have been talking about for the last 19 years. It's sad to say we haven't seen much progress on it. We've had some very good news recently from the federal government in their support for agriculture in the Northwest Territories; we've been moving along with our Growing Forward programs and our different funding programs, but the time has come, we need an agriculture policy.

Would the Minister of ITI please update me on where we are at on a comprehensive NWT agriculture policy? Thank you.

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

**HON. DAVID RAMSAY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Out of the EOS, the idea of an agricultural strategy was born, and we are moving forward with the agricultural strategy. I agree with the Member; the Northwest Territories is one of only two jurisdictions in the country without a comprehensive agricultural strategy in place. We are going to change that. Work has started.

To advance and nurture growth in this sector as well as economic opportunity and benefits for the Northwest Territories agricultural industry, a definitive strategy and accompanying policy instruments are certainly needed to help guide decision-making, growth and capacity building and to attract and leverage future investment and funding in this sector.

We are moving forward with a strategy and certainly look forward to sharing the work along the way with Members of this House. Thank you.

**MRS. GROENEWEGEN:** That's reassuring but, of course, it can't come quickly enough, in my opinion.

As I said in my Member's statement today, the lack of an agricultural policy is actually a barrier to a lot of... It is an impediment and a barrier to a lot of

activity that could take place in the agricultural area, whether it's about taxation or purple gas or licensing of farm equipment. There are so many different things that our government does not have any framework or policy or legislation on.

The big one is land. In order to undertake and become involved in agriculture, we need land.

I would like to ask the Minister, how closely does his department work with the Department of Municipal and Community Affairs to ensure that the availability of land will come alongside an agricultural policy in tandem? How closely do they work together? Thank you.

**HON. DAVID RAMSAY:** A policy, a strategy on agriculture, I mean, it's not going to be worth the paper it's written on if we don't have access to land, so I agree with the Member.

We are going to continue to work with Lands and MACA to ensure that where available, we will make land available for agriculture here in the Northwest Territories. The Members don't have to look any further than in this room to see support for agriculture. Here in the Northwest Territories we've had a great deal of success in a lot of our communities across the territory. When it comes to growing this sector, we feel there is a really bright future for agriculture here in the NWT. We need a strategy, we need those instruments in place to make it successful, and we are going to do just that. Thank you.

**MRS. GROENEWEGEN:** I hate to ask this question, but is this going to happen in my lifetime? And please don't say depending on how long you live.

In terms of the time frame, are we going to see some action on this within the life of this Assembly, and who are we going to consult with? Who do we need to bring together to get this policy formulated and adopted in this House? Thank you.

**HON. DAVID RAMSAY:** We have had discussions with the Territorial Farmers' Association; they have been involved. The advancement of the institute in Hay River, folks there have been involved.

This will happen in the life of this government, we will have this strategy in place. We have just over a year left in the life of this government. I want to assure Members that we feel very strongly about putting this in place and, again, having those tools in place at our disposal to grow the industry here in the Northwest Territories, and we will continue to work with MACA and with Lands to look at the land issue as well. Thank you.

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

**MRS. GROENEWEGEN:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I mentioned in my Member's statement that Choice

North Farms has a pilot project ready to go. ITI has been involved in supporting that.

To the specifics of assisting this organization now in moving forward, what can the Minister tell me that he can do to help identify a location and land for this, if not under agricultural then under industrial, something outside of the town limits. What can the Minister do to help us find that land and get this pilot project off the ground? Thank you.

**HON. DAVID RAMSAY:** Mr. Speaker, what I will do is I will have a discussion with the Minister of MACA and we will try to find a solution to do this. It's important that agricultural pursuits don't have the hurdles to go over. In this case, it looks like there is a hurdle there and that's the issue of land and the availability of land.

I want to assure the Member that at the earliest possible opportunity we will have a discussion with MACA and we will try to sort this out. Thank you.

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

QUESTION 539-17(5):  
PROMOTING NWT TOURISM

**MR. MOSES:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Earlier this week I talked about the NWTRPA becoming a national, I don't want to say icon, but it will be promoted at the national level. It's a great opportunity for this government to get messages out there to get tourism on the national front, much like we did with Arctic Air and we had those NWT Tourism Spectacular NWT during the commercials. So my questions today are for the Minister of ITI.

Is the department doing anything to promote tourism with CBC Television during that special in January like we did with Arctic Air? Is the department in talks with possibly the CBC Television show to get something in the commercials while that special is being aired? Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Moses. Minister Ramsay.

**HON. DAVID RAMSAY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm not aware of the specifics on whether or not we are involved, whether NWT Tourism or the department is involved in that. I will endeavor to find that information out, but certainly if there's a way that we can continue to promote the region and promote the territory through advertising and that is an opportunity for us, we will certainly take a look at that. Thank you.

**MR. MOSES:** I know we've done a lot of investment and a lot of work with the Arctic Air production, like I said, doing all those commercials.

I'd like to ask the Minister if he and his department, in partnership with NWT Tourism, would possibly sit down with the NWT Rec and Parks Association and

come up with a promotional strategy. They'll be developing this air program and also look at when they go down and visit with the Play Exchange group, if they'd be willing to look at some kind of promotional campaign where they all could partner together to get NWT on the national level. Thank you.

**HON. DAVID RAMSAY:** I certainly encourage the folks at NWT Parks and Rec to contact our staff in Inuvik, our ITI staff in Inuvik. There are a lot of great things, and the Member really made a great statement today on this. The opportunities here don't end at tourism, of course healthy lifestyles, and including maybe Health and Social Services and trying to get as much out of this as we possibly can. I really appreciate where the Member is coming at with this. So, if there is a way that ITI can help out, we'd certainly like to be there to lend our support. Thank you.

**MR. MOSES:** The NWT Rec and Parks Association represents all of the Northwest Territories. So, in terms of that fact, I'd like to ensure that ITI or NWT Tourism does contact the office here in Yellowknife. It is a made-in-the-NWT event, and like I said, it can be highlighted at the national level.

Is the Minister's office, working with NWT Tourism, willing to contact CBC broadcasting and see if we can actually get some of those spots during the special to air some of our Spectacular NWT commercials? Thank you

**HON. DAVID RAMSAY:** Thank you. Again, I appreciate the Member's enthusiasm and his ideas. Like I mentioned earlier, I will go back to the department and to Northwest Territories Tourism and discuss that option of airing those ads and how that might all work, and I'll get some information back to the Member. Thank you.

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

QUESTION 540-17(5):  
SCHOOLYARD SAFETY

**MR. HAWKINS:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'll have questions for the Minister of Education, Culture and Employment. The question I want to bring up today is about schoolyard safety.

One of the schools in my riding, which is Mildred Hall School, has a fire hydrant right in the middle of the playground. The children can't play soccer or play baseball without safety concerns.

From my research, no school in the Northwest Territories, or even Alberta, has this type of safety problem. Actually, it's beyond ridiculous that the children have to worry about this. In a situation where we have declining physical activity with children, we must find ways to encourage, not

discourage, children from playing and being part of activity.

So my question for the Minister of Education, Culture and Employment is simply this: Would he be willing to agree today to look at trying to find a financial solution to this particular problem, because it isn't a heavy capital issue but it is one that should be paramount always before our mind: the safety of the children and making sure that they're active in their own ways.

So will the Minister work with the school board to find a financial solution to this problem because they don't have the money? Thank you.

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

**HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY:** Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. This is an issue that was just brought to my attention just now. So I will commit to working with the school board to find a solution. Mahsi.

**MR. HAWKINS:** Thank you. I appreciate that answer. I'm not sure I want to screw it up by asking another one and getting him to retract it. But does the Minister see a possibility of working on the solution within the next few weeks so we can build it into the upcoming budget?

Recently the Department of Education has taken back about \$400,000 from this school board. I know the Department of Education – we don't need the exact dollar – turns back money every single year to the Department of Finance, and I know they're always happy to get that money back.

So what I'm trying to get at is: Does the Minister see if he can get this plan in action immediately, because it's robbing the kids and we want to make sure we can get it in the window of this upcoming season of construction.

**HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY:** Mahsi. Those are the discussions that we need to have. I don't have any information in front of me pertaining to this. My department needs to sit down with the school board and find out the details of the issues that may be before us. It's not only our department but Public Works and Services that we have to work with when it comes to infrastructure. So that discussion needs to happen with the school board. Mahsi.

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

QUESTION 541-17(5):  
LIABILITY AND FINANCIAL SECURITIES

**MS. BISARO:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My questions today are addressed to the Minister of Lands. I'd like to follow up on his statement about establishment of the liabilities and financial assurances division.

Some questions have been asked already by other Members about security for development in the NWT. I'd like to ask the Minister first, in general, does the department have an approach, do they have a policy in regard to the value of security that is required for development? Is the security required equal to the value of the remediation or is it a percentage of the value of remediation? Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Ms. Bisaro. Minister of Lands, Mr. McLeod.

**HON. ROBERT MCLEOD:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My understanding is that the security amounts are set by the board and that it would normally consist of whatever it may cost to remediate the site. I'd have to confirm that, but I know the amounts are set by the boards. Thank you.

**MS. BISARO:** Thanks to the Minister. The Minister's statement stated: "Security provides additional protection to ensure that there are funds to address environmental liabilities if proponents fail to take remedial action." That's definitely a statement that I can agree with and I'm very glad that that's in there. I do have a bit of a difficulty in that if the amount is set by the board and yet the government is supposed to do the monitoring and enforcement, if the number is not enough for remediation, there's a bit of a gap in there.

I'd like to ask the Minister how the assessments are made. He says that they're made by the board, but are they made in house? Does the department assist the board when they are making those assessments for security?

Earlier in response to questions from Mr. Bromley, I believe, the Minister mentioned that they were in negotiations with a particular development to establish a security. So I'd like to know how these assessments are made and my point is we need to have them as accurate as possible. Thank you.

**HON. ROBERT MCLEOD:** Thank you. I'll have to admit that I'm not quite sure how the assessments are made. All I know is they are made by the board. I'm sure there's a lot of work that goes into them, once they make it and we negotiate with the proponents as to the instrument that they will pay and then we hold that security. Thank you.

**MS. BISARO:** Thanks to the Minister. The Minister also mentioned in his statement that we are working on short- and long-term policy development concerning the government's management of securities. I would hope that the manner in which assessments are done would be part of that consideration. Certainly the other day there was quite a consideration of the difference, or the statement that we are using security bonds as opposed to irrevocable letter of credit.

I'd like to ask the Minister, and he may not be able to give me this answer today, but I would like to know from the Minister what the difference is between a security bond and an irrevocable letter of credit and why is it that we have decided a security bond is acceptable as security.

**HON. ROBERT MCLEOD:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. A surety bond is what we have accepted in this particular case. It is a bond that is covered by three major insurance companies, and the proponent would pay a premium on that insurance. It's in effect until we release our interest in it. It's a very powerful instrument to use. It's one that's used widely across the world, my understanding, and it's one that's acceptable under the Waters Act, and it does carry a lot of weight. It's covered by multinational insurance companies, and it is one that we're using in this case. What that does is it also frees up some capital that the developers can put back into their project, which could add as long as 10 years on to the life of some projects and the jobs that would continue to provide. It is a very strong bond and it is acceptable in development.

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

**MS. BISARO:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thank you to the Minister. Thank you for correcting me. Yes, I meant surety bond, so thank you for understanding what I meant.

I guess my concern is whether or not the department has looked at situations where a surety bond has had to be used. I appreciate that the reasoning that it frees the company up for capital as opposed to having a letter of credit, which is cash.

Can the Minister, if he has not or the department has not, look into previous situations or situations that exist anywhere in the world where a surety bond has had to be called on and how effective it was in providing the funds necessary for remediation of a site?

**HON. ROBERT MCLEOD:** We do have a list of instances where it's been used in the past. I think as we go forward with this, what I need to do is, I need to sit down with the committee that oversees Lands. I need to give them a briefing so we all have a better understanding of the differences between a surety bond and a line of credit. I will commit to doing that at our earliest convenience. We do have examples of where it has been used in the past.

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

QUESTION 542-17(5):  
DIRECT APPOINTMENT POLICY

**MR. HAWKINS:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to return to one of my favourite subjects, and that's direct appointments. As we've all heard at length repeatedly over the years, my concern that they're

not publicly accounted for and whatnot. Rather than spending a lot of time, let's go straight to the Minister of Human Resources and get right to the bottom.

What type of public reporting does the Minister see is available for the public to know how many direct appointments we are doing, how often do we make them, and what departments receive them? Let's just start off with some simple questions like that.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Hawkins. Minister Beaulieu.

**HON. TOM BEAULIEU:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We have that information. We do advise committee on the amount of appointments that we've done over each government. I believe that the last time the committee asked, we had provided them with information on the amount of direct appointments that we had done at the Cabinet level.

**MR. HAWKINS:** If it's provided to committee, of course, as we all know through the various channels, levels and scrutiny we receive, of course, every piece of that information is confidential. What public reporting can be done on this particular subject?

**HON. TOM BEAULIEU:** Direct appointment is a unique tool that this government uses to fill positions, and if the committee feels that it would be important for this to be reported in a manner to the general public and if committee has ideas on how we would be able to report that to the government, then we would be open to listen to that.

**MR. HAWKINS:** I appreciate the answer from the Minister. Is the Minister saying that if he had a sharply worded letter from committee that supported this initiative, the government would jump on it?

**HON. TOM BEAULIEU:** Yes, we would consider it, depending on what information they wanted to release. I believe that we could probably talk about the various priorities, but I think some of the information would remain confidential. If the committee has ideas and it was to write to us asking us what they wanted released for what purpose to the public, then we would consider that.

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

**MR. HAWKINS:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I want to be very clear on the record. I think that there are cases and reasons why we do direct appointments, and I am certainly not against all of them by any means. I want to make sure that's absolutely clear. I'm only about public transparency, and that's really what it comes down to. Frankly, my question, lastly, for the Minister of Human Resources would be: Minus the recent devolution transfer of appointments – because some of them, if not all of them, had to be considered direct appointments –

what type of direct appointments are we talking about that have fallen under this government in the last three years?

**HON. TOM BEAULIEU:** There are various reasons: supporting career development for long-term employees, supporting advancement of employees who have successfully completed formal training, advancing career development of affirmative action candidates outside the public service, addressing unique challenges with a particular job competition such as when recent recruitment practices indicate an open competition would be unproductive in resolving an undesirable work situation such as marriage between two individuals in the same departments.

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

QUESTION 543-17(5):  
STANTON TERRITORIAL HOSPITAL  
RETROFIT AND P3 CONTRACT

**MR. BROMLEY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My questions today are for Minister Miltenberger and Finance. I have questions about the P3 contract we are proposing for the retrofit of Stanton Territorial Hospital.

I am worried that it may not be the best deal for the people of the Northwest Territories. Research indicates that failure rates are high, that they amount to a huge transfer of tax dollars to private financiers, and buyout of P3s are becoming more common. Because it's politically expedient to defer expenses and avoid debt, the government is essentially renting money rather than borrowing it more cheaply on their own.

I'd like to ask the Minister why has he chosen this justly maligned model for a project so important to the well-being of our citizens as the retrofit of our territorial hospital.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Bromley. The Minister of Finance, Mr. Miltenberger.

**HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We have looked at this carefully. There is a process. There are a number of considerations that are there. The public interest is paramount. The value for money must be demonstrable. Appropriate public control and ownership must be preserved. Accountability must be maintained and all processes must be fair, transparent and efficient. We've put this project through the rigour, for value, for money, a review, and we looked at it because we are required to under our P3 policy, anything over \$50 million, and we are of the opinion that we can demonstrate and have demonstrated that, well, as the Member indicates, it's a much maligned process that in this instance seems to be something that's very, very worth considering.

**MR. BROMLEY:** Thanks for the Minister's response. I'm sure all the other jurisdictions that have had such failures have similarly done the analysis and so on. A 2012 study of 28 Ontario P3 projects worth more than \$7 billion found that public-private partnerships cost an average of 16 percent more than conventionally tendered contracts. That's mainly because private borrowers typically pay higher interest rates than governments. Transaction costs for lawyers and consultants also add about 3 percent to the final bill, and of course, private financiers are looking for a large return on their investments.

Specifically, what are the checks and balances the Minister refers to that makes our P3 project so different and so safe, from Cabinet's perspective, and it will protect us and the public from the 16 percent-plus cost penalty typical of such an approach. Mahsi.

**HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER:** Mr. Speaker, from my time in government, it has been my experience that there is no particular construction project that is ironclad and failsafe anywhere. So, are there challenges with the P3? Yes. Are there challenges with other processes? Yes, there are.

We have a management framework for P3s. We have some of the best finance people in the world that are looking at this and they are very, very capable people that have delivered, time and time again, good budgets, that are very knowledgeable. We have the Public Works department that has a lot of skills in terms of overseeing projects, and in spite of the very many challenges, we have managed some fairly substantial projects over the last few years, if I look at the Inuvik East Three School, we've worked our way through the bridge and we are now fully engaged in delivering the Tuk-Inuvik highway on time and on budget all with separate and different approaches to the construction.

So I wouldn't be so quick to write this off. I know there are some concerns in some quarters, but we believe that we had the rigour on this and the very thorough review, and we're making the case that we should be considering this. Thank you.

**MR. BROMLEY:** Thanks to the Minister. You know, many times I've heard my colleagues, and I myself have asked the questions, what are the specific challenges that the Minister mentions and what are the specific safeguards in response to those. Once again, the Minister said, we've got great people working on this. So again, I hope the Minister will make that clear to the public and to the House.

Mr. Speaker the RFP for the Stanton rebuild has just been made public. The list of jobs to be privatized is growing. In addition to maintenance jobs, we now know help desk services, plant services, waste management services, road and

ground maintenance, parking management, pest control, security and surveillance and laundry and linen services are to be privatized. In recent years catering and housekeeping were also privatized.

How is the increasing privatization of public service jobs possibly considered good for the economy of the Northwest Territories, the delivery of critical health care and the expected employees? Mahsi.

**HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER:** Mr. Speaker, what is critical and what is going to be good for the Northwest Territories and all the people living here is that we're going to have a \$350 million project that's going to give us a state-of-the-art health centre, that's going to come in on time and on budget, that's going to be 40 percent larger than it currently is, it's going to provide us some of the best services, it will be our flagship acute care facility for the next 30 years or so, and it will be done in a way that we make sure, in fact, the staff complement at Stanton is going to grow. Yes, there are some potential non-core services that may not be government jobs, but as part of the process, we're looking at it and no final decisions have been made. But what we have to focus on is this is a very, very much needed project and it's going to give us a facility that's going to serve us well into the future. Thank you.

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

**MR. BROMLEY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I do appreciate the Minister has a vision. Again, some specifics would help us get on board with that.

What are the checks and balances in response to these challenges that are out there? If there is a fair chance that this P3 initiative will fail, based on vast experience nationally and internationally, as we saw with the Deh Cho Bridge boondoggle and so on, but most notably with the building and retrofitting of hospitals in other jurisdictions such as Ontario, what is this government going to do? What is this government doing to ensure we have the fiscal capacity to bail out the Stanton Territorial P3 projects, again, such as many other governments are doing now? What is our fiscal capacity? How is the Minister assuring we have the resources to bail us out if need be? Mahsi.

**HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER:** Mr. Speaker, first let's just look at the bridge. Yes, it had some issues as it was built, but it has won, subsequently, all sorts of awards. I have talked to a lot of people about the bridge and I've asked them all the same question and there is always the same answer. Given some of the critics about the bridge and the dislike for the bridge and they don't like how it was done and what it looks like, would you all go back to ferries and ice roads? It's an unequivocal 100 percent no way. We love being able to go in and out. We love the service and access that the bridge gives us. If you consistently call it a boondoggle, we

have a piece of infrastructure... I've been in Edmonton where they have overpasses that cost more than that bridge. It's a great piece of work.

We have experience with hospitals, not to the magnitude of this one, and the Member has made up his mind that once again it's going to be the process. He will say that this is a good project; he just doesn't like the process, like many things. We will have to and we will demonstrate, we have demonstrated, that there is value for money here and the P3 process is one worth considering. Thank you.

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

QUESTION 544-17(5):  
FERRY CLOSURE POLICY

**MR. MENICOCHÉ:** Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I wanted to ask the Minister of Transportation about the policy about ferry closures at this time of year. It's very stressful for all the residents that are on the ferry system. I had a couple of calls from residents of Fort Simpson that indicate there was a bit of confusion this year.

I would like to ask the Minister, what policy does the Department of Transportation have for notifying the general public about ferry closures? Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Menicoche. Minister of Transportation, Mr. Beaulieu.

**HON. TOM BEAULIEU:** Mahsi cho, Mr. Speaker. What we use is the average of the last 10 years as a time when we indicate when the ferry will close. The average in the last 10 years on the one ferry, the Liard ferry, was November 3<sup>rd</sup>, so we advised the public that it would be closed anywhere within 72 hours because we thought that was taking us to November 3<sup>rd</sup>. However, we try to keep the ferry open as long as possible, as long as it is safe to continue to run, so there may be extensions added to that if the ferry is still running safely across the river. Thank you.

**MR. MENICOCHÉ:** The particular case I'm talking about is Fort Simpson. Apparently, the depth sounder wasn't working properly, so the staff said, oh look, we have to close tonight. I think that was on Sunday, but the depth sound meter wasn't working properly. Then the department advised the public and then they opened up the next day for 12 hours on Monday, then Tuesday they said they're doing daylight hours. It is really confusing for the residents of Fort Simpson and the businesses, so they were quite confused.

Once again I would like to ask the Minister what specifically happened in the case of Fort Simpson ferry closure this year.

**HON. TOM BEAULIEU:** That vital piece of equipment that the Member refers to was not

working properly at the time. We had that piece of equipment repaired and it started to work. We recognized that the depth was still sufficient to run the ferry, so we extended the ferry operations.

As I indicated, we feel that we try to run the ferry as long as possible so that is why there was a little confusion to try to keep the ferry open, although we indicated earlier that we thought it would be closing sooner. Thank you.

**MR. MENICOCHÉ:** Especially this time of year, of course, I pride the ferry captains and all staff that do everything they can to extend the ferry day by day. But in this case it was the failure of a piece of equipment that confused everybody. Everybody thought definitely that the ferry was being shut down.

Perhaps the Minister can issue a public statement to the residents of Fort Simpson apologizing for the confusion this year, and even with that little simple statement. Thank you.

**HON. TOM BEAULIEU:** Mr. Speaker, I have no problem whatsoever to advise the people in Fort Simpson and apologize for having some failure on the equipment and explain why there was some confusion of the ferry being anticipated to close then extended again. Thank you.

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

**MR. MENICOCHÉ:** Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I'm glad that the Minister concurred to that.

Does the Minister feel that there is need to review the policy, or is it just a case where it was a malfunctioning piece of equipment that created the confusion? Thank you.

**HON. TOM BEAULIEU:** One of the things we will do for this vital time of the year, I will ensure that the equipment is checked earlier, before it's needed and to ensure that it's working. That is one of the things that we will incorporate with that ferry or any ferry that needs a depth sounder to continue to cross the river. Thank you.

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

**MR. YAKELEYA:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I seek unanimous consent to turn back to item 8 on the orders of the day.

---Unanimous consent denied

**MR. SPEAKER:** Item 9, written questions. Item 10, returns to written questions. Mr. Clerk.



### Returns to Written Questions

#### RETURN TO WRITTEN QUESTION 22-17(5): JUNIOR KINDERGARTEN FUNDING

**CLERK OF THE HOUSE (Mr. Mercer):** Mr. Speaker, I have a return to Written Question 22-17(5) asked by Ms. Bisaro on November 3, 2014, to the honourable Jackson Lafferty, Minister of Education, Culture and Employment, regarding Junior Kindergarten funding.

Later today, at the appropriate time, I will table "Funding for Junior Kindergarten Implementation in the 2014-2015 School Year," which provides the allocation, cost share and net impact of Junior Kindergarten for each education authority.

If the number of schools offering Junior Kindergarten remains as it is now, the allocations and cost-sharing amounts in 2015-2016 will remain the same as in the "Funding for Junior Kindergarten Implementation in the 2014-2015 School Year" document.

Mr. Speaker, at this time it is not possible to project changes to these allocations and cost-sharing amounts for the 2015-2016 school year. This is because education authorities have been offered the choice to withdraw from the Junior Kindergarten Program and any such changes would impact the funding to, and cost share by, all education authorities. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**MR. BROMLEY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I seek unanimous consent to return to item 8 on the Order Paper, oral questions. Mahsi.

---Unanimous consent denied

**MR. SPEAKER:** Item 11, replies to opening address. Item 12, petitions. Item 13, reports of committees on the review of bills. Item 14, tabling of documents. Mr. Beaulieu.

### Tabling of Documents

#### TABLED DOCUMENT 182-17(5): 2013 PUBLIC SERVICE ANNUAL REPORT

**HON. TOM BEAULIEU:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I wish to table the following document, entitled "2013 Public Service Annual Report." Thank you.

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

#### TABLED DOCUMENT 183-17(5): 2013-2014 REPORT OF THE LEGAL SERVICES BOARD OF THE NWT

**HON. DAVID RAMSAY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I wish to table the following document, entitled "2013-2014 Report of the Legal Services Board of the NWT." Thank you.

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

#### TABLED DOCUMENT 184-17(5): FUNDING FOR JUNIOR KINDERGARTEN IMPLEMENTATION IN THE 2014-2015 SCHOOL YEAR

**HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY:** Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. Further to my Return to Written Question 22-17(5), I wish to table the following document, entitled "Funding for Junior Kindergarten Implementation in the 2014-2015 School Year." Mahsi, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Lafferty. Item 15, notices of motion. Mr. Hawkins.

**MR. HAWKINS:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I seek unanimous consent to return to item 8, oral questions, which is on the orders of the day. Thank you.

---Unanimous consent denied

**MR. SPEAKER:** Item 16, notices of motion for first reading of bills. Colleagues, we are going to call a 15-minute break.

---SHORT RECESS

**MR. SPEAKER:** Before we start back into the work of the day, I'd like to welcome back former Speaker and Minister and MLA for Mackenzie Delta, Mr. Krutko.

---Applause

Item 17, motions. Mr. Nadli.

### Motions

#### MOTION 31-17(5): ESTABLISHMENT OF OMBUDSMAN OFFICE, CARRIED

**MR. NADLI:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. WHEREAS this 17th Legislative Assembly has often spoken of and identified openness, transparency and accountability as being of utmost importance to all Members and the people of the Northwest Territories;

AND WHEREAS the Government of the Northwest Territories currently lacks a single point of contact where Northwest Territories residents may take their concerns when they feel they have been impacted by unfair treatment in government administration;

AND WHEREAS with the recent achievement of devolution, the Government of the Northwest Territories has marked a significant milestone in its evolution and has reached an unprecedented level of complexity;

AND WHEREAS the Government of the Northwest Territories has undertaken a review of current

practices which identified more than two dozen pieces of territorial legislation that establish statutory appeal mechanisms – evidence of the complexity of the territorial government that the average citizen has to engage with;

AND WHEREAS nine Canadian provinces and Yukon have parliamentary ombudsman offices;

AND WHEREAS an ombudsman office would complement the work of the Human Rights Commission by providing an advocacy support option for people who have legitimate complaints of unfair treatment not based on human rights grounds;

AND WHEREAS the Human Rights Commission has indicated that they frequently get requests for help from people who have legitimate complaints about government treatment not based on human rights grounds, and that the Human Rights Commission would refer such people to an ombudsman if such an office existed;

AND WHEREAS the need for a territorial ombudsman for the Northwest Territories was first raised in the Legislative Assembly over 20 years ago and was most recently debated in this House on June 8, 2012;

AND WHEREAS, pursuant to Motion 12-17(4) of this Legislative Assembly, the matter of the potential role of a Northwest Territories ombudsman, whether stand-alone or combined with another statutory office, and options for implementing such an office, was referred to the Standing Committee on Government Operations for research, review and analysis;

AND WHEREAS, in response to Motion 12-17(4), the Standing Committee on Government Operations tabled its report on Establishing an Office of the Ombudsman for the Northwest Territories in the Legislative Assembly on June 4, 2014;

NOW THEREFORE I MOVE, seconded by the honourable Member for Frame Lake, that the government introduce legislation that will establish an ombudsman as an independent and non-partisan statutory officer;

AND FURTHER, that the government, in designing the appropriate legislation, refer to the report produced by the Standing Committee on Government Operations and work closely with the Office of the Clerk of the Legislative Assembly to examine the options of both a stand-alone office and one that might combine with another statutory office.

AND FURTHERMORE, that the government provide a response to this motion within 120 days.

Mahsi.

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

**MR. NADLI:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Today we're debating a motion requesting that the government introduce legislation that would establish an ombudsman in the Northwest Territories. In June 2014, the Standing Committee on Government Operations tabled a special report on the need for an ombudsman. As the committee chair, it is appropriate for me to provide some opening remarks on this motion.

I'll begin by describing what an ombudsman is and does. The term "ombudsman" is a fancy term for a citizens' defender, someone who is a voice for the people and a peacemaker. An ombudsman assists people, free of charge, who feel they have been treated unfairly by government and helps people understand their rights when it comes to government administration.

An ombudsman responds to complaints from the public by conducting confidential investigations and then recommending ways to improve government services. The ombudsman's office is a place of last resort and it complements existing appeal mechanisms and remedies available through the courts.

An office of the ombudsman would have strong powers of investigation, requires cooperation from all government organizations. However, it would not have the power to change or reverse government decisions. Moral persuasion is a primary tool in the ombudsman toolkit.

Generally, an ombudsman has the power to investigate government departments and certain Crown corporations. However, it would be up to the NWT Legislative Assembly to decide whether to include municipalities, Aboriginal governments, schools and hospitals within the scope of the ombudsman's mandate.

The ombudsman's office in the Yukon makes the services available to the Aboriginal governments, but only if they request it. The public may wonder why the Northwest Territories needs an ombudsman. The Standing Committee on Government operations believes it's an idea whose time has come.

The Government of the Northwest Territories is becoming more complex, especially now that devolution has been achieved. The GNWT talks a lot about transparency and accountability to the public. An ombudsman would help to ensure that the GNWT is on the right track. Although the vast majority of GNWT public servants perform their jobs diligently and conscientiously, mistakes can happen. As well, sometimes there is a systemic unfairness. An ombudsman would be uniquely

positioned to make recommendations for improvements in such instances.

All Canadian jurisdictions except PEI and Nunavut have an ombudsman office. The Yukon combines the ombudsman's duties with those of the Privacy Commissioner.

The function of an ombudsman is entirely consistent with the principles of consensus government. The method of operation emphasizes sound reasoning, independence and good working relationships.

The GNWT is evolving and becoming a more sophisticated and complicated government. I hope that my colleagues will join me in supporting this motion. The time has come for legislators in the NWT to put in place an office whose key purpose is to promote fairness and assist our people. Mahsi.

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

**MS. BISARO:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm very pleased to rise in support of this motion and to be able to speak to the motion that's before us today.

Although Members on this side of the House and committee have heard considerable support from our constituents and from the general public in support of the establishment of an ombudsman office, there are, unfortunately, still naysayers when it comes to establishing that office in the NWT. I think it's because many people do not understand how the office can be a good force for government, that it can promote accountability in administration and improve government through investigations.

I'd like to provide some info that backs up what Mr. Nadli has just told us and to help people understand the office of an ombudsman. So what is an ombudsman? I'd like to give you a couple of quotes, one from the Ontario ombudsman website, which says:

"Ombudsman' is a Swedish word meaning 'citizen's representative,' an independent official who investigates complaints from the public about mal-administration and government. The first parliamentary ombudsman was created in Sweden in 1809."

So we're a little behind the times. "The ombudsman is an officer of the Legislature, independent of government and all political parties."

From the Yukon website:

"Every day the Yukon government makes decisions and provides services that affect people's lives. These decisions and services may relate to vehicle registration, student loans, health services, a grant application, or numerous other things. Although many government workers strive to do the best job they can, sometimes problems can develop. If a citizen feels that the Yukon government has

been unfair in making a decision or delivering a service and is unable to resolve the matter, it is essential that they have an independent authority to bring their concern to. Identifying and resolving problems benefits the person who brings the complaint forward, others in the same situation, the government and all citizens of Yukon."

So what does an ombudsman do? From the Yukon website:

"The ombudsman is an impartial investigator who takes complaints regarding Yukon government services. The ombudsman can independently and impartially look at a matter to see whether or not you've been treated fairly. If the ombudsman finds that you have been treated unfairly, he or she can make recommendations to address the unfairness. Independent review of individual complaints can work to improve government administration. We also work to educate the public and government about fairness in administration and the role of our office."

From the Ontario website about what an ombudsman does:

"The ombudsman investigates public complaints about Ontario government services. These include individual complaints, for example, about bureaucratic delays and major systemic problems affecting thousands or even millions of people. He or she also investigates complaints about closed municipal meetings."

The description of an ombudsman is very similar no matter where you look. Mr. Nadli cited some, I've cited some, and that's only from two sources, but they are very similar. An ombudsman office oversees all government departments, all boards, corporations, tribunals and agencies. I feel it's critical that people understand that the office does not duplicate the work of a Member of the Legislative Assembly. That's a concern that is often expressed to me by our MLAs. Instead, it offers a venue to work with MLAs to help constituents. People need to know that it is an office of last resort, and as such, it is an alternative to court for our residents. In addition, the ombudsman office provides for a single point of entry or contact for residents with complaints about procedural fairness or decisions. It's also very important to know that an ombudsman recommendation is not binding.

We've been discussing the issue of an ombudsman or an ombudsman office as far back as 1992, as mentioned by Mr. Nadli. This description that I'm about to give is from a 1993 NWT standing committee report:

"The ombudsman complements, not replaces, existing institutions in ensuring that the grievances of the public are addressed. Thus,

the ombudsman does not investigate complaints when legal or other remedies are available, but is there to provide a remedy when administrative or other avenues of recourse are unavailable.”

An ombudsman office is independent, reporting to the Legislative Assembly, not the government, and it is exempt from provisions of the Access to Information and Protection of Privacy Act. Any information collected by the ombudsman office is protected and secure. Nothing is released unless the individual involved gives permission for it to be released.

The Ontario ombudsman website lists the five top reasons for complaints, and they are ones that we hear all the time from our constituents: first, wrong, unfair decisions; second, bad service; third, inadequate communication; fourth, unfair policies and procedures; and number five, delays. We hear lots of those. These are all things that apply just as easily to the NWT as they do to Ontario.

The Ontario ombudsman was here earlier this week, and in listening to him discuss his office and the work that he does, I was surprised to learn that it is against the law in Ontario to refuse to comply with an order from the ombudsman office. It is punishable by jail. But it only makes sense. For the office to properly do its job, to fully investigate concerns and problems, the staff must be able to access any documents from any government entity. I think knowing that puts the fear of God into our Cabinet colleagues and contributes to their resistance to establishing this office. It's the fear of the unknown, the fear of interference. But good, transparent and accountable government should welcome the insight into government practices that an ombudsman can bring.

What does Cabinet have to fear? Nothing, as noted in the 1993 NWT standing committee report. It said:

“The office of ombudsman is a resource to the public administration. The ombudsman is not an adversary of the bureaucracy. Indeed, good relations with the bureaucracy are essential. A properly functioning ombudsman facilitates public confidence in the fairness of the public administration and the intervention of the ombudsman should improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the bureaucracy.”

As noted, we are one of only three jurisdictions in Canada that do not currently have an ombudsman office, and I've said many times before, there are innumerable situations where NWT residents could use an ombudsman to assist in solving a dispute or a disagreement or to investigate unfair government decisions or practices.

Government staff generally do a wonderful job for our residents, but there are times when a resident, rightly or wrongly, feels they've been treated

unjustly or without fairness. In many cases, they have no option for appeal. Certainly, some organizations and some departments do have an appeal or a complaints process, but if a resident loses on that front there is no other option of appeal except to go to court. We all know residents who are intimidated by the court system, and even though they have the courage of their conviction, they firmly believe they have been unfairly treated, they will not contemplate taking their case to court. It's David versus Goliath, and few of us take on that kind of fight. Never mind the investment of time and money that a court battle demands.

In previous consideration of the ombudsman issue, the government of the day has said that residents have ways available to them to appeal a court action or decision. That's true. They can talk to department staff, there are appeal boards in some cases, as I noted, and people can ask their MLA for help, but none of these possibilities provide an impartial forum, and when all options are exhausted and the individual still feels wronged, the only action left to them is to take the matter to court, and that is an expensive and intimidating solution. NWT residents fighting a government or a board decision need an alternative to court, and an ombudsman office will give them that.

We've been talking about the need for an ombudsman office for years now. As Mr. Nadli mentioned, as far back in Hansard as 1992. There was a proposal for an office as far back as 1993, and the report tabled in this House in 1993 recommended the following:

“The Standing Committee on Legislation undertook a review which included public hearings throughout the Northwest Territories. The committee tabled its report on March 1, 1993, and recommended:

1. That the Minister of Justice proceed on a priority basis with the preparation of a bill which would establish the right of access by the public to information held by government institutions.
2. That the Minister of Justice develop a legislative action paper outlining a proposal for the creation of an ombudsman for the Northwest Territories.”

Now, some 21 years later, we unfortunately have had no concrete action to establish an office for the ombudsman. But there has been action, lots of it. Most recently, as we all know, the Standing Committee on Government Operations produced an excellent and thorough report. That report recommends that we establish an office of the ombudsman for the NWT.

This motion that we are dealing with today asks the government to develop legislation to do just that: to produce legislation that will allow for the

establishment of an ombudsman office. That office is needed and the need is evident. Over the last couple of decades, particularly with devolution, our territory has grown, and we have grown up, and part of being grown up is recognizing the need to help our neighbours and our friends. The time is now to bring this legislation forward. I ask all Members to recognize that and to vote in support of this motion.

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

**MR. BOUCHARD:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to acknowledge the mover and the seconder as well as Government Operations for their hard work on this motion and the work on the ombudsman implementation. I know I've been able to attend several of the meetings.

In my short term as MLA, I've seen many situations where an ombudsman would be convenient and useful. There are several opportunities where MLAs can fight the fight to a certain point until they hit a roadblock, whether that's in the Minister's office or whether it's in bureaucracy or whether it's in the legislation. An ombudsman would be able to take care of some of those issues. I think we're talking about the small percentage of issues that have been before MLAs and the government. I know the government's probably reluctant to accept this ombudsman, seeing as they would indicate that we take care of the issues that are before us, and that's true. They do, on the majority. But there is that 1, 2, 3 percent that they cannot fix. There is no immediate solution and maybe they agree to disagree with one of our constituents.

The other argument that lots of people have a concern with is the cost. Granted, there will be a cost to this office, but we know that we would implement it with a statutory office to do economies of scale for implementation to maybe do some joint work, office and staff-wise and similar work-wise.

There are many constituents that have issues with the way government is doing certain items, but they can't risk that, whether they are a contractor who continues to do work with the department on a daily basis, they can't risk their livelihoods to make a complaint. An ombudsman may be able to take that complaint anonymously, so that individual or that company can make a complaint that they haven't dealt with or this situation hasn't been dealt with.

As the mover and seconder indicated, this issue and this discussion have been here for more than 20 years. We need to look at an ombudsman office sooner than later. We're at the last year of this Assembly and we're going to go through another Assembly that didn't implement this important office, this important feature in GNWT to take constituents' concerns and complaints that are not being dealt with, that are taking too long to be dealt with.

Like I said, in my short three-year career here, we have had issues where people have been working on complaints and concerns for over three, four, five years, and I've taken them on from previous MLAs. There are certain things in this government that have to be dealt with promptly, and we believe that an ombudsman will allow this to happen and should be implemented. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**MR. MOSES:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. First of all I would just like to acknowledge the work of the Government Operations committee in bringing this forward. It was a very long process and a lot of work into research. I would also like to thank the staff behind the scenes for doing the research and bringing forth a very good motion and some of the reports and discussion papers that we had to make our decision on. I would like to thank Mr. Nadli and Ms. Bisaro for taking that one step further and bringing the motion to the floor as we debate it in the House today.

I think Ms. Bisaro and our chair, Mr. Nadli, said it very well on why we need an ombudsman, what is an ombudsman, what they do and some of the powers that they have. We were lucky to have Mr. Andre Marin, the ombudsman for Ontario, here to do a little presentation and the Q and A with the public here in Yellowknife. He gave a lot of really good points in terms of why it's needed.

Also, just to let you know, Mr. Speaker, we are one of three jurisdictions in Canada right now that don't have an ombudsman office that need the importance of it. What Mr. Marin had also mentioned last week was that in his office, he has support from all political parties in the work that he does. Even though the recommendations aren't binding, the government always acts on those recommendations and, in some cases, develops action plans right away when they see some of the recommendations that come out of his office.

The motion is very important as we proceed to creating this ombudsman act, and as Ms. Bisaro stated earlier, if we do have an ombudsman office and they do the investigations, they also have the opportunity to get files, to get e-mails, to get information that we, as Regular MLAs, don't have access to.

In my job, I have had constituents, in terms of bringing concerns forward, where we have worked with government and we have actually hit a stone wall and we couldn't do anything further. We've tried every opportunity, every avenue. We also looked at some of our other statutory officers to get it addressed, and it feels as though, as an MLA, you fail them but you have worked every opportunity that you can. I think having an ombudsman office would help alleviate that, would speed up the processes and, really, they're a last

line of defence, last point of contact. MLAs have a lot of opportunities to work on behalf of constituents across the Northwest Territories and residents, but having that ombudsman office, an independent body that can actually do the work and bring out good recommendations, to get them addressed.

I know we've talked about the costs of an ombudsman office somewhere around the cost of \$400,000. We were lucky; our staff did a great job in looking at some of our contracts over \$5,000 that came out of the expenditures of 2013. So an office, to put it in perspective, for the cost of about \$400,000 that would help people, help organizations get the answers that they need to do the work that they can do, especially the ones that feel they have been mistreated and treated unfairly by government. Just to put it in perspective, in 2013 we paid \$368,000 for one airport garage exterior and we paid \$424,000 for one snow blower. Those are just a couple of the examples. But this office would provide a lot of support in terms of the people that feel that they have been done wrong by our governments in the Northwest Territories.

I know, speaking back home to people in my community, there is a lot of support for it and a lot of individuals saying that they wish this office was opened quite a number of years ago. Some people who have actually left the Northwest Territories whose issues couldn't be resolved and, really, we're losing people because they have lost confidence in how their cases were handled.

If you don't know now, I am in support of this ombudsman office. I'm in support of the motion and hope all my colleagues are also in favour. Once again, I would like to thank the standing committee for all the work that they did to get us to this point in time. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**MR. BROMLEY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise in support of this motion. I would like to just put out a few points, some of which may have been presented already by my colleagues and I think they have done a great job at listing many of the benefits.

First of all, would an ombudsman impinge on an MLA's work? This has been something that I've thought about for quite a while, and I have concluded today, no. MLAs are adept at seeking the best support for their constituents. They will quickly identify the ombudsman as a critical tool, a critical arrow in their quiver when needed, but also Cabinet, I believe, will learn to appreciate this tool for the clarity it can bring.

I had the opportunity to visit with the Ontario ombudsman over lunch just the other day. The record is clear that an ombudsman improves performance and transparency, something I am

really big on. Would it be costly, is clearly a responsible question to ask. I don't think so if it is done appropriately and well. An important element of this is empowering the ombudsman to be able to seize documents, subpoena witnesses and so on, while maintaining strict confidentiality, even in a court process. This has been characteristic of ombudsmen and it allows them to provide that efficient and timely process, which is quite a bit different than a court process, which is often what the public and complainants have to rely on today. So this provides an economic alternative to the often unaffordable and lengthy court process.

Again, visiting with the Ontario ombudsman, I learned that in Ontario there's a separate Environmental Commissioner to share the load. Obviously, I don't think we need to go to that point without seeing how an ombudsman would be able to cover off environmental complaints, as well, and I think that would be included with the broad definition that is being proposed here. Duties and responsibilities can include Crown corporations, and I think that's something that we would need to consider.

In the Yukon they adapted legislation to allow Aboriginal governments access to ombudsman services. This might be worthy of consideration here in the Northwest Territories. Also in the Yukon, I note that they combine the ombudsman with the Privacy and Information Commissioner office, which is something we might contemplate.

Again, I would like to thank committee and the chair for bringing this forward, and in particular I would like to tip my hat to Ms. Bisaro, MLA for Frame Lake, for her focus and persistent, some might say dogged, pursuit of this opportunity throughout the 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> Assemblies.

I wasn't supportive in the 16<sup>th</sup> Assembly. What has changed? For me it's devolution and the complexity of our government and all of the issues that we can expect coming out of devolution. I support devolution, but with it comes the added responsibility and an ombudsman is a very critical tool, I believe, that's been well demonstrated to help deal with those sorts of things. So that's the difference. After 22 years of discussion that we've heard, I'd say the time is now and there are some good reasons for that.

So in conclusion, as my friend Lois Little says, we live in turbulent times that are bound to continue into the foreseeable future. The Government of the NWT and Northerners as a whole need all the help we can get to manage fairly, justly and responsibly through these times.

As the ombudsman for Ontario aptly pointed out at the public meeting on November 3 at the Great Hall and was explained by the standing committee chair and Members in their thoughtful and positive comments, the time is right for a maturing

government to establish just such an office. An ombudsman office will support MLAs, the GNWT and residents to handle the intricacies of new powers and responsibilities associated with devolution and changing indigenous public government relationships.

An ombudsman's office can help the GNWT to fulfill its duty of care, which is, and likely will continue to be, complicated by a growing number of vulnerable citizens, the impacts of climate change, historic and, some would argue, current colonial and patriarchal dynamics and global forces, including corporate rights agreements. I think that's well stated and certainly speaks to the need and appropriateness for us to be talking about an NWT ombudsman's office.

I look forward to supporting this motion. Mahsi.

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

**MR. DOLYUNNY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. One of the joys of working alongside like-minded MLAs, especially in committee, is that on occasion all our compass headings point in the same direction and the motion before the House today is a testament of this resolve.

Early in our mandate as a committee, we took it upon ourselves to ask some fundamental questions as what singular activity could we do to change the lives of Northerners. Although we have a motion brought forward by Mr. Nadli and seconded by Ms. Bisaro, which we thank, if there was ever a motion brought before the House penned as one voice, moved and seconded as a body, this would be such a motion. Armed with determination and in conjunction with all our statutory obligations, this committee rose to the occasion and tasked itself with wanting to urge the government to prepare a legislative proposal and an introduction of a bill before the end of the 17<sup>th</sup> Assembly. To save time and money, but not compromise quality, the committee prepared with in-house resources a report pursuant to Motion 12-17(4) for the research, review and analysis on establishing an office of the ombudsman for the Northwest Territories.

I want to thank personally the hard work of Ms. April Taylor, committee researcher, who we owe a huge debt of gratitude in preparation of this said report.

---Applause

Through research, thorough analysis, written communication, engaged dialogue and a town hall meeting last Monday, we find ourselves today at a most critical juncture in time. A time, which we have all embraced throughout our journey as post-devolutionary participants of the 17<sup>th</sup> Legislative Assembly, enabling Northerners to take charge of decisions affecting them has been the vision of a new and prosperous territory with each Member of this Assembly standing proud alongside our

Premier in support. Clearly, the next evolutionary step is to enshrine this opportunity of success and to put Northerners in control of their destiny with the proper tools of opportunity, opportunity that supports the guiding mechanisms of accountability and transparency like no other.

With newfound responsibilities in its path of maturity, so does a government faced with more complexity and sophistication in its path. Now, more than ever, so too will there be need of navigation through complex myriads of appeal mechanisms, untested policies and legislative gaps for the people it serves.

Now is the time for this government to join together with Regular Members and all Northerners to forge a pathway of a proper support mechanism working alongside our current oversight commissions of privacy, equal pay, official languages and human rights. In fact, there exists a huge opportunity for the creation of a one-stop single-window government accountability office, an office that could house all levels of commissions with the addition of an ombudsman.

This government accountability office concept would set the core standard of accountability and transparency and could conceivably be the true hallmark of a post-devolutionary legacy.

This is what the people want. This is what the people expect. Today, this is what we ask. I'll be supporting this motion. Thank you.

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

**MR. BLAKE:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I too would like to commend the mover and seconder for the motion. I know the last time this motion came forward I did not support it, but after a little more information I came to change my mind mainly because, in the long run, I can see this cost-saving. A lot of what the ombudsman does is the same thing as the Languages Commissioner and the Human Rights Commissioner. So I feel that we could most likely replace those two commissioners with the ombudsman because they basically do the same thing. That was the thing that made me change my mind.

Moving forward we'll see how things roll out. I will be supporting the motion. Thank you.

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

**MR. MENICOCHÉ:** Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I just want to say that I think the Government Operations have done an excellent report. One thing they didn't note is that it's another statutory office. So, we've got the Languages Commissioner that Mr. Blake spoke about, the Human Rights Commission and we've also got an Information Commissioner.

In my term as MLA, I've learned that I've helped constituents go through these commissioners' offices and not all the time they had their needs met. People do want to be heard. They want their concerns heard, and as an MLA, we can only go so far and do as much as we can. I think that having the ombudsman from Ontario here kind of swayed me in the direction that maybe we do need one more outlet, maybe the people need one more venue to go to.

So with that, I certainly will be supporting this motion. I'm glad that they've done their groundwork, they've done an excellent report and more work than I've seen before in other motions. I'm getting positive feedback for that, so I'll certainly be supporting that motion. Mahsi cho.

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

**MRS. GROENEWEGEN:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As I said earlier today about the agricultural policy, this is another topic that has been on the agenda of the Government of the Northwest Territories either in the forefront or on the backburner for many, many years, the idea of an ombudsman for the Northwest Territories. It was certainly something that was discussed by many, many candidates over the years in candidates' forums and on election platforms.

We are here today to make a decision on a motion to ask the government to move forward with the establishment of an ombudsman's office. I think that the success of this office is going to be largely dependent on a few things, and I think that the detail in terms of the parameters of what this office would actually look at is very important, because when you think of the 42,000 people in the Northwest Territories who in their day-to-day life have some contact with the GNWT, I think that the myriad and scope of issues that people may have with the government could be quite extensive. I mean, everything from staffing complaints to contracting complaints to student financial. I mean, we just think about all the scope of issues that we deal with as MLAs every day, and so how a complaint or a concern gets elevated to the level of being heard or investigated or responded to by a statutory officer such as an ombudsman, I think that has to be very clearly laid out, and I think Members have explained here a little bit about how the establishment of an ombudsman is not going to affect the relationship between MLAs and constituents and MLAs being the go-to person for people and constituents when they have concerns.

I'm not exactly sure how all of that is going to work out, but if it is wide open with no parameters, no guidelines, I mean, the sheer volume of issues or inquiries or complaints that an office like the ombudsman could necessarily deal with would mean that it would be so powerful and require so

much resources and so much staff to be effective that that's a concern. I think we have to, moving forward, be clear about what's the pathway, what's the process for a person, an individual who has a grievance to get their issue to the level of an ombudsman, because I think there are many other opportunities before that which people can access to have their concerns met.

I agree with what the other Members are saying here today about it's hard to take on the government and win. It is a David and Goliath situation. I've been a big proponent of transparency and accountability in government. Anybody who's been around the North for very long will know that I took on a very big challenge in the area of transparency and accountability at one time, and it was hard, and I remember at the time thinking, there's the Premier and there's God, and there's nobody in between to appeal to, or there's the courts, and that's about it. Unless you are very, very well resourced, court is not an option. I don't want people to feel despair in their dealings with the government. I don't want them to feel like it's a hopeless or a helpless situation when they cannot get answers to the issues and the concerns that they have, so I think that the idea of the office of an ombudsman is a good idea.

Now, an Ontario ombudsman has been here and has talked to a lot of the Members and made quite an impression obviously. Other jurisdictions have ombudsmen, so we're not inventing the wheel here. This is not a foreign concept in democracy and democratic government, but there is one thing that's a bit unique in the Northwest Territories and that is I don't think very many places in Canada you could know every one of your constituents and actually run into them on any given day. I mean, we are very close to... I mean, when I was the Minister of Health and Social Services, I'd have people call me at home to tell me that their washer and dryer had broken down. I mean, we are very close to our people, and I think that that sets us apart and makes us a bit different, and I don't want the office of an ombudsman to change that relationship where people feel our constituents, other people's constituents. I don't want to lose that approachability that we have as MLAs to respond to the concerns of our constituents, and so I think that, first and foremost, it would always be better if we could come to them.

I also want to say that I don't think that putting in an ombudsman office should be any affront to the good folks who work in the public service, because again, as a very experienced Member in this Legislature, I want to say that I have had good success with the people who serve us in the departments and the Ministers who represent those departments and those activities. I think that, for the most part, people want to respond, they want to be fair, they want to provide good service to the



residents of the Northwest Territories. But there are those occasional instances where it becomes impossible, as an MLA, to solve the problem, and other Members have referred to those experiences that they've had as well.

I can think of some situations over the years where the person who has been, I guess, affected by a government decision has tried to explain it, has tried to lay it out. A lot will depend on their ability to communicate their issue, and then for an MLA to be able to unravel the layers and the complexity and the knowledge that it would take to understand the situation and actually say, yes, there's an issue or there isn't. It would be very, very challenging, and there are those cases, and I think those are the kinds of cases that could go to an ombudsman.

I am going to support the establishment of the office of an ombudsman. At the end of the day, no matter how much power we give that office, it will still be up to us as legislators, and we will make final decisions. I'm a little bit concerned that we sometimes, well, we'd have to have a very respectful relationship.

Another thing, and this is very kind of, like, right down to the brass tacks, a lot will depend on who is in that position, and it has got to be somebody who understands and respects the various roles that people play in a government like ours. It can't be somebody that's got an axe to grind or a chip on their shoulder against the government. I'm just talking very candidly here, but it's going to have to be somebody who has a respectful understanding of all the players and where we all fit into the scheme of things here, because if you had the wrong person in a role like this, it could get kind of out of hand, so I think it would need to be a person that would be very, very carefully chosen for a position like that.

Sometimes we do turn things over to independent statutory officers, independent commissions that review salaries, or boundaries commissions and that, and then they come back with their recommendations and we have handed off the authority to deal with things and then we pull back because we don't want to respond to whatever those findings are. I think that that whole give and take in the relationship with an ombudsman office has to be clearly laid out, and I think it could be successful, and I will support the motion.

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

**MR. YAKELEYA:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The issue here is this is being planted as a seed. We had some discussions in the past, and like my other colleagues, when this came up I certainly did support the notion of an ombudsman in the Northwest Territories.

A couple days ago in the Members' lounge, it's been reported on the news and Mr. Bromley spoke about the sighting of a wolverine just past the Members' lounge as we were having dinner with the Ontario ombudsman. The wolverine is a well-respected animal, fierce and with survival but also very feared by many people, any animal, and isn't it a coincidence that we have the ombudsman here with us at the same time a wolverine passes. I'm saying maybe that's a sign that a powerful animal like that and as our colleagues talked about the position that we're talking about, how you look at that position, it could be friend or foe, and the wolverine, I'm trying to think, even last night, what is that wolverine telling us, having been spotted close by the buildings. Animals usually tell us, if you really think about it, they tell you something and it's for us to think about it. What are they saying? What is it saying to us? It was a young wolverine; it wasn't an old one. It was still small, and he was dark skinned, so it's a young wolverine, not the old ones. You can tell, and I thought, well, what is that young wolverine telling us walking by our Assembly here at the same time we invited the Ontario ombudsman here to support the Government Operations committee and support the Members on this side with his expertise and what they've done in Ontario and the growing pains, and this is planting the seed.

As any well-known farmer or anybody who has family who had farming, it's always the time is right to plant. There's a time to plant, and the seeds have to be put in the ground, and the farmer has to do it properly, otherwise he'll have a bad crop, and the weather might not be too favourable. So I thought the time is right now to plant this.

We heard it on November 3<sup>rd</sup>, people coming out to talk to us, we heard it from the Members, and we have to think that anything worthwhile isn't easy. Certainly we are asking this Assembly to look at it, with all the questions that you may have and the Assembly may have and all the other questions it takes for a request like this from this side as a recommendation to government on drafting a discussion paper, drafting legislation on the request that we think that the timing is right now to have it.

With that in mind, I think it's time now to start planting the seed of the ombudsman, pull out the weeds that we need to pull out. How do we form this position in the Northwest Territories and to help all of us, not just outside members but, more importantly, to help the people in the small communities, people in the communities, the larger centres like Yellowknife and other regional centres? I think now we need, more than ever, to have the ombudsman.

The last question is: What would it cost us if we didn't have an ombudsman? We have to think about that. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Yakeleya. I will allow the Premier to... Honourable Premier, Mr. McLeod.

**HON. BOB MCLEOD:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In December 2012 the government provided the Standing Committee on Government Operations a discussion paper on the establishment of an ombudsman office. The discussion paper summarized the various Northwest Territories appeal bodies and statutory appeal officers already created through 35 individual pieces of territorial legislation. These statutory processes already provide the public with opportunities to register complaints, request investigation, or appeal questions of administrative fairness.

In addition to existing legislation, our small population and consensus style of government means that the Northwest Territories residents also have a level of immediate access to capable, hardworking MLAs that is not always available to citizens in larger jurisdictions with partisan governments. The paper also noted that a proposal to establish a new statutory office with a reporting relationship not to government but to the Legislative Assembly is a proposal best considered by Caucus as a whole. The paper concluded that it was difficult to rationalize the need for an independent parliamentary ombudsman at this time.

More recently, the Standing Committee on Government Operations report on Establishing an Office of the Ombudsman for the Northwest Territories provided cost estimates for an ombudsman office at between \$400,000 to \$600,000 per year.

As this is a recommendation to Cabinet, Cabinet will abstain from the vote.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. McLeod. To the motion. I am going to allow Mr. Hawkins.

**MR. HAWKINS:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I certainly was an early advocate for the ombudsman during my first term in the 15<sup>th</sup> Assembly, and then in the 16<sup>th</sup> Assembly I did question, similarly as the Premier had done, wondering about the value and the challenges put before us.

I often wondered: would the MLAs be putting themselves out of a job by having an ombudsman because people would first think that is the person we should be going to. But over time I have learned even more. I have been given the chance to understand the complexities and particular issues and appreciate how challenging they can be. I think Member Groenewegen really talked well about the types of struggles we have and how far our personal limitations can be. It's not just about your pocketbook anymore when you march government to court. It's about being able to get the right access to the right information to make sure we make the right decisions.

I recall a time when I approached a particular department – the department will remain faceless – I remember an applicant came to me, she told me she was applying for a program. She told me her former spouse went and scuttled her application by whispering false information. By the time I was able to deal with this with the particular department, well, money had gone by, too bad, that's the way it goes. They wouldn't provide any information as to what they were doing or how they were investigating, other than the fact that they said, we manage and investigate our own issues. It was a very challenging issue. I had to go back to the constituent with very little support from anyone and say, how do we deal with this situation? I had no recourse at the time. She had no recourse at the time, and at the time government said, that's the way it is.

I don't believe the ombudsman is the solution to every problem, nor should anyone else think the ombudsman is the solution to every problem. What I do say, though, is it is important that we have all the tools in our toolbox that work. When the person needs these types of levers, they need to be ready and there to grab them in case of an emergency.

Many challenges about information are about being given access. MLAs are denied a lot of access to information, so how do we really know if we are getting to the bottom line of a situation? We don't know. We often have to say to the face of government and sit in frustration because of confidentiality and other processes.

If we did it by the numbers... I want to thank that Member Moses for sort of qualifying it in his own way. I had actually thought of it slightly different, but the same kind of mechanism. Over the past firefighting season we spent approximately \$40 million, and of course, we have all heard the story it was about a million dollars a day. We have all heard the cost of an ombudsman office that can run anywhere between \$400,000 and \$600,000 per year. If I did that in firefighter dollars, that's less than half a day in firefighter dollars to make sure Northerners are safe for a year.

If I took MLA Dolynny's numbers of highway money, this would be less than half a kilometre of highway to know that our people are protected. I think our people are worth at least a half a kilometre of protection. I think that our people in the Northwest Territories are worth half a day and certainly more than half a day of firefighting.

The point I am making is, we can justify the spending of some money some ways and we can certainly justify the money we are not spending in other ways. It's very easy; these are called decisions. Now, I understand, I know and I can appreciate, as I am going to wrap up my statement here and say this, I know government has challenges when Members give direction, we have

seen this trouble recently on the Junior Kindergarten. We are all Members united together over a common cause for the people.

I will finish by saying something very simple. I have often been told, if you want something done, make it their idea. I am willing to say every single Member of this Assembly is willing to give the ombudsman initiative to the Premier and Cabinet. So I am going to finish by saying, Tom Beaulieu, I am going to thank you for your fine work on this job. Michael Miltenberger, you have always been a visionary on this issue. Bob McLeod, I appreciate your help on this initiative. Jackson Lafferty, I applaud your understanding the complication of this problem. David Ramsay, your achievements behind the scenes will always never go unnoticed. R.C. McLeod, your willingness to understand the complexity of the issue goes well above and beyond. As I said, I don't need the credit, and I suspect none of our Members need the credit. We need to be there for the citizens of the Northwest Territories.

Mr. Premier, feel free to take all the credit on this initiative. I will welcome it and I have no doubt all my colleagues do, all we need to do is act. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Next time, Mr. Hawkins, you direct your comments at me, not looking at your colleagues on the other side of the floor. I will allow the mover of the motion now. Mr. Nadli, we will have closing remarks. To the motion. Mr. Nadli.

**MR. NADLI:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's important to note that this report that the Government Operations had produced was produced back in June and we made it available to the public on the website. It has been five months since it sat in the public domain for the people to contemplate the next steps that we are in right now.

Just an indication of the next steps, it's the understanding of this side that through the legislative process there is going to be a legislative proposal at the same time there is going to be a level of public consultation to determine the scope of the office of the ombudsman in terms of its operations as well. What is also important to note is that commonly in community, elders view the government as...[English translation not provided.]

One of the goals of the office of the ombudsman is to humanize government and that's the role of the ombudsman.

So with that, I'd like to ask for a recorded vote. Mahsi.

#### RECORDED VOTE

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

**CLERK OF THE HOUSE (Mr. Mercer):** Mr. Nadli, Mr. Hawkins, Ms. Bisaro, Mr. Moses, Mr. Bromley, Mr. Yakeleya, Mr. Menicoche, Mr. Blake, Mrs. Groenewegen, Mr. Dolynny, Mr. Bouchard.

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

**CLERK OF THE HOUSE (Mr. Mercer):** Mr. Beaulieu, Mr. Miltenberger, Mr. McLeod – Yellowknife South, Mr. Lafferty, Mr. Ramsay, Mr. McLeod – Inuvik Twin Lakes.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Results of the recorded vote: in favour, 11; opposed, zero; abstentions, six.

---Carried

---Applause

Mr. Yakeleya.

#### MOTION 32-17(5): EXTENDED ADJOURNMENT OF THE HOUSE TO FEBRUARY 4, 2015, CARRIED

**MR. YAKELEYA:** I MOVE, seconded by the honourable Member for Thebacha, that, notwithstanding Rule 4, when this House adjourns on Thursday, November 6, 2014, it shall be adjourned until Wednesday, February 4, 2015;

AND FURTHER, that any time prior to February 4, 2015, if the Speaker is satisfied, after consultation with the Executive Council and Members of the Legislative Assembly, that the public interest requires that the House should meet at an earlier time during the adjournment, the Speaker may give notice and thereupon the House shall meet at the time stated in such notice and shall transact its business as it has been duly adjourned to that time.

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

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Question.

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

---Carried

Item 18, first reading of bills. Item 19, second reading of bills. Mr. Ramsay.

#### Second Reading of Bills

##### BILL 41-17(5): AN ACT TO AMEND THE PARTNERSHIP ACT

**HON. DAVID RAMSAY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I move, seconded by the honourable Member for Monfwi, that Bill 41, An Act to Amend the Partnership Act, be read for the second time.

This bill amends the Partnership Act to clarify that registration requirements in respect of partnership and business names apply to all partnerships and businesses operating in the Northwest Territories, including when registrations are to be made and renewed. It sets out restrictions on names that may be registered and set out, administrative provisions that are similar to provisions in the Business Corporations Act, include a right to seek a judicial review of a decision made by the registrar before the Supreme Court of the Northwest Territories, specifies specific offenses in relation to each partnership class, make consequential amendments to the Business Corporations Act, Liquor Act and Northwest Territories Business Development and Investment Corporation Act, and make other amendments to improve clarity and readability. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Ramsay. To the principle of the bill.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Question.

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

---Carried

Bill 41 has had second reading. Mr. Ramsay.

BILL 42-17(5):  
AN ACT TO AMEND THE  
RESIDENTIAL TENANCIES ACT

**HON. DAVID RAMSAY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I move, seconded by the honourable Member for Inuvik Twin Lakes, that Bill 42, An Act to Amend the Residential Tenancies Act, be read for the second time.

This bill amends the Residential Tenancies Act to reduce the retention period for inspector reports from three years to 18 months, require landlords to provide receipts to tenants and former tenants on request, clarify that subsection 51(5) applies to both tenancies which begin as a fixed term and of periodic tenancies, permit termination of a tenancy agreement in circumstances where family violence has occurred, provide a remedy for improper termination of a tenancy agreement resulting from a notice of rent increase, clarify that a condominium corporation may apply to a rental officer to terminate a tenancy and evict a tenant, provide that a tenancy agreement for subsidized public housing is reinstated when an eviction order is denied, permit orders and decisions of a rental officer to be enforced as a judgment of the Supreme Court, and allow for regulations to establish fees for making applications under the act. The bill also includes a consequential amendment to the Condominium Act.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Ramsay. The motion is in order. To the principle of the bill. Mr. Hawkins.

**MR. HAWKINS:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I certainly do speak in favour of the principle of the bill, but I do feel that the Residential Tenancies Act update is missing some critical components. I'll just leave it as simple as that, for example, the Hotel Keepers Act allows someone to be let go, removed, and evicted where the update of the Residential Tenancies Act shows that it's well thought out that people are protected, and I would assume that the update would have considered these types of remedies.

The example I provide to somebody is that there are folks out there who can only rent in certain spots, and in some cases, in our communities, they can only rent in hotels, and some hotels lease residences for month to month but they come with no rights. The Residential Tenancies Act is being updated here and it would have been a great time to amalgamate, actually, the two bills, and it probably would have been to everyone's great advantage.

A person renting from a landlord has more rights if they rented in my house than they would if they rented at a hotel because they come with no rights. The issue, really, I'm saying that I agree with the updates provided by, I've seen the preamble of the bill, and I have no disagreement with that. I just see it as an issue where we've missed a real opportunity to give people rights who need them.

In summary, if a person rents month to month from a hotel, they can be evicted at any time, their stuff can be taken, and they have zero rights. Normally, you would suggest to point them to the rental and tenancy office but they have no authority to deal with that particular issue. I've dealt with this issue recently and I've found that there is a huge gap. I'll be taking it up with the particular committee, but I did think that I wanted to remind people with the principle of this bill that we have a huge advantage to taking just a small step forward to provide people protection that deserve it. That's all.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Hawkins. To the principle of the bill.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Question.

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

---Carried

Bill 42 has had second reading and is referred to committee.

Item 20, consideration in Committee of the Whole of bills and other matters. Item 21, report of Committee of the Whole. Item 22, third reading of bills. Mr. Clerk, will you ascertain if the Commissioner of the Northwest Territories, the Honourable George Tuccaro, is prepared to enter the Chamber to assent to bills.

**COMMISSIONER OF THE NORTHWEST TERRITORIES (Hon. George Tuccaro):** Mr. Speaker and Members of the Legislative Assembly, good afternoon.

I'd like to take a moment to encourage all residents to honour the service and sacrifice made by members of the Canadian Armed Forces as we approach Remembrance Day next Tuesday.

As I look ahead to the coming holiday season and the celebration of Christmas, I would like to wish each and every one of you a joyous and safe holiday season filled with hope, good health, inspiration and time with your families and friends as we enter into the coming New Year of 2015.

One of my favorite quotes and I think it is very fitting for the coming holidays: "Life will take you many places, but it's love that brings you home." I would like to wish each of the Members of this House safe travels and a busy, productive time as you continue your work in the spirit of collaboration and cooperation for the people of the Northwest Territories.

#### ASSENT TO BILLS

As Commissioner of the Northwest Territories, I am pleased to assent to the following bills:

- 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,
- Bill 34, 2015 Polling Day Act
- Bill 35, Supplementary Appropriation Act (Operations Expenditures), No. 2, 2014-2015
- Bill 39, Supplementary Appropriation Act (Infrastructure Expenditures), No. 4, 2014-2015
- Bill 40, Appropriation Act (Infrastructure Expenditures), 2015-2016

Thank you, merci beaucoup, mahsi cho, quanani, koana.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Before we adjourn today, colleagues, I would like to thank the Pages who have helped us out during this sitting. I know I speak for all Members when I say thank you for a job well done.

---Applause

It is always such a pleasure to have our northern youth join us in the Chamber.

For those young people who would like to learn more about government, you may want to consider

participating in our upcoming Youth Parliament. Youth Parliament is scheduled from May 4 to 8, 2015. Detailed information will be posted on the Assembly website in the New Year.

Colleagues, every year on November 11<sup>th</sup>, Canadians pause for a moment of silence to honour and remember the women and men who have served and continue to serve Canada during times of war, conflict and peace. I have seen Members wearing poppies during the past weeks as a symbol of remembrance, a symbol that is particularly meaningful to all Canadians this year.

I encourage all NWT residents to take a moment, wherever you may be on November 11<sup>th</sup>, to acknowledge the courage and sacrifice of those who have served and continue to serve our country.

Members, when we leave here today, some will continue to work in the capital, some will return to work in their constituencies and committees will prepare for meetings in December. The work of government does not end when we conclude today.

However, we will not meet again formally and in this Chamber until the New Year. So although it may be a little early, please let me take this opportunity to wish all the residents of the Northwest Territories a happy holiday season and a healthy, safe and peaceful New Year.

Mr. Clerk, orders of the day.

#### Orders of the Day

**CLERK OF THE HOUSE (Mr. Mercer):** Orders of the day for Wednesday, February 4, 2015, at 1:30 p.m.:

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

19. Second Reading of Bills
20. Consideration in Committee of the Whole of Bills and Other Matters
21. Report of Committee of the Whole
22. Third Reading of Bills
23. Orders of the Day

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Clerk. Accordingly, this House stands adjourned until Wednesday, February 4<sup>th</sup>, at 1:30 p.m.

---ADJOURNMENT

The House adjourned at 5:04 p.m.