



# **NORTHWEST TERRITORIES LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY**

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**18<sup>th</sup> Assembly**

## **HANSARD**

**Tuesday, May 28, 2019**

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**The Honourable Jackson Lafferty, Speaker**

# Legislative Assembly of the Northwest Territories

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(Monfwi)

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**YELLOWKNIFE, NORTHWEST TERRITORIES****Tuesday, May 28, 2019****Members Present**

Hon. Glen Abernethy, Mr. Beaulieu, Mr. Blake, Hon. Caroline Cochrane, Ms. Julie Green, Hon. Jackson Lafferty, Hon. Bob McLeod, Hon. Robert McLeod, Mr. McNeely, Hon. Alfred Moses, Mr. Nadli, Mr. Nakimayak, Mr. O'Reilly, Hon. Wally Schumann, Hon. Louis Sebert, Mr. Simpson, Mr. Testart, Mr. Thompson, Mr. Vanthuyne

The House met at 1:30 p.m.

**Prayer**

---Prayer

**SPEAKER (Hon. Jackson Lafferty):** Good afternoon, colleagues. Item 2, Ministers' statements. Minister of Environment and Natural Resources.

**Ministers' Statements**

MINISTER'S STATEMENT 185-18(3):  
2019 WILDFIRE SEASON OUTLOOK

**HON. ROBERT MCLEOD:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Although last year's fire season was a significant break from years past, we know that each fire season brings its own unique challenges.

Over the winter, most of the territory experienced below-average precipitation, and the few weeks of record-breaking warm temperatures we saw earlier this spring caused snow to disappear weeks earlier than usual in some areas.

Although parts of the Northwest Territories received snow earlier this month, much of the NWT remains very dry, especially in the South Slave and Dehcho regions. Weather predictions for the summer indicate hotter-than-average temperatures and below-average precipitation for all regions over the next three months.

Mr. Speaker, this could be a very active wildfire season for our firefighters. As of this week, there have been 14 wildfires in the Northwest Territories. Twelve of these fires are believed to be human-caused. Typically, we see an average of 20 human-caused fires each year, so the fact that we have already seen 12 this year is a concern. Several of these were ignited while there was still snow on the ground, and all of them were preventable fires that required government resources to extinguish.

Mr. Speaker, it is critical at this early stage of the season while fuels are still dry that residents use extreme caution with campfires while out on the land. It is everyone's responsibility to ensure their fires are fully extinguished before leaving them.

Residents are advised to soak the ashes, stir, and soak them again.

People planning to do spring brush or grass burning are required to get burn permits from their local municipality or Indigenous Government office. If burning is done outside of municipal limits, permits must be obtained from their local ENR office. Of course, anyone doing controlled burning should ensure they have enough water and hand tools available to put out the fire.

Mr. Speaker, fires are a vital part of our forests. They have very real and direct impacts on people and communities. That is why we continue to work with communities on wildfire prevention and risk mitigation planning and activities.

Staff from our Forest Management Division and in the regions continue to work with local governments to update and implement Community Wildfire Protection Plans, and to apply the principles of FireSmart to their cabins, homes, and other property. Over the last few months, the department has met with 15 communities to discuss these important topics, and will continue to engage the rest of the territory as we move forward with protection planning.

Mr. Speaker, three NWT communities were recently awarded funding for Wildfire Community Preparedness Day to assist them with FireSmarting. Congratulations to Fort Good Hope, Whati, and Wrigley on taking the initiative to prepare their communities for the risk of wildfire.

We know that managing fires is becoming more complex as a result of climate change. More than anything, the 2014 fire season underlined the need to improve our knowledge as forest managers to keep up with the predicted trends of increasingly intense fire seasons as our climate warms.

In the last five years, our government has been working closely with research partners at various universities, federal agencies, and even NASA to identify gaps in our knowledge and to learn more about the changing fire environment to help us with our decision-making. This continuing collaboration between fire managers and researchers is critical in helping to ensure our fire management decisions are based on the best available information, allowing us to achieve our number one priority,

keeping our residents, communities, and front-line firefighters safe.

Mr. Speaker, our residents and firefighters are our most important values-at-risk. I wish everyone a safe fire season and encourage all of our residents and communities to do their part in preventing and preparing for wildfire. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Masi. Ministers' statements. Minister of Industry, Tourism and Investment.

MINISTER'S STATEMENT 186-18(3):  
CELEBRATING TOURISM WEEK

**HON. WALLY SCHUMANN:** Mr. Speaker, this is tourism week in the Northwest Territories and is an opportunity to celebrate the unprecedented growth that we have nurtured and witnessed during our time as the 18<sup>th</sup> Legislative Assembly. During the life of this Legislative Assembly, visitor numbers in the Northwest Territories have increased by more than 30 percent. This includes a 61-percent increase in Aurora tourism. Our tourism sector is now worth over \$203 million, a 48-percent increase in spending over the last five years, and led by a 75-percent growth in spending by leisure tourists, travellers.

As our government continues to support a more diverse economy, this is great news, and it is the kind of success that we look forward to highlighting and celebrating each year at this time.

Mr. Speaker, we are able to celebrate extraordinary growth in our tourism sector because of the commitments that have been made investing in it.

In the 2018-2019 alone, the Government of the Northwest Territories has invested approximately \$5 million to support our destination marketer NWT Tourism, tourism operators, Indigenous partners, and community groups in their work to attract and cater to visitors to our spectacular territory.

In the Northwest Territories, our parks play a significant role in attracting summer visitors, and we are set to invest \$7 million this year in parks infrastructure and improvements, but tourism infrastructure, marketing, funding supports, training, and a spectacular product only make up a portion of our formula for success. Year in and year out, the people who visit our territory tell us that the best part of their trip is the people.

For this reason, the Department of Industry, Tourism and Investment is once again celebrating Tourism Week with a campaign recognizing NWT residents who personify the qualities of a northern host and ambassador for our territory. Our campaign encourages residents to nominate people on social media who exhibit the warm, welcoming

spirit of northern hospitality that our tourism industry is built on. Nominated individuals are eligible for prizes, with two winners awarded in each region.

Last year's campaign unearthed a ton of amazing stories about NWT residents going above and beyond to make folks feel welcome. Nominations have already begun rolling out this for year's campaign and will continue to be received through the end of the week.

I would encourage all Members to join our celebration by sharing a story from their constituency using the hashtag #NWTHost on Facebook or Twitter.

Mr. Speaker, while we celebrate northern hosts, the department will be also offering free Northern-Most-Host workshops throughout the week for tourism operators, hospitality employees, and vendors who interact with the tourism industry. These will be supplemented by networking activities, community barbecues, and other events celebrating tourism across the Northwest Territories. Again, I encourage Members to support events in their riding and join events here in the capital between attending the business of our Legislative Assembly. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Masi. Ministers' statements. Minister of Education, Culture and Employment.

MINISTER'S STATEMENT 187-18(3):  
INCOME SECURITY PROGRAM  
IMPROVEMENTS

**HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Income Security programs are a vital part of the social safety network that helps Northwest Territories residents by bridging gaps in their ability to support themselves and to pursue their personal, educational, and career goals.

Residents who have accessed our Income Security programs and have lived experience are important partners in developing program improvements. Their voices are essential, and I have sought their feedback. I have also welcomed input over the last few months from non-government agencies, Members of the Legislative Assembly, and Indigenous governments. By taking the time to listen and hear suggestions from our partners, our work to meet the needs of our most vulnerable residents is better informed. Achieving change takes time, but building relationships and having solution-based discussions with those who understand the issues is a positive step.

Our partners identified 27 ways to improve our income assistance program. I heard very clearly that, in order to build responsive income security programs, we must look at more than just benefits

levels. Residents need to have the tools to access and understand the programs available to them, and right now, they don't have those tools. I've heard from all partners that clear communication products are immediately required to help fix this information gap.

As one of our first priorities, we are updating the Income Assistance Handbook, available to clients and their advocates. The new handbook will be client-focused, user-friendly, and written in plain language. We are engaging the Literacy Council to assist with this work. The revised handbook will be completed and available by this summer. This tool will provide residents with a better understanding of the Income Assistance program.

We recognize that our programs can sometimes be complex, and the department is looking at ways to streamline administration and simplify the public's interactions with the program. New approaches include simpler reporting requirements, redesigned forms, and client-focused service standards. In the coming weeks, I will be reporting our progress to the non-government organizations and residents that provided input on our programs.

We have retained the services of an outside consultant to help us redefine our business processes and achieve the outcomes that have been asked for us. We have also reviewed the income assistance payment process and implemented a clearer process to ensure clients are receiving timely payments.

The changes we are now making will build on past program enhancements, such as the recent increase of up to \$105 per month to the income assistance allowances for seniors and persons with disabilities. This increase came into effect on April 1, 2019. It provides additional financial support to help with the costs of supplies and services required as a result of age or a disability. This is one of the ways we are meeting our commitment to help NWT seniors age in place.

Also on April 1<sup>st</sup>, we increased the maximum course reimbursement for part-time post-secondary students from \$500 to \$880 per course, with a maximum lifetime limit of up to \$8,800. This change will support residents in making choices that work for them to advance their education.

The Government of the Northwest Territories has an obligation to assist vulnerable residents and to help people across the NWT achieve as much education and economic security as they can. We are making changes and investments that will improve the quality of life and opportunities for everyone, in partnership with clients, non-governmental organizations, Members of this House, and other levels of government. I am proud

of the way we are working together to create positive change for the people who need our help. Mahsi cho, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Masi. Ministers' statements. Minister responsible for the Northwest Territories Housing Corporation.

MINISTER'S STATEMENT 188-18(3):  
NORTHERN HOUSING SUMMIT

**HON. ALFRED MOSES:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I had the pleasure of hosting the Northern Housing Summit on April 23 and 24, 2019, in Inuvik. The summit's theme was "Northern Solutions for Northern Housing," reflecting the mandate commitment of the 18<sup>th</sup> Legislative Assembly, and its purpose was to encourage new partnerships in housing.

We brought leaders from across the Northwest Territories to Inuvik to share their experiences in a wide variety of housing matters. There were also presenters from the Yukon and Nunavut. Topics ranged from territorial and federal funding opportunities to local capacity development, green building practices, community housing planning, and housing for healthy communities.

The Northern Housing Summit featured two distinguished keynote speakers. Former Premier Nellie Cournoyea provided her unique perspective on housing, both as a political leader and from her own lived experience. Douglas Cardinal is one of North America's pre-eminent architects. Mr. Cardinal gave an engaging presentation on his mission to incorporate Indigenous concepts, values, and respect for local Indigenous traditions and cultural practices into design and architecture.

Mr. Speaker, the Northern Housing Summit provided communities, Indigenous organizations, industry, non-government organizations, and other housing stakeholders with the information to access new investment opportunities, such as the Government of the Northwest Territories Community Housing Support Initiative and the federal National Housing Co-Investment Fund.

The Northern Housing Summit empowered individuals, organizations, and communities to engage on key housing issues and initiatives. It has already resulted in the expansion of partnerships among housing stakeholders.

The summit also encouraged stakeholders to plan for the future through the training of tradespersons, participation in community housing plans, the development of green energy solutions, and by contributing to healthy communities.

Further, this event provided an opportunity for Indigenous leaders to express their thoughts on the federal Indigenous Housing Strategy. Northwest Territories Indigenous leaders were unanimous in stating that southern-based models often do not work in the North and that access to federal housing funds must allow for equality and fairness among all Indigenous groups across Canada, including the Northwest Territories.

The report on the Northern Housing summit will be released in June.

Mr. Speaker, the Northern Housing Summit was a success on many levels. It allowed communities and stakeholders to come together, learn from each other, and build a shared path toward northern solutions for northern housing. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Masi. Ministers' statements. Item 3, Members' statements. Member for Mackenzie Delta.

### Members' Statements

#### MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON MARINE TRAINING CENTRE

**MR. BLAKE:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Today I want to mention the Marine Training Centre in Hay River. This centre has proven successful achievements for a few of my constituents with the training they received. No doubt this will improve safety and security of NWT marine operations.

This has a very positive outlook for the Mackenzie Delta. We have two ferries that operate in my riding, the Abraham Francis on the Peel River and the Louis Cardinal on the Mackenzie River. The way I look at it, the more participants we can encourage to take this training means more employment for local and regional residents, not to mention the positive outlook on their jobs and more confidence, knowing they can work safely transporting vehicles back and forth on both rivers.

Marine training in the North is definitely one step forward. Let's continue to support this training initiative. Residents rely on the safety and security of marine vessels. With the continuous efforts of everyone involved, we can only hope for better things to come for the future. Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and I will have questions later today.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Masi. Members' statements. Member for Deh Cho.

#### MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON PERSONAL WELLNESS IN COMMUNITIES

**MR. NADLI:** Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. I am challenged in making statements in my language. I could only talk about what I know from the heart.

Today is a good day and, once again, another spring season has dawned upon us. "We only live once a day," a late relative would say. This led me to ask: as Dene, how can we make things better?

[Translation] Our elders stated, "We are born. Then we die. Our hope is that we leave a good trail for another generation to follow. How we think, how we feel is critical. We think good, then we also feel very good for ourselves and others." [Translation ends.]

Mr. Speaker, alcohol and drugs cause many problems for Dene. Maybe it is the feeling of despair and a sense of futility that cause us to feel that something is holding us back. Seeing our communities from a Dene perspective, we believe our home is in the community when our heart tells us that our true home is on the land.

[Translation]. We have fallen and can't get up. There is upheaval in the communities. It is hard to live like a Dene. From stories of the past, our ancestors were very healthy and strong people. That's the kind of people we come from. We have to honour our ancestors and take care of ourselves for those who are following us. We thank them for that. That is why we work this way, and we use the strengths of some people to do that, and some people who do that, who help them. We Dene, we want to live good. We want to think better and to help others who are coming to look after ourselves. Our land, ourselves, same thing. We need to do that. It's very important to us to do that. Thank you, Mr. Speaker. [Translation ends.]

**MR. SPEAKER:** Masi. Members' statements. Member for Nahendeh.

#### MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON PAY IT FORWARD PROGRAM IN FORT SIMPSON

**MR. THOMPSON:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. There are often community members who make great contributions to a community who go unrecognized, mainly because these individuals seek results rather than recognition. They humbly and selflessly serve others. Today, I would like to recognize a few of these individuals from the Nahendeh region.

Currently, the Northern Store in Fort Simpson is operating a pay it forward program. This program started six years ago, when resident Mrs. Pat Waugh heard of a homeless resident having to be medevac'd because he consumed discarded food.

Pat started the program at the local Northern Gas Bar in Fort Simpson, simply by donating enough for

a sandwich and coffee for some of the homeless residents or residents who could not afford adequate nutrition. Soon the program was off and running. Within a short amount of time, the donations began to increase to a pace that tracking of funds became difficult to manage. The Northern Store manager decided it was best to put all donations on a gift card. This would make tracking the funds easier. Once the program was established, the Northern Store managers felt it was important to match the donations.

There are a few programs in Fort Simpson that offer food to those in need. Currently, there are numerous individuals who access and rely on this essential pay it forward program, helping to meet their nutritional needs.

The most important proponent of this program is the fact that the funds on the gift card are not exhausting. It appears that Ms. Waugh instinctively knows when the card is running low on funds, and drops into the Northern Store to stock it up.

Mr. Speaker, this pay it forward program is an excellent way for members of the community to look out for and take care of one another. This program further enhances a culture, people caring for people, and in doing so, making them feel loved and appreciated.

I would like to take this opportunity to recognize Betty Ann Nayelle and Chevon Kellman, who were instrumental in delivering the program and management of this program. I would like to thank them for doing this great job for the residents of Nahendeh. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Masi. Members' statements. Member for Sahtu.

#### MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON BOREAL CARIBOU IN THE SAHTU

**MR. MCNEELY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. CFC, or Caribou Framework and Collaboration, planning is essential to sound management, consultation, and an important element to achieving goals set by the stakeholders. Last year's caribou survey showed alarming and very concerning decline in caribou numbers, or herd numbers for the barren-land caribou. Range planning and consultations followed.

Mr. Speaker, Canada labelled, in the Boreal Forest jurisdiction, the boreal caribou as a species at risk. However, in the NWT, and more specifically in the Sahtu, boreal caribou are not deemed species at risk in support of this caption. It is very common for hunters to view these animals, larger and darker in size on the east side of the Mackenzie River. To take notice of this potential risk scenario would only

be a proactive measure on the principals of conservation and preservation.

Mr. Speaker, advancing forward in the spirit of principles of engagement, collaboration, data collection, recovery strategies, framework, and action plans, I am very pleased to hear the Department of ENR is scheduling a meaningful session with the Sahtu land claim parties planned for the summer. It is paramount to the multiple caribou herds within our territory, conservation and recovery, growth, stabilization and growth would only mean sound management for the next generation's food and clothing security.

In summary, Mr. Speaker, the bilateral engagements between the stakeholders, the Sahtu Secretariat Incorporated, and the Government of the Northwest Territories works. In this case, both groups realize the cooperative need for environmental wildlife and resource land management. Mahsi, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Masi. Members' statements. Member for Yellowknife North.

#### MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON PRODUCERS INCENTIVE PROGRAM

**MR. VANTHUYNE:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Today I'd like to talk about the film and TV production industry in the NWT. It is one of our economic success stories. Our production industry has grown substantially in recent years, with feature films, international festival screenings, and TV series gaining attention across Canada and around the world.

Mr. Speaker, our government support for film production has grown from virtually nothing a few years ago, but our funding model is not consistent with any other jurisdiction, and it has gaps that are preventing the industry from moving to the next level.

Northern filmmakers have access to funding through ITI's SEED Program, but SEED is not designed for media producers. SEED is a start-up program designed for small businesses and entrepreneurs. SEED has allowed many productions to get started, and we need to recognize that, but it does not recognize the unique qualities of the production business.

One model for funding film and television is our very successful Mining Incentive Program. The Mining Incentive Program offers two streams of funding; one for prospectors who are exploring and developing new projects, and one for production to actually bring a project into being. The MIP model could be designed to fit the needs of the production community very well. The prospector fund would be

more like a development fund for producers, funding scriptwriting, production planning, or location scouting. The corporate fund would be more like the film sponsorship, for actually going into production on a big show or movie.

Mr. Speaker, northern producers already have an incentive to develop projects in the North. They live here. They know the people and the places, and have northern stories to tell. All they need is access to sufficient resources to tell those stories.

Some recent successful northern productions have been made with just a tiny fraction of the funding coming from our government. Greater homegrown support and incentives would help our filmmakers gain higher-level experience, and our industry to grow to the next level. That means changing the rules so they're specific to the needs of production, making rules that support northern producers, and it means there needs to be more funds on the table.

Mr. Speaker, let's consider modernizing and updating our system to provide stronger support for this important, growing, diversified industry. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Masi. Members' statements. Member for Yellowknife Centre.

#### MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON GOOD NEIGHBOUR AGREEMENTS

**MS. GREEN:** Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. In early May, CBC North ran a story about how a day shelter and sobering centre in Calgary's downtown has succeeded in working with its neighbours and clients to minimize negative behaviours in the neighbourhood. Experiences there and in other places such as Vancouver and Quesnel, BC, have shown the benefits of creating a type of social license called a "Good Neighbour Agreement." These agreements share common features relevant to our experience here, all aimed at ensuring safe and hospitable experiences by shelter clients, area residents, businesses, and downtown visitors alike.

I met recently with the owner of the building next to Yellowknife's sobering and day centre to discuss concerns with the street activity surrounding the facility. We discussed the Good Neighbour Agreement approach, and I came away with a slew of positive suggestions for features to include. First is the vision of a centre as a positive force supported by the community with an agreement setting out concrete steps to maintain services to clients as well as the safety and liveability of the neighbourhood. Key stakeholders include clients, the contractor operating the facility, resident and business neighbours, the City of Yellowknife, territorial governments who provide the funding, and the RCMP. The agreement defines the parties'

expectations to their rights, and commits the partners to responsibilities in issues of safety, conduct, and communication. A recommended feature found in other communities' agreements is the creation of a formal liaison committee as a meeting place for actions and concerns. The Good Neighbour Committee would meet regularly to check in, and ensure the parties are living up to their commitments and brainstorm for solutions to emerging issues.

All of these suggestions originate from a proactive and constructive attitude towards making the centre work for everyone. Creation of the centre and its supporting services, including the Street Outreach Program, have gone a long way to alleviating concerns with conditions in our downtown. A Good Neighbour Agreement should be the next improvement. I'll have questions for the Minister of Health and Social Services. Mahsi.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Masi. Members' statements. Member for Frame Lake.

#### MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON GIANT MINE LONG-TERM FUNDING STUDY

**MR. O'REILLY:** Merci, Monsieur le President. I attended a public meeting by the Giant Mine Oversight Board on May 1<sup>st</sup>. This was a very well-attended event, with over a hundred members of the public. The main issues included the ongoing research and development into a permanent solution to the toxic arsenic stored underground, and ensuring economic benefits to the NWT from the 10-year, \$1-billion active remediation phase.

Lots of questions were raised about the ongoing research program. The board recently signed an agreement with TERRE-NET, which brings together leading experts from Canadian universities in a variety of relevant fields. The board has signed contracts with the University of Waterloo for TERRE-NET to engage in a formal document review and attended the GMOB Research Workshop, where the results and initial focus of the joint research program were explored.

Some progress has been made on securing northern benefits from the Giant Mine Remediation Project in that a couple of collaborative advisory bodies have been established to develop a real strategy, but more needs to be done.

Another simmering issue is the unresolved work required to fulfill measure 6 of the environmental assessment of the Giant Mine Remediation Project. The federal government is required to investigate long-term funding options for the project and for contingencies, including a trust fund with multi-year, up-front funding, and to involve the public in discussing the options. Two drafts of the report

were prepared by an accounting firm, but not much has been achieved. A scathing letter was recently issued by the board on the latest draft of the study that I tabled last week. The board says that the study lacks a conceptual framework for what is meant by "long-term funding" in relation to project requirements for ongoing maintenance and management, monitoring security, and public communications. Alternative delivery models for provision of these services have yet to be developed. Case studies from other jurisdictions have not been identified or considered in a faulty analysis of options. The so-called comparative analysis concludes that the current system of annual appropriations is the best option for long-term funding. This study is now almost two years late and will potentially jeopardize the current water licence proceeding.

An annual appropriations model for funding perpetual care of Giant Mine does not build any public confidence in this project and was one of the main reasons it was referred for an environment assessment in the first place. I will have questions for the Minister of Environment and Natural Resources later today on what our government is doing to make sure this study is finished properly. Mahsi, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Masi. Members' statements. Member for Kam Lake.

#### MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON 2019 YOUTH PARLIAMENT

**MR. TESTART:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Earlier this month, youth from across the territory came together here in the Chamber for the annual Youth Parliament. Model parliaments such as the one recently hosted by this Legislative Assembly are incredibly important in not only ensuring continued democratic participation of future generations, but as also integral to passing on the knowledge of how our system works to the next generation of leaders.

Our young parliamentarians showed us that they already have a strong grasp of the issues which face our territory today and made compelling arguments for increasing mental health support for youth while also acknowledging the complexities implementing such legislation would have. This discussion was informed by personal experiences and the observed experiences of their peers. I want to thank the young members who so openly discussed their experiences on the floor of the House and commend them for their courage.

Mr. Speaker, these young people remind us of how important it is to invest time, energy, and resources into the next generation of northern leaders. I was also impressed that the majority of the youth parliamentarians were young women, and I hope

this is an indicator that interest in politics is alive and well with our youth and that young women will continue to make their voices heard as they move from schooling into the work force and, for some, I hope, a seat in this House.

I was thoroughly impressed by the work of our young parliamentarian for Kam Lake, Ms. Stella Smyslo, and her skills in debate, her enthusiasm, and her hard work in putting together her Member's statement and her performance in the debate throughout the week of Youth Parliament.

Mr. Speaker, I also want to thank all Members of this Assembly and the staff of the institution who worked tirelessly to make this event a reality for our youth, and I offer particular recognition of yourself, Mr. Speaker, as host of the Youth Parliament. The behind-the-scenes work often goes unnoticed, but I know that the participants learned a great deal from your guidance and instruction.

It is great to see young people given an opportunity to speak in this Chamber, and they in no way wasted that opportunity. I am also impressed with the young parliamentarians, and this year was no different. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Masi. Colleagues, I would like to draw your attention to visitors in the gallery. With us here today is the Consul-General of India, Ms. Abhilasha Joshi. She joined the Indian Foreign Service in 1995 and, over the years, she has been posted in Lisbon, Portugal; New Delhi, India; and Sao Paulo, Brazil. As of August 2017, she assumed charge of the Consul-General of India in Vancouver. Colleagues, please join me in welcoming the Consul-General to our proceedings and to our beautiful Legislative Assembly, and to the North, as well. Of course, with her is our very own Carmen Moore, chief of protocol. Thanks for doing a great job. Masi. Members' statements. Member for Tu Nedhe-Wiilideh.

#### MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON AFFIRMATIVE ACTION POLICY

**MR. BEAULIEU:** Marsi cho, Mr. Speaker. On June 1, 2018, I made a Member's statement on the Affirmative Action Policy. Today, I will be making a similar statement.

Over the years, I have seen, both as a Regular Member and a former Minister of Human Resources, that our government has failed numerous Priority 1 candidates trying to get employment with the GNWT. Therefore, Mr. Speaker, I am not convinced that our government is committed to increasing the number of Priority 1 employees that we employ in our departments, as per the Affirmative Action Policy.

Mr. Speaker, we need to have more Priority 1 candidates in management positions in order to increase the volume of P1 employees across the board. I have not seen any departments with a solid human-resource plan that advances their Priority 1 employees into positions that have greater say in hiring Indigenous employees.

Mr. Speaker, in our small communities, we encourage our students by telling them to go to school every day and graduate from high school, in order to provide themselves with an opportunity to take post-secondary studies. However, we cannot in good faith tell them they have opportunities with the GNWT, because the actions of various departments do not project a welcoming environment for Indigenous people.

This government has not developed proper plans to increase the Priority 1 numbers in all departments, boards, and agencies. I think it's time our government starts the process of allowing small communities to deliver their own programs and services, similar to how the municipalities are funded. This will allow the communities themselves to decide who can do the best job for their residents.

Mr. Speaker, I have said to most people who have asked, "I will be retiring at the end of this term." So, after all of these years in the House, I can firmly say that the Affirmative Action Policy does not work, because it is not the will of our government to make it work.

Mr. Speaker, this is witnessed by amalgamating the Departments of Finance and Human Resources, as human resources has no standing in the GNWT structure. In order to make affirmative action work, more attention must be paid to it. Otherwise, Mr. Speaker, the government should scrap the Affirmative Action Policy and replace it with something that does work. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Masi. Members' statements. Member for Nunakput.

#### MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES IN REGIONS

**MR. NAKIMAYAK:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Recently, there were two adults who passed away from suicide in my region. The rates in the Northwest Territories continue to be high, despite the various programs provided by Health and Social Services. Although the programs we have, such as the group phone session, Facebook chat, and funds for on-the-land healing, the underlying causes of suicide, such as unemployment, lack of housing, poverty, colonization, mental illness, and addictions remain.

Mr. Speaker, I am going to share a quote from my friend, Gabe Nurlugatuk, who lost his son to suicide. He says: "Depression is hard to diagnose, but, with all of us, we can make a difference. We all need someone. We all need to live. Tomorrow is another day."

Mr. Speaker, the new Stanton Territorial Hospital shows promise for better mental health. It has a therapeutic garden with a ceremonial fire pit, a playground, sleeping couches for family and friends, and a sacred space for prayer with ventilation to allow smudging. It's efforts like these that give me hope, Mr. Speaker. It shows that the Government of the Northwest Territories is focusing on the well-being of our Indigenous people. However, these features are located in Yellowknife, which is a far reach from Nunakput's constituents. The Minister shows commitment to treating and preventing suicide. It's also important that we engage the underlying causes for suicide in order to lower the rates in the Northwest Territories. The negative effects suicide has on families and communities are at times unheard. This issue is compounded and triggers multiple issues that can be prevented with help, such as interventions and continuous support from our friends, family, and coworkers.

Mr. Speaker, an example also to think about are the benefits that we get from employment as a Government of the Northwest Territories employee. In the communities, on paper, the benefits are great, but most times don't physically reach our communities when it comes to mental health and issues that affect our well-being.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Later on, I will have questions for the Minister of Health and Social Services.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Masi. Members' statements. Member for Hay River North.

#### MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON DREDGING THE HAY RIVER

**MR. SIMPSON:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Let's talk about dredging. When I was growing up, there used to be a sandbar at the public beach in Hay River maybe a couple of hundred feet out. You couldn't really see it from the shore, but seagulls would land on it, so it became known as Seagull Island. To get there, you would have to wade out waist-deep in water. About 10 years ago, a former Hay River MLA stood up in this House and talked about how Seagull Island had changed because of the build-up in sediment, saying, "You could practically walk halfway to Fort Providence now without getting wet." Obviously, she was exaggerating, but Seagull Island hasn't been an island in a long time.

A while ago, you could have probably called it Seagull Peninsula. Then it turned into Seagull Point. I was out there just a couple weeks ago, and what was once a submerged sandbar is now hundreds of metres of dry land. It juts out into the Great Slave Lake, curves west and then south, resulting in a brand new body of water, thousands of square feet in area that is physically separated from the lake. Let's call it Seagull Lagoon.

On the other side of the island, the West Channel is increasingly becoming isolated from the lake, as sediment is deposited at the mouth of the channel, merging islands with the mainland, and creating the perfect barrier to block ice that would otherwise flow out of the channel into the lake during breakup.

Mr. Speaker, things have gotten worse since I stood up in this House three and a half years ago and asked this Cabinet how they were going to work towards fulfilling the GNWT's mandate of getting the Hay River dredged. The statement I made that day was similar to the one made by the previous MLA from Hay River North at the beginning of his term. His statement was similar to the one made by the former Member for Hay River South the term before that. The answers that all three of us have received over and over again from the three different Ministers of Transportation have all been the same. They say dredging is not the GNWT's responsibility, but they'll work with the federal government to see if they'll pay for it.

Well, Mr. Speaker, over the last quarter century, the feds have made their position clear by denying applications put forth by the GNWT and, in some cases, outright ignoring letters sent by our Ministers related to this issue.

Mr. Speaker, they say the Government of Canada pays attention to our proceedings, so instead of asking our Cabinet to lobby the feds, I'll address the rest of my comments directly to the federal government: start doing your job and resume dredging operations in Hay River. This is an economic issue, this is a public safety issue, and, as far as I'm concerned, this is a federal election issue. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Masi. Members' statements. Item 4, reports of standing and special committees. Member for Kam Lake.

### Reports of Standing and Special Committees

COMMITTEE REPORT 16-18(3):  
REPORT ON THE REVIEW OF BILL 29: AN ACT  
TO AMEND THE ACCESS TO INFORMATION  
AND PROTECTION OF PRIVACY ACT

**MR. TESTART:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Your Standing Committee on Government Operations is pleased to provide its Report on the Review of Bill 29: An Act to Amend the Access to Information and Protection of Privacy Act, and commends it to the House.

The Standing Committee on Government Operations ("the committee") is pleased to report on its review of Bill 29: An Act to Amend the Access to Information and Protection of Privacy Act or ATIPP Act.

Bill 29: An Act to Amend the Access to Information and Protection of Privacy Act was sponsored by the Department of Justice and has been referred to the Standing Committee on Government Operations for review. The bill proposes to:

- Provide for the application of the act to municipalities that are designated in regulations;
- Clarify the types of records exempted from disclosure because they would reveal Cabinet or Financial Management Board confidences and provide for a similar exemption for municipal records;
- Allow for a compelling public interest to override particular statutory grounds providing that a record is to be exempt from disclosure;
- Revise time limits by restating them as business days rather than calendar days, shortening some turn-around times, and adding time limits for certain actions required under the act that did not previously have them;
- Set out a process for the Information and Privacy Commissioner, or IPC, to consider requests from heads of public bodies to extend time limits for responding to requests for access;
- Address the privacy and access considerations related to human resources documents, including employee evaluation and workplace investigation documents;
- Clarify exemptions from disclosure relating to business interests;
- Permit the collection and disclosure of information for the delivery of common or integrated programs and services;
- Update the general powers of the IPC;
- Provide for a review of the act by the Minister every seven years; and

- Make other adjustments intended to improve language and enhance clarity in the act.

Now in its 23<sup>rd</sup> year, the Access to Information and Protection of Privacy Act came into force on December 31, 1996. The stated purposes of the act are to make public bodies more accountable to citizens and to protect the privacy of personal information held by public bodies. Public bodies include the Government of the Northwest Territories and its agencies, boards, commissions, and corporations, as set out in the regulations. The act achieves its purposes by:

- Giving individuals the right to access and the right to request the correction of personal information about themselves held by public bodies;
- Setting out limited exceptions to the right of access;
- Preventing the unauthorized collection, use, or disclosure of personal information by public bodies; and
- Providing for an independent review of decisions made under the act by the Information and Privacy Commissioner.

Although the act has been amended from time to time to respond to specific issues raised by stakeholders and standing committees, the act had never subjected to a comprehensive review until the Department of Justice committed to undertake this work in 2012. The results of that review informed the development of Bill 29.

Bill 29 received second reading in the Legislative Assembly on October 30, 2018, and was referred to the Standing Committee on Government Operations for review.

The work of the standing committee to amend Bill 29 is set out in this report. The report contains recommendations to government on the implementation of the revised legislation. It also provides a rationale for the motions moved by the committee to amend specific provisions in the bill. These motions are listed in Appendix 1 in order of their appearance in the bill and are referred to in this report by their number assigned in the appendix.

### **The Public Review of Bill 29**

In this digital age, where data of all descriptions is easily accessible by personal computer and phone, people have become increasingly aware of the need to protect their personal information and the potential impacts of failing to do so. At the same time, the public is demanding more accountability and openness from government. Citizens want

access to documents held by government, so they may determine if government decision-making is reasoned, defensible, and being carried out in accordance with the legislative and policy framework that government has put in place.

In this environment, it is vitally important to have strong access and privacy legislation governing how the public sector collects, manages, and discloses personal information. Committee was pleased to see the Minister of Justice bring forward Bill 29, in accordance with mandate commitment 5.3.1.

In addition to soliciting input through letters sent to stakeholders, the committee travelled to, and held public hearings on Bill 29, during the week of January 21, 2019, in Fort Smith, Inuvik, and Fort McPherson. A final public hearing was held in Yellowknife on January 24, 2019. Committee thanks everyone who attended these meetings or provided written submissions to the committee for sharing their views on Bill 29.

Committee noted a great deal of public interest in Bill 29. In addition to the input received from residents in the communities we visited, committee received both verbal and written submissions from:

- The City of Yellowknife;
- The NWT Association of Communities;
- OpenNWT; and
- The Information and Privacy Commissioner of the Northwest Territories, Ms. Elaine Keenan Bengts, who was accompanied by former British Columbia Information and Privacy Commissioner, Mr. David Loukidelis.

Committee also received written submissions from the Hamlet of Tulita and the Northwest Territories Branch of the Canadian Bar Association.

Given the breadth of input and the complexity of the legislation, public input is noted in greater detail under the topic headings below.

At this time, Mr. Speaker, I would like to hand the reading of the report over to my colleague, the honourable Member from Deh Cho.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Member for Deh Cho.

**MR. NADLI:** Mahsi, Mr. Speaker.

### **WHAT WE HEARD AND DID**

#### **Scope of the Act**

#### **Inclusion of Municipalities**

#### **Input Received**

Clause 2 of Bill 29 provides for Northwest Territories' municipalities to be included under ATIPP by extending the definition of a "public body" to include municipalities as defined under the Cities, Towns and Villages Act, the Charter Communities Act, or the Hamlets Act. Clause 2 also specifies that a municipality must be designated in the regulations in order for ATIPP to take effect. This mechanism ensures that municipalities do not immediately assume responsibilities under the amended legislation when it goes into force, but rather when the GNWT amends the regulations.

Clause 10 of Bill 29 specifies which municipal records are to be exempt from disclosure under ATIPP. In her submission, the IPC urged the government to consult with her office regarding which municipalities are to be designated as public bodies and indicated that she hopes to see the larger communities designated first. She also noted her support for the protection provided to municipal confidences under clause 10.

In its submission, the City of Yellowknife emphasized the degree to which they are already very open and transparent. The city claimed to already be covered under PIPEDA, the federal Personal Information Protection and Electronic Documents Act. The city expressed concern about the potential impact of ATIPP on their Whistleblower Policy, which allows complainants to remain anonymous in order to encourage reporting without fear of reprisal. The city is also concerned about its capacity to implement this change and the costs associated with the requirement to designate an ATIPP coordinator. They said:

"If ATIPP is amended to include municipalities, it is imperative that the territorial government provide appropriate financial, records management and training resources to municipalities."

The Hamlet of Tulita noted that its records management is probably similar to other NWT communities in that there is no standardized indexing system or centrally maintained file system. They said:

"Being able to access information is critical to the effective functioning of ATIPP. Council would like to see, before any such action is taken to require community governments to become compliant, that the GNWT (probably through MACA) provide training and assistance to the community governments in standardized record management."

The hamlet went on to suggest that perhaps the electronic systems being used in larger NWT communities could be acquired by the Department of Municipal and Community Affairs (MACA) as a standard records management system for all communities.

The NWT Association of Communities (NWTAC) advised the committee that they had passed a resolution stating:

"The implementation of ATIPP legislation to communities needs to be done in a measured, realistic and highly planned way; and further, that any implementation plan needs to include adequate resources and training to ensure its success."

In addition, the NWTAC called upon the committee to do all it can to ensure that the GNWT honour commitments made in 2018 to support a staged implementation recognizing operational challenges, and to ensure that the Departments of Municipal and Community Affairs and Justice work with community governments, to assess capacity, resource requirements, and training, and consult with communities on implementation timing.

In its submission, OpenNWT noted that the:

"Inclusion of municipalities under the act is an important one that has been a long time coming...Much of the current conversation has been filled by "what ifs" -- what if there are too many requests, what if records capacity isn't there - these are all systems that can evolve with time."

This submission further pointed out that when the act was first brought into force, the GNWT "did not have any advanced records management system in place, either."

### **Committee Response**

The committee does not take a position on the application of PIPEDA to municipal governments, but notes guidance on this subject from the federal Information and Privacy Commissioner which suggests that, contrary to the city's assertion, PIPEDA may have limited application to municipalities in the NWT only to the extent that it applies to information about municipal employees.

With respect to the city's concern regarding the impact of ATIPP on the confidentiality of the process under its Whistleblower Policy, again, the committee does not take a position on this. Committee does, however, note the following provision from the Government of the Northwest Territories' Harassment Free and Respectful Workplace Policy which suggests that protecting the anonymity of complainants is inconsistent with due process:

7. The investigation process is conducted following the principles of procedural fairness and natural justice. This means:

(a) Only those complaints in which the complainant's identity is disclosed may be taken through the mediation and/or investigation

processes. Anonymous complaints do not allow for due process.

The committee supports the inclusion of municipalities under ATIPP legislation, but is cognizant of the very real concerns municipal authorities have about ensuring that implementation is staged and orderly. Accordingly, the committee makes the following recommendation:

#### **Recommendation 1**

The Standing Committee on Government Operations recommends that the Department of Municipal and Community Affairs, working with the Department of Justice, develop a detailed and costed plan to guide the implementation of ATIPP for municipalities.

Additionally, the standing committee recommends that the plan identify: i) timelines for the inclusion of different categories of municipalities in the ATIPP Regulations; ii) the resources needed by each municipal government to comply with ATIPP, to ensure adequate funding for initial implementation and ongoing operational requirements; along with iii) any other significant considerations as determined through consultation on development of the plan.

The standing committee further recommends that, before being finalized, the plan be provided in draft so that input may be obtained from the appropriate standing committee, the NWT Association of Communities, and the local government administrators of the Northwest Territories.

Mr. Speaker, at this time, I will now pass the reading of the further sections to my honourable Member colleague from Hay River North. Mahsi.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Member for Hay River North.

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

#### **Inclusion of Local Housing Organizations**

##### **Input Received**

The Information and Privacy Commissioner noted the importance of bringing local housing organizations under ATIPP. Her submission notes that:

"From a privacy perspective, housing corporations collect, use and disclose significant amounts of personal information about their residents. This includes financial information, information about their employment and personal information about their family situation. It can also include sensitive information about any conditions that a resident may have. The many privacy complaints my office receives show a clear need for these corporations

to live under the same privacy rules as other public sector actors."

#### **Committee Response**

From its review of the IPC's 2017-2018 Annual Report, committee is aware of an instance in which a person sought access to information held by a local housing organization. In this case, the Northwest Territories Housing Corporation directed the local housing organization to respond to the request, even though the housing organization is not bound by ATIPP. In committee's view, this suggests that the NWT Housing Corporation recognizes the need for open and transparent conduct by local housing organizations.

Committee considered bringing forward a motion to define local housing organizations as "public bodies" under the act, but recognized that this would not be consistent with the manner by which public bodies are designated under the act. To be consistent with the existing structure of the legislation, the most appropriate way to include local housing organizations under ATIPP would be to define them as public bodies by including them in Schedule A to the regulations. Accordingly, committee makes the following recommendation:

#### **Recommendation 2**

The Standing Committee on Government Operations recommends that the Minister of Justice propose, for approval by the Commissioner in Executive Council, amending the Access to Information and Protection of Privacy Regulations to include Housing Associations incorporated under the Societies Act and Housing Authorities incorporated under section 45 of the NWT Housing Corporation Act, as public bodies under the Access to Information and Protection of Privacy Act.

#### **Powers of the Information and Privacy Commissioner**

The ATIPP Act sets out the powers of the IPC with respect to both access and privacy matters. The committee gave a great deal of consideration to the scope of these powers.

#### **Modernizing the Role of the IPC**

Bill 29 proposes a number of changes to strengthen the powers of the IPC. Clause 35 expands the powers of the IPC to:

- provide educational programs about the act and the public's rights;
- consult with any person with expertise in any matter related to the act;
- provide comments on the privacy implications

of new technology;

- provide comments on practices and procedures to improve access and privacy;
- advise the heads of public bodies when their staff fail to fulfill the duty to assist applicants; and
- inform the public of deficiencies in the system, including in the office of the IPC.

Committee supports the inclusion of the powers set out in clause 35, which will modernize the IPC's powers and align them with other provincial and territorial privacy commissioners. However, committee feels that Bill 29 could do more to strengthen the IPC's powers in the following areas.

#### **Initiating Access and Privacy Reviews on the IPC's Own Initiative**

Committee supports the proposal under Clause 28 to allow the IPC to initiate a review relating to a privacy breach on her own initiative, without receiving a complaint. Committee notes that this is something the IPC has called for in her past annual reports and is a power afforded to information and privacy commissioners in other Canadian jurisdictions and to other statutory officers with Ombud-like powers in the Northwest Territories.

This would give the IPC the authority to investigate problems that might be systemic and thus not restricted to a single complaint. The committee sees no sound policy rationale for giving the IPC this authority only for privacy matters, as proposed under clause 28, and believes that the IPC should also have the authority to investigate systemic issues relating to access matters. Consequently, committee moved motions 10(a) and (b) to ensure that the IPC has this power to initiate an investigation relating to an access matter without the prerequisite of having received a complaint. Committee also moved motion 15 to clarify that the IPC's power to initiate reviews related to privacy matters on her own initiative also includes reviews related to the correction of personal information.

#### **Making Binding Recommendations**

##### **Input Received**

From the IPC, committee heard that:

"A key shortcoming of Bill 29 is that it would continue to give public bodies the unacceptable ability to ignore adjudicated decisions by the IPC...NWT public bodies can pick and choose which decisions they will respect and which they will not. From a rule-of-law perspective, this is an unacceptably weak regime. It is also not clear why access to information -- which the Supreme Court

of Canada has stated has constitutional dimensions -- does not merit better protection."

In its submission, OpenNWT noted that:

"The current process for making ATIPP requests can be difficult for the public and onerous. Currently, when a government body refuses to release a record the applicant can appeal to the Commissioner for a review. However, these reviews are not binding...and it is up to the applicant to then seek a judicial order. Considering the disparity in resources available to the government versus a private citizen or organization, this is fundamentally unfair."

Both the IPC and OpenNWT recommend that the GNWT adopt an approach found in the Newfoundland and Labrador Access to Information and Protection of Privacy Act, which was designed to enhance the enforceability of the IPC's recommendations. In this model, a public body is required to comply with the IPC's recommendations. If a public body does not wish to comply, it must apply to the court within a prescribed timeline, for a declaration that it is not required to comply with the IPC's recommendation. In its application, the public body must substantiate the reason it disagrees with the IPC's recommendations and justify how its own decision to refuse access was guided by the provisions of the act. "It should not be left to public bodies to pick and choose which access to information rights/privacy rights they will respect."

#### **Committee Response**

Currently, the recommendations made by the IPC under the ATIPP Act are not binding on the GNWT or its boards and agencies. If the IPC finds in favour of a complainant and recommends that a public body give access to a record that it has refused to release and the public body refuses to accept the recommendation, the only recourse left to the complainant is to file a notice of appeal with the Supreme Court, pursuant to section 37 of the act. The act does not provide any similar avenue of appeal for privacy complaints. Committee was in agreement that the recommendations of the IPC need to be strengthened so that they are binding upon government in some fashion.

Committee looked closely at the Newfoundland model. Committee believes that, because the GNWT is more adequately resourced to undertake legal actions, requiring the GNWT to go to court for approval to disregard the IPC's recommendations is more fair than requiring an applicant to go to court when the GNWT refuses to comply with the IPC's recommendation. Committee views this approach as consistent with the GNWT's commitment to a more open and accountable government. The

Newfoundland model would even the playing field, making the access and privacy system in the Northwest Territories more accessible for those with access or privacy concerns.

The committee further believes that this approach would by its nature promote more careful and justifiable decision-making on the part of public bodies, whose heads will be more inclined to assess whether or not their decision on an access matter is likely to be viewed favourably by the courts.

In considering the scope of powers available to the IPC, committee was aware that other statutory officers, such as the NWT Human Rights Adjudication Panel, have the power to make orders having the weight of court rulings. Committee considered that providing the IPC with order-making power would be an alternative approach to the status quo and to the Newfoundland model.

Because ministerial concurrence with committee motions is required if a bill is to be amended at the committee stage, committee met with the Minister of Justice and his staff to discuss a number of potential amendments to Bill 29. Committee was surprised to learn at this meeting that the Department of Justice views the option of providing the IPC with order-making power more favourably than the Newfoundland model. The department offered the insight that the most frequent reason the GNWT refuses to comply with the IPC's recommendations is because those recommendations often lack a degree of precision necessary to allow the government to comply in a manner consistent with its mandate and operating structure. Providing the IPC with order-making power, the department suggested, would impose a level of discipline on the IPC that would result in more specific and precise direction to government. The minister indicated his willingness to concur with such an amendment on the condition that he could obtain the support of Cabinet.

Accordingly, committee moved motions 12 and 12(a) to amend Bill 29 to provide the IPC with order-making power related to access matters and motion 16 to provide the IPC with order-making power related to privacy concerns.

I would now like to hand reading of the report over to my colleague, the Member for Sahtu.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Member for Sahtu.

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

### **Public Interest Override**

Clause 4 of Bill 29 proposes to amend the ATIPP Act to provide that, for certain records, the exemption from disclosure provided under the act

will not apply where the applicant "demonstrates that a compelling public interest in the disclosure of the record clearly outweighs the purpose of the exemption." This means that, where the act prohibits a record from being disclosed, the person seeking access may be able to obtain the record if they are able to demonstrate that the public's need to know is more important than the privacy considerations that would otherwise prevent the record from being disclosed.

### **Input Received**

Committee heard from Mr. David Loukidelis, a former British Columbia Information and Privacy Commissioner, who appeared before the committee as a witness at the invitation of the NWT IPC. Mr. Loukidelis asserted that the proposal does not go far enough because it only allows the public interest to override four of the act's disclosure exemptions: advice from officials (section 14), intergovernmental relations (section 16), government's economic interests (section 17), and harm to the applicant or another individual (section 21). In contrast, Mr. Loukidelis notes, the public interest prevails over all of the secrecy provisions contained in the ATIPP acts of Alberta, British Columbia, Prince Edward Island, and New Brunswick.

"The bar is set too high -- the public interest would only win out over secrecy where there is a 'compelling' public interest that 'clearly outweighs the purpose of the exemption.' Experience with similar language in Ontario shows that the bar is so high that the override will effectively be illusory."

Both Mr. Loukidelis and the IPC additionally point out that clause 4 of Bill 29 only applies in instances where someone has made a request for a record. They argue that there should be a positive duty on government to disclose information that is in the public interest. As the NWT IPC noted:

"Bill 29 should be amended to provide that the public body is required to disclose to the public, an affected group of people or an applicant, as promptly as practicable, information about a risk of serious harm to the environment or to the health or safety of the public or a group of people. This duty should apply, to be clear, regardless of whether an access request has been made."

Finally, both the IPC and Mr. Loukidelis express concern that clause 4 of Bill 29 places the onus on a member of the public to demonstrate a compelling public interest "from a position of complete or near complete ignorance." This observation served to confirm committee's view that this places an unreasonable burden of proof on the applicant.

### **Committee Response**

In response to these concerns, committee moved motion 2, which places a positive duty on government to disclose to the public, without delay, information about a risk of significant harm to the environment or to the health or safety of the public or information that, for any other reason, should be disclosed because it is clearly in the public interest to do so. This public interest override applies throughout the act, not just to the four disclosure exemptions provided for in clause 4 of the bill. It also removes the requirement for a member of the public to demonstrate a compelling public interest and, instead, puts the onus on government to ensure that, regardless of protections provided under ATIPP, information in the public interest is properly disclosed.

### Labour Relations Information

Clause 17 of Bill 29 proposes to add a new section 24.1 to the act, that would require a public body to refuse to disclose to an applicant "labour relations information, the disclosure of which could reasonably be expected to reveal information supplied to, or the report of, an arbitrator, mediator, labour relations officer or other person or body appointed to resolve or inquire into a labour relations matter."

### Input Received

As pointed out by the IPC in her submission, "this would be a mandatory exemption, and a public body would not be permitted to waive its protection." She goes on to express the view that "this is a potentially vast black hole in the act. For one thing, the terms 'labour relations information' and 'labour relations matter' are not defined. They could be very broad in their scope."

The IPC also expresses her concern with the proposal to "withhold even the final report of a labour arbitrator or similar decision-maker," noting that, with respect to arbitration decisions, "there is no good reason for an access to information law to require them to be secret." She argues that "these decisions are an important part of our law and the act should not require them to remain secret when an access request is made for an unpublished decision."

### Committee Response

Committee agrees that the exemption from disclosure of information harmful to the GNWT's labour relations interests is too broad as set out in clause 17 of Bill 29. Committee discussed with Justice the possibility of adding a definition to the act and was persuaded by the department's concern that such a definition this might inadvertently capture types of information that should not be exempted or, conversely, fail to

address types of information that should. Committee also considered an approach that would narrow the scope of the provision by inserting a "harms test." The effect of this would be to require a public body to give consideration to the nature of the information being requested, to determine if it "could reasonably be expected to (i) harm the competitive position of the GNWT as an employer; (ii) interfere with the negotiating position of the public body as an employer, or (iii) result in financial loss or gain to the public body as an employer."

Unfortunately, an amendment to clause 17 of the bill could not be finalized in time for this provision to be amended at the committee stage. Had such an amendment been completed, it would have been moved as motion 7, which is why readers of this report will not find such a motion in Appendix 1 to this report.

Committee has enjoyed a positive and extremely collaborative relationship with the Minister of Justice and his staff on the review of Bill 29, and work to resolve the committee's concern is still underway as this report is being read into the record. Committee has every confidence that a solution can be reached that is satisfactory to both the Minister and to committee and that will result in a further amendment to this bill on the floor of the House.

Mr. Speaker, I pass the further reading on to the honourable Member for Nunakput.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Masi. Member for Nunakput.

**MR. NAKIMAYAK:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I checked my papers, and I do not have any duplicates, so you only get all 29 pages in this report.

### Obligations of Public Bodies

The ATIPP Act places a number of obligations on public bodies. Bill 29 proposes to amend certain of these obligations.

### Response to the IPC's Access-Related Recommendations

As set out in Bill 29, clause 31 proposes to require a public body to provide the IPC with a status report on its implementation of the IPC's privacy-related recommendations.

The committee originally supported this proposal because it is something that has been long sought by the IPC. However, committee could see no sound policy reason for this obligation to exist only with respect to privacy-related matters. Committee considered moving a motion which proposed to also place this obligation on public bodies with respect to access-related recommendations by the

IPC. However, the subsequent decision to provide the IPC with order-making power, for both access and privacy matters, as set out in motions 12 and 16, supplanted the need for either clause 31 of the bill or an amendment requiring public bodies to report on the status of access-related recommendations.

Motions 12 and 16 require a public body to comply with an order of the IPC within 20 or 40 business days, respectively. Because the IPC's orders become mandatory under these amendments, the IPC will no longer be left wondering to what extent recommendations accepted by a public body are being implemented.

### **Records That May Be Disclosed Without an Access Request**

Section 72 of the ATIPP Act gives public bodies discretionary authority to identify categories of records that do not contain personal information and can, therefore, be made available to the public without the need for a formal access request under the act.

Clause 37 of the bill proposes to make this requirement mandatory, rather than optional, for public bodies. Committee supports this proposal, but wants to ensure that the public has a way of knowing which categories of records may be requested without an access request.

Committee therefore moved Motion 19, which obligates public bodies not only to develop these categories of records, but also to publish them, so that people seeking information held by the government will know which records they may readily access without need to make a formal request under the act.

### **Privacy Impact Assessments**

#### **Input Received**

The IPC has spoken to the committee, many times, about the importance of "privacy by design," which is the notion that whenever government is developing a new initiative, it should give consideration, in the earliest planning stages, to the initiative's impacts on the privacy of individuals. One of the ways to achieve this is through the use of a privacy impact assessment (PIA), which describes how individuals, whose personal information will be collected, used or disclosed, would be affected by the initiative.

Committee heard from the IPC on this subject, who said:

"PIAs help ensure that initiatives proceed only if there are no compliance concerns that cannot be mitigated. They enable what is known as privacy by

design, with privacy compliance being designed into the initiative at the outset. PIAs also enable public bodies to assess whether, even if an initiative is legally compliant, it is not good policy from a privacy perspective. A PIA is an important and highly-desirable business risk assessment tool that should be mandatory."

Committee sees the value in privacy impact assessments, noting that such assessments are required under the Health Information Act for any proposed change to an information system or communication technology relating to the collection, use or disclosure of personal health information.

#### **Committee Response**

Committee was persuaded to seek an amendment to Bill 29 requiring public bodies to conduct privacy impact assessments, not only by the IPC's evidence, but out of consideration for impacts related to "common or integrated programs or services," a concept introduced in Bill 29.

One of the key features of the ATIPP Act is that it places an obligation on public bodies to limit their collection of personal information to only that which is needed to deliver a given program or service. It also requires that each public body must disclose to an individual the reasons for which their personal information is being collected. As a result, public bodies are not authorized to share the personal information they have collected, such that it can be used for purposes other than those for which it was first collected. Bill 29 proposes to change this with the introduction of the concept of a "common or integrated program or service."

A common or integrated program or service is one that provides one or more services through a public body working collaboratively with one or more other public bodies. The rationale for this approach is to break down the silos that tend to occur within government, so that different government departments or agencies may collaborate to deliver programs and services.

While this may be desirable from a program-delivery perspective, it creates challenges for collaborating offices, as they are currently prevented under the act from sharing with one another the personal information they have collected from their clients. As a result, clause 26 of Bill 29 proposes to amend the act to allow public bodies to share personal information they have individually collected for the purpose of collaboratively delivering a common or integrated program or service. Committee sees privacy impact assessments as vitally important in this context.

Mr. Speaker, as a result, committee moved Motion 13 to amend Bill 29. This amendment requires

public bodies to develop privacy impact assessments for any proposed enactment, system, project, program or service, including common or integrated programs and services, involving the collection, use or disclosure of personal information. These PIAs must be submitted to the head of the public body for review and comment. It further requires that privacy impact assessments done for common or integrated programs or services be submitted to the IPC for her review and comment. Finally, this motion also requires the head of a public body to notify the IPC at an early stage, when developing common or integrated programs or services.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I now pass it on to the Member for Hay River North.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Masi. Member for Hay River North.

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

### **Mandatory Breach Notification**

#### **Input Received**

The Northwest Territories Health Information Act, which came into force on October 1, 2015, places an obligation on the custodians of health information to advise affected individuals if the privacy of their health information is breached. Having had experience with this legislation, the IPC has recommended that public bodies under ATIPP should be required to provide the same breach notification for personal information under their control. She says,

"The duty to notify individuals of a breach that meets a statutorily-defined risk of harm is necessary for several reasons. First, it enables those affected to protect themselves from identity theft or fraud, and in some cases from personal harm. Second, the duty to notify affected individuals, and the public, serves as an important incentive for governments to take privacy seriously and avoid breaches in the first place. Third, a breach notification requirement would require public bodies to investigate the details of breaches, notably how they happened, and thus give them a solid information base for steps to prevent similar breaches in the future."

OpenNWT also recommended mandatory breach notification for ATIPP, stating that "Based on the large number of privacy breaches in the NWT it is important that our residents are notified individually."

#### **Committee Response**

Committee was persuaded of the value of amending the act to include a mandatory breach

notification. To determine how to achieve this, committee looked at the relevant provisions of the NWT's Health Information Act and Nunavut's ATIPP Act, Division E, Data Breach Notification. Committee moved a lengthy Motion 17, to incorporate into Bill 29 a section, largely modeled on the Nunavut example, which provides a definition of "harm" and sets out a process governing public bodies with respect to data breach notifications. In addition, committee moved Motion 20, to provide the Minister with the authority, under section 73 of the act, to make regulations respecting the requirements to be fulfilled by public bodies in the event of a data breach

### **Protecting the Privacy of Individuals Making Access Requests**

#### **Input Received**

The IPC has recommended that the identity of access requesters be protected under the act. She notes that "although it is convention not to disclose the identity of access requesters within a public body, there is no legal bar to doing so."

#### **Committee Response**

Committee believes that people seeking access to government records should be afforded a right to privacy, especially in a jurisdiction such as ours, where the population is small and many members of the public and the public service are known to one another.

Committee moved motion 3, which amends Bill 29 to provide that the identity of a person requesting access to information constitutes personal information which should be known only to the public body's ATIPP coordinator. It further provides that the identity of an access requester may only be disclosed by the ATIPP coordinator, to other employees in a public body, to the extent required in order to fulfill the access request.

### **Annual Reporting to the Responsible Minister**

Consistent with the GNWT's commitment to openness and transparency, committee sees the value of having public bodies report annually on activities they have undertaken as required by ATIPP. Committee moved motion 23, which requires public bodies to submit a report to the responsible Minister, within 60 days of the fiscal year end, detailing the:

- Number of requests received;
- Time taken to process the requests;
- Number of requests that were denied and the exceptions that were relied upon by the public body, in determining the denial;

- Fees collected;
- Justification relied upon for any extensions of time; and
- Number of privacy impact assessments the public body has conducted in the fiscal year.

### **Obligations of the Responsible Minister**

#### **Annual Reporting to the Legislative Assembly**

Motion 23, which requires annual reporting on ATIPP by public bodies, also requires that the Responsible Minister compile the reports submitted by the public bodies into an annual report, to be tabled within 60 business days of receiving the year-end information from the public bodies or, if the Legislative Assembly is not sitting at that time, at the next sitting of the Assembly. This will ensure that the information produced by public bodies as part of their year-end reporting is made available to the public.

#### **Statutory Review of the Act**

As noted at the outset of this report, the Northwest Territories' ATIPP legislation is just a few years shy of being a quarter of a century old. While it has been amended from time to time, the legislation has not, until now, been subjected to a comprehensive review.

ATIPP legislation governs the collection, use and disclosure of personal information. Processes used for collecting, exchanging, cataloguing and distributing personal information are intrinsically linked with technological changes. To put the age of the current ATIPP Act into perspective with respect to technological advancement, consider that in the same year it went into force the DVD was launched, smartphones were in their infancy, and there were roughly 45 million Internet users, none of whom had yet heard of Google, as compared with today's 1.4 billion Internet users.

Given the impact of changing technology on ATIPP, committee sees a greater-than-average need to ensure that the legislation is kept current. Clause 39 of Bill 29 achieves this by proposing to amend the act to include a requirement that the responsible Minister undertake a review of the legislation every seven years.

Based on past reviews of the Official Languages Act, committee is aware that mandated reviews of legislation occurring at arbitrary intervals, be it every five years, seven years, or whatever the case may be, do not always lend themselves to producing amended legislation. One reason for this is that, if the date for a review happens to coincide with the final year of an Assembly, there will not be enough time remaining to complete any

recommended legislative changes arising from a review.

Committee prefers to see the statutory requirement to review legislation be tied to the lifespan of a sitting assembly. In this way, the review period can be synched to coincide with the four year term of an assembly, allowing enough time for any required changes to the legislation to make their way through the legislative process.

Committee moved motion 21 to amend clause 39 of the bill to require the Minister to carry out the review within 18 months of the start of the 20<sup>th</sup> Legislative Assembly and within 18 months of every second assembly thereafter. This will result in ongoing reviews of the act at eight-year intervals.

Committee debated whether or not to also amend the proposal in clause 39 of the bill to require that the review be done by a committee of the Legislative Assembly rather than being done by the Minister, as is the case with the Official Languages Act. Regardless of who does the review, it will ultimately be up to the responsible Minister to sponsor amending legislation to implement the findings of the review. On this basis, committee was satisfied with leaving the responsibility for the review in the hands of the Minister, providing that the results of the review be tabled in the Legislative Assembly for the consideration of Members. Committee moved motion 22 to provide for this reporting requirement.

#### **Time Limits**

As noted at the start of this report, Bill 29 proposes to revise time limits in the act by restating them as business days rather than calendar days; shortening some turn-around times; and adding time limits for certain actions required under the act that did not previously have them. Committee is proposing changes to a number of the time limits set out in Bill 29.

#### **Time Limit for IPC to Complete Reviews**

##### **Input Received**

Presently, the ATIPP Act requires the IPC to complete her reviews on access and privacy matters within 180 calendar days, or approximately six months. Clauses 22 and 29 of Bill 29 propose to shorten this timeframe to 60 business days, which is approximately three months. It is perhaps not surprising that the IPC would not be in favour of this amendment. Noting her deep concern, she asserts that the:

"Imposition of such a severe constraint without my office having more resources would either cause my office to fail to meet that standard or, in order to do so, to divert scarce resources from other

important tasks, such as privacy complaints under the Health Information Act. Neither outcome is desirable."

She goes on to argue for the complete elimination of her time limit, pointing out that her office's review functions differ from those of other public bodies. Public bodies act on the basis of their own records and the contextual information they receive. In contrast, the IPC is entirely dependent upon public bodies to be timely in their responses to the IPC's requests for information when processing an applicant's request for a review.

### **Committee Response**

The committee considered this input along with the testimony from Department of Justice representatives who pointed out that, in their review of the ATIPP Act, they heard from the public that the entire process is too lengthy.

Committee recognizes that the public should be able to have access to a process that is as expedient as possible. At the same time, committee notes that the cut to the IPC's time limit proposed in Bill 29 is the most severe cut proposed to any of the timelines contained in the act, while her office has far fewer resources than most public bodies. Committee is of the view that a reduction of that size would have a negative impact on the IPC's ability to complete thorough reviews. Committee moved motions 11(a) and (b), which set the IPC's time limit for completing access and privacy reviews respectively at 90 calendar days, which is approximately four and a half months. Committee believes that this will expedite the process for the public while still allowing the IPC adequate time to complete her work.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to hand the reading of the report over to the Member for Kam Lake.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Masi. Member for Kam Lake.

**MR. TESTART:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thank you, colleagues. I will finish off the end of the report once I find the page. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

### **Time Limit for a Public Body Responding to an Access Request**

Clause 5 of Bill 29 proposes to amend the deadline for a public body to respond to an access request from 30 calendar days to 20 business days. Under subsection 11(1), the act allows a public body to extend this initial deadline "for a reasonable period." Clause 6 of the bill changes strikes out "for a reasonable period" and substitutes "for a period not exceeding 20 business days," placing a hard deadline on the extension a public body may grant itself. The combined effect of these amendments is that a public body will have a total of 40 business

days to respond to an access request. Committee supports both of these proposals.

Should a public body require further time, clause 7 of Bill 29 requires the head of a public body to seek a further extension from the IPC. Under proposed subsection 11.1(3), while this request is being made, the time limit for replying to the request is suspended. If this request is then denied by the IPC, the original time limit does not resume under the bill as drafted. Rather, under the proposed new subsection 11.2(6), the clock is re-set and the public body is required to reply no later than 20 business days after receiving the decision of the IPC.

Committee expressed concern with this latter provision because, even if the request for an extension is denied by the IPC, proposed subsection 11.2(6) in effect grants an extension of the same length (20 business days) as that which the public body was originally able to grant itself. This builds an incentive into the act for public bodies to seek extensions in every instance, with the knowledge that even a denial from the IPC will result in an additional 20 days to complete the request.

Committee considered a motion to address this concern, but the motion was later superseded by the decision to grant the IPC order-making power as set out under motions 12 and 16. Motion 12 gives the IPC the authority to "reduce, deny, or authorize an extension of a time limit under section 11 or 11.1." Motion 4 complements motion 12 by deleting subsections 11.2(2) to 11.2(7), which would have set out the IPC's authority to grant an extension of a public body's deadline. Instead, in accordance with motion 4, a request by a public body for an extension of its deadline will be treated as a "review" in accordance with Division D of the act, which deals with reviews and recommendations of the IPC. As such, a decision by the IPC related to a deadline extension will be final and binding upon the public body.

### **Time Limit for Notice to Third Parties**

Division C of the ATIPP Act is concerned with the rights of third parties with respect to the disclosure of information. Where a public body is considering giving access to a record that may contain information potentially constituting an unreasonable invasion of a third party's privacy or negatively impacting on their business or other interests, the public body is required to give notice to the third party. Paragraph 26(2)(c) gives the third party 60 calendar days to respond. Clause 19 of Bill 29 proposes to shorten that deadline to 30 business days. Committee has no objection to this proposal.

Upon receiving input from a potentially affected third party, the head of a public body must consider that input in determining whether or not to give the applicant access to the requested record. Section 27 of the act requires that the head must wait for a reply from the third party or until at least 61 days have passed since notice was given to the third party before making a decision on the request. The same section also provides that the head of a public body cannot wait any later than 90 calendar days to respond to the applicant.

Clause 20(b) of the bill proposes to shorten, from 61 calendar days to 31 business days, the period during which the public body must wait for the third party's reply. Clause 20(a) proposes to amend the deadline for the public body to reply to the applicant from 90 calendar days to 45 business days.

In effect, Bill 29 proposes a 15-day window between the last day upon which a third party has to respond to the public body and the last day upon which the public body must provide an answer to the applicant. Committee heard that this time period was still too long. As a result, committee moved motion 8 to change the deadline for the public body's reply to the applicant from 45 business days to 40 business days, thereby reducing the 15-day window to 10 days.

#### **Appeal Notice Time Limit**

Section 27 of the act also specifies time limits for a public body to give notice that a third party has a right of appeal where access to a record is being granted to an applicant, and that an applicant has a right of appeal where access to a record is being denied by a public body. When the bill was drafted, an oversight resulted in these deadlines of 30 calendar days each not being converted to business days. While a straight conversion of calendar to business days would have resulted in an amendment setting these deadlines at 20 business days, committee learned, in discussions with the Minister of Justice, that the department had intended to reduce these deadlines to 15 business days. In the interest of expediting the entire ATIPP process, committee was in agreement with this proposal. Motion 9 was moved at the committee stage to make this change.

#### **Miscellaneous or Technical Amendments**

Committee also proposed a number of miscellaneous or technical amendments to the bill, some of which were completed in cooperation with the Department of Justice to address oversights and other drafting-related matters. This includes motion 1 which corrects a typographical error, amending "public body" to the plural "public bodies." Other miscellaneous or technical amendments are as follows:

#### **Transfer of Access Request to Appropriate Public Body**

Subsection 12(1) of the act provides that a public body may transfer an access request to another public body, where the other public body has custody of the requested record. To ensure that access requests are administered by the appropriate public body having care and control of the requested record, committee considers that this transfer should be compulsory under the act, instead of being discretionary, as is currently the case. Committee moved motion 5, which amends Clause 8 of the bill by changing "may" to "shall."

#### **Disclosure Harmful to Conservation**

Subsection 19(b) of the act allows that the head of a public body may refuse to disclose information having "Aboriginal cultural significance." Committee moved motion 6, which amends the word "Aboriginal" to "Indigenous" to reflect the current standard terminology in use by the GNWT.

#### **Publication of ATIPP Coordinator Contact Information**

Clause 36 of Bill 29 requires public bodies to designate an ATIPP coordinator, and sets out the responsibilities associated with the position. Committee moved motion 18 to enhance this provision by adding a requirement for public bodies to ensure that the contact information for ATIPP coordinators is made publicly available.

#### **Reference to "Spouse" in the Act**

Section 48 of the ATIPP Act sets out a lengthy list of circumstances under which a public body has the discretion to disclose personal information. Clause 26 of the bill adds additional circumstances, including one, Section 48(q.4), that permits disclosure of a deceased person's personal information to a "surviving spouse, adult interdependent partner, or relative."

Committee looked further into the meaning of the term "adult interdependent partner" in the context of Bill 29. Committee's research revealed that the Province of Alberta enacted the Adult Interdependent Relationship Act in 2002 to legally define common-law and same-sex relationships outside of the definition of marriage, which is "an institution that has traditional religious, social, and cultural meaning for many Albertans." An "adult interdependent partner" is defined in the legislation within this context.

In discussion with the Department of Justice, committee asked whether or not the term "adult interdependent partner," that is not defined in Bill 29, is necessary or whether the term "spouse," as used in Clause 26 of the bill, is sufficient to include

spouses in the Northwest Territories who are in common-law and same-sex marriages. It was determined that the word "spouse," as defined in the Northwest Territories' Interpretation Act, does include individuals in common-law and same-sex marriages, rendering the term "adult interdependent partner" unnecessary in Bill 29. Motion 14 removes this term from the bill.

### Clause-by-Clause Review of the Bill

Given the complexity of this bill and the number of proposed amendments, the committee requested and received two extensions to the 120-day deadline for the review of bills provided for by rule 75(1)(c) of the Rules of the Legislative Assembly. These extensions provided time, following the public consultation process, for motions to be drafted and reviewed by the committee and by Cabinet. Committee thanks the Legislative Assembly for granting these extensions.

The clause-by-clause review of Bill 29 was held on May 22, 2019. At this review, the committee moved 25 motions set out in Appendix 1.

The Minister concurred with all of the motions moved by committee, allowing for extensive amendments to Bill 29 at the committee stage.

In conclusion, the committee wants to thank the Minister of Justice for his concurrence with the motions to amend the bill that were moved during the clause-by-clause review. Committee also again thanks the honourable Minister and his staff for their assistance and collaboration on the review of Bill 29. Committee also thanks the public for their participation in the review process and everyone involved in the review of this bill for their assistance and input.

Following the clause-by-clause review, a motion was carried to report Bill 29: An Act to Amend the Access to Information and Protection of Privacy Act, as amended and reprinted, as ready for consideration in Committee of the Whole.

This concludes the Standing Committee on Government Operations' Review of Bill 29.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the honourable Member for Hay River North, that Committee Report 16-18(3) be received by this Assembly and moved into Committee of the Whole for further consideration. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Masi. The motion is in order. To the motion.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Question.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Question has been called. All those in favour? All those opposed? The motion is carried.

---Carried

Masi. Reports of standing and special committees. Item 5, returns to oral questions. Item 6, recognition of visitors in the gallery. Item 7, acknowledgments. Colleagues, at this point in time, I am calling for a short break.

---SHORT RECESS

**MR. SPEAKER:** Welcome back, Members. As we left off, we were about to reach item 8, oral questions. We'll continue with oral questions. Member for Yellowknife North.

### Oral Questions

QUESTION 731-18(3):

FILM AND TELEVISION INDUSTRY SUPPORT

**MR. VANTHUYNE:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My questions are for the Minister of Industry, Tourism and Investment. As I mentioned in my Member's statement, I believe it's time to build on our successes in our growing film and television production industry. I would like to start asking the Minister, the NWT's three-year film strategy will soon be coming to an end, so I'd like to ask the Minister: can the Minister tell us what discussions have taken place in the department about renewing or updating the strategy? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Masi. Minister of Industry, Tourism and Investment.

**HON. WALLY SCHUMANN:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The Member is correct. We are about to begin a process to review and evaluate our current NWT film strategy, as the previous Assembly had one laid out for us. In order to move forward on that, we needed to look and build on the success that we have. As all Members know in this House, the amount of work that we've done around the film industry in the 18<sup>th</sup> Legislative Assembly, there has been a lot of great work done there working with these people. It's one of my favourite diversification files to work with these individuals. There's a lot of fun in this group of people, but we have to ask ourselves: where have we been? What are we doing? What do we need to do moving forward, and how can we get there?

These are the questions that we have to ask ourselves, and also I think a lot of Members in this House pushed on the ITI file, in particular. How do we measure, and what kind of indicators do we need to put in place to be able to confirm what our progress is? These are the types of things that we

have to ask ourselves to allow us to identify the next steps moving forward.

**MR. VANTHUYNE:** Thank you to the Minister for his reply. I appreciate that he is, in fact, very fond of this industry, and that diversifying the economy is certainly a big piece of our mandate as a government. Earlier, I spoke about a possible program similar to the Mining Incentive Program, but specifically designed for film production. I'm wondering: would the Minister be willing to entertain discussions on such as program, in particular, with industry types, even now and during the life of this 18<sup>th</sup> Assembly?

**HON. WALLY SCHUMANN:** I welcome the Member's enthusiasm, as well, for this industry. He was actually at the Dead North Festival with myself, and participated in the awards night. I'm always happy to have a discussion with all Members of this House about the importance of this industry, particularly the Member for Yellowknife North. As I said, he has a keen interest in this, as well.

As I said, this industry has grown significantly since the 18<sup>th</sup> Legislative Assembly, and we need to consider how much we invest in these projects and productions with NWT residents. With the review coming up, it's due in 2019-2020. We have to sit down and have a look at this. There have been some good successes, like I said, in the film rebate programs. A good example is where our department has invested in 11 projects across the Northwest Territories, Mr. Speaker, and we invested roughly \$375,000 and were able to leverage \$1.5 million out of these projects in NWT. Is this something that we have to build on, or is this something we want to change and do something differently? We need to have those discussions going forward.

**MR. VANTHUYNE:** I appreciate the Minister's comments, once again. It seems as though at minimum we are going to at least to agree to have a discussion with industry types and see where the future will lie. That said, if a program such as what I was proposing is to come about, then we recognize that any new program would obviously need new money. In many jurisdictions, Mr. Speaker, a visiting film or TV crew will have to buy a licence or permits in order to work in that particular jurisdiction. As well, there may be requirements for local hiring, et cetera. Does the NWT currently have any, call them, "location fees" that they charge to visiting production crews?

**HON. WALLY SCHUMANN:** Currently, no, we do not charge fees for out-of-town producers in the Northwest Territories. This is something that I am glad the Member has brought up so that we can be aware of it. As far as the film industry goes, we are in a competitive marketplace. We are in a higher-

cost jurisdiction. These are things that we have to be relatively paying attention to. I think it would be difficult charging and a financial challenge for these guys who are looking to invest in the Northwest Territories. We are just building on the momentum of attracting these people here in the Northwest Territories and help us build our capacity and awareness around the Northwest Territories as an attractive jurisdiction. Like I said, do we want to be able to risk these opportunities with a small fee that probably would not have a large impact on the revenue that we would collect to help support the industry? These are the discussions that we are going to have to have and have a serious look at these things going forward.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Masi. Oral questions. Member for Yellowknife North.

**MR. VANTHUYNE:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I want to go down this road a little bit further because there are a lot of jurisdictions around the country that are in fact charging these types of fees and/or issuing these types of permits, and they are for the simple case that (a) you at least know they are in your jurisdiction; (b) you know that they are following certain safety conditions. You never know where they might be filming. In other jurisdictions, like if you are going to go into a territorial park, maybe you need to take out a permit of some kind, and so I am wondering: would the Minister create these kinds of measures in support northern film industry? It would be nominal. It's not something that would be extensive, but I think the payback in terms of being able to support a program like the Producers Incentive Program is what these funds could go towards.

**HON. WALLY SCHUMANN:** As I said, I do not know if the risk is worth the reward at this point, without some more research and analysis of what implications it would have on the industry. I would certainly like to have a look at it, but I would love to sit down with the Member and have a little better understanding and conversation with him of how he thinks we could implement this thing. Maybe we could even pull some of the people from this industry together and have a chat about what these things are going to look like going forward, as we renew our strategy in the 2020-2021 session. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Masi. Oral questions. Member for Hay River North.

QUESTION 732-18(3):  
DREDGING THE HAY RIVER

**MR. SIMPSON:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I have some questions for the Minister of Infrastructure related to my earlier statement about dredging. In my earlier statement, I was talking directly to the

federal government because people tell me they listen to what we are saying here, but I am sure, like most people, they tuned out while we were reading that report, so I have some questions about what our government is doing.

It's been tough to get someone to take responsibility for dredging. In 2015, the then Minister of Transportation said:

"I wrote a letter to the Department of Fisheries and Oceans and asked the federal government to consider putting money into dredging the Port of Hay River, and I indicated it was vital to the territories for resupply of fuel and food to some communities. I did not get a response."

In a letter to me from the Minister of Transportation, he has stated that Transport Canada has indicated generally that it does not want to fund dredging activities. Given their investment in dredging in the last 25 years, it's clear that they do not. That is because they have ended, the Government of Canada has ended, their national dredging program. They ended it years ago. I would like to know what this government is doing. Like other governments, the Government of Manitoba has a dredging program, so clearly it's within the responsibility of the other territories or provinces, so what is this government doing? Can I get an update from the Minister on dredging the Port of Hay River? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Masi. Minister of Infrastructure.

**HON. WALLY SCHUMANN:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. To update the House or to remind the House, I guess, more than anything, last year, I wrote a letter, actually we applied, Infrastructure applied under the Ocean Protection Plan. If all Members remember that, that is one of the programs the federal government has listed in their mandate going forward. We applied under the 2018 application form for the fund for marine facility planning studies. In that study, in our application with the federal government under the OPP, we asked for planning studies to identify dredging requirements in the Port of Hay River and the Port of Tuktoyaktuk. Both of these facilities are federal facilities. However, this funding application at that time was not approved.

**MR. SIMPSON:** I have a pile of papers here. I have been doing research, and this file goes back a long time. The Minister said that there was an application for a study to find out where it needs to be dredged. Mr. Speaker, we know. The Minister has given us statements before where he said that there has been surveillance-aircraft reported imagery over the harbour. The coast guard has done sounding operations. There is a price tag for dredging. He tells me it's about \$10 million. There is

an estimated volume that needs to be dredged of about 100,000 cubic metres. So it seems like this work is here. When I flew over the West Channel the other day, I could see the sand bars in the water. I think that we need to move past studies and we need to move towards dredging. Has the Minister submitted or is submitting any application to the federal government for dredging, not just planning studies but for dredging? Can he elaborate on that?

**HON. WALLY SCHUMANN:** The Member is making his point here. We've talked to different Ministers. Different Assemblies have talked to the federal government about this dredging issue in Hay River and the Port of Tuktoyaktuk. It's an ongoing issue. The federal government got out of this racket in about 2012. That was when they cancelled their program, and they left the jurisdictions hanging. Members and Ministers from that point forward have pushed this issue for a long time. We have in this Assembly, I myself particularly since I have become the Minister of Transportation and the Minister of Infrastructure, have been pushing this issue with different Ministers, and, at the end of the day, they are not that interested. They do not even like the word "dredging" mentioned. What we are doing, our new approach now, is we are working closely with our partners, the Canadian Coast Guard, to explore possibilities of restoring the former federal remote marine resupply sites MoU with our government. We have got an ask in with them, and I am waiting to hear back from the Minister on that. Actually, with any luck here, we are going to be setting up a call, and that will be one of the things I will be discussing with the federal Minister here in the coming weeks.

**MR. SIMPSON:** That response is similar to one that was heard in this House on February 4, 2011, when actually the Member for Great Slave at that time asked our then Transportation Minister or now MP a similar question. He said there was going to be some discussions with Coast Guard; they are going to look into getting some dredging done. Hopefully, these discussions are a little more fruitful.

There is another working group that has been put together, and I believe the government is part of it, and it has been led by the harbour authority. It's been around since 2016. Can the Minister give us some updates about what's been going on with that group?

**HON. WALLY SCHUMANN:** The development of the working group is intended to facilitate joint work on issues of common interests concerning marine transportation and marine infrastructure in the Northwest Territories. The Department of Infrastructure will continue to emphasise the importance of dredging in the Port of Hay River and other federal port facilities in the Northwest

Territories and particularly Tuktoyaktuk, which is of some concern going forward, too, and to Canadian Coast Guard, but cannot guarantee these efforts will increase the likelihood of dredging.

Now, as I have said in this House and the Member has made quite clear, a number of people have approached the federal government on this issue. They clearly do not want to be involved in this thing, and they are trying to download it as much as they can to the jurisdictions. This is an important issue going forward, particularly this year. My concern already is the low water we see. Great Slave Lake is already down. Many of the Members here who live in Yellowknife can testify to that when they go down to how low the level is. The river system is low. So this is going to be an issue that is going to be of significant importance going forward, particularly with the MTS stationed in Hay River that has to use that port facility. We also have to use the part going into Tuktoyaktuk.

We are going to have to try to find a way with the federal government to help support this initiative because, without their support, it's going to end up on our lap and it's going to cost us a significant amount of money. As all Members in this House know, the financial resources of the 18<sup>th</sup> Legislative Assembly have been taxed right to the max, and the 19<sup>th</sup> Assembly is going to be in just as tough shape going forward, so we are going to have to find a way to partner with the federal government and all the people and players in this industry to try to make this happen. I will continue to do that.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Masi. Oral questions. Member for Hay River North.

**MR. SIMPSON:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I agree that the 18<sup>th</sup> Assembly is in rough financial shape. I think that the 19<sup>th</sup> is going to be in even worse shape and the 20<sup>th</sup> in even worse than that. The fact remains that, when something has to get done, it has to get done. We hear about dredging Hay River. We hear about it in Tuktoyaktuk. We hear about it for the ferries. There are some ferries that are in a few inches of water, and that is not sustainable. Will the Minister stop waiting for the federal government to come to the table after 25 years and just pony up and buy some dredging equipment that we can use all across the territory? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**HON. WALLY SCHUMANN:** Yes. We can postpone a lot of capital projects to do that. That is going to cost a lot of money. That is not something I am willing to do without an analysis of what this thing would even fathom what this would cost, never mind the permitting that would have to be obtained to do this type of thing. At this point, I am going to continue as the Minister of Infrastructure to work with my colleague in the federal government

on this issue. I will update the House when I have a call with him in the coming weeks. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Masi. Oral questions. Member for Nahendeh.

QUESTION 733-18(3):  
FOSTER CARE

**MR. THOMPSON:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Foster parents are a very important part of our child and family system in the Northwest Territories. I greatly appreciate the selfless work that they do to help our children as they grow and develop during difficult times. Mr. Speaker, I have some questions for the Minister of Health and Social Services. Can the Minister tell us how many foster parents we have in the Nahendeh region, including those families who make their homes available for emergencies? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Masi. Minister of Health and Social Services.

**HON. GLEN ABERNETHY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. There are 159 foster caregivers in the Northwest Territories today. Twenty-eight of those are in the Deh Cho. Thank you.

**MR. THOMPSON:** Can the Minister tell us: How does the department recruit foster parents throughout the year, or does the department or the NWT Health and Social Services Association have a blitz once a year?

**HON. GLEN ABERNETHY:** The Foster Family Coalition is a significant stakeholder, and they provide leadership in the recruitment of foster homes across the Northwest Territories through the year. The Foster Family Coalition and the department have developed a foster care recruitment video. You can go online and see it. It is "We Need You." This launched in March 2019, and as a result of this video, the Foster Family Coalition has indicated that they have already started seeing increase in the number of individuals coming forward, expressing an interest to be in foster families. That is good news. This video was launched through social media, and it is being played at theatres in Yellowknife, Hay River.

Just as a note, the Foster Family Coalition has also been displaying posters in various location in NWT communities and have distributed recruitment postcards to every home in the Northwest Territories. The coalition has often used different tables at community trade shows and are hosting information sessions regarding fostering and adopting. That was at the trade show here in Yellowknife just recently.

A significant part of the foster care recruitment involves the establishment of extended foster family homes. This is something your colleague Mr. Beaulieu has raised for years. In that situation social workers make a significant effort to recruit extended family members as foster caregivers to children when they come into care. There are two streams. For the family foster caregivers, often we are dealing directly with families that are identifying the need, and then on the other side, the Foster Family Coalition is doing their recruitment.

**MR. THOMPSON:** That is great to hear, and I am very happy to hear that the department is working with the coalition on this issue. I really appreciate that we are working with families to keep the families together. I have known the Minister was very committed to that, and I appreciate him and the department for doing that. How does the department ensure that the homes are safe and the parents get the necessary training to deal with these youth, especially when we are talking about families and that as the process moves on?

**HON. GLEN ABERNETHY:** To ensure the safety and security of children and youth who are placed in foster homes, all applicants and adults over the age of 19 must complete a home study, child protection records check, and a criminal records check in order to be approved as a foster home. Foster caregivers and foster children are seen by child protection workers according to the department's contract standards and policies. I will note that this is one of the areas that we did have difficulty and was identified in the audit. Through our quality improvement plan, we have already started to see improvements in this area. Also, these homes are also reviewed annually to ensure the safety and well-being of children and youth and to ensure foster homes continue to conform with the standards established within our regulations.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Masi. Oral questions. Member for Nahendeh.

**MR. THOMPSON:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I appreciate the answers that the Minister has provided us here today. Mr. Speaker, one of my concerns I hear is sometimes we don't have enough foster homes. We can't get children into emergency homes. What happens if we, as the department, do not have places for them to go? Where do we place these individuals? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**HON. GLEN ABERNETHY:** The department works to always find a place for a young person in need of our services. This could be through placements at foster homes as the Member has identified, group homes, specialized treatment which may be outside of the Northwest Territories. As I have already indicated, we try really hard to keep our children

with extended family if that is possible. In some situations, we will approach friends and make sure that we can keep them in community, in families.

If we can't find somebody through the many avenues that we have, we can do really short placements with the CFS workers themselves. They can actually stay with them. Whether that is in a hotel or some other means, we will do that, but they will stay with those children until we find a suitable location for them. If, for instance, we do have to look at using a rental accommodation like a hotel, we will verify. We will make sure that all the steps are taken to ensure that that is a safe location and that they have adequate supervision while being in those situations. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Masi. Oral questions. Member for Yellowknife Centre.

#### QUESTION 734-18(3): GOOD NEIGHBOUR AGREEMENTS

**MS. GREEN:** Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. My questions are for the Minister responsible for Health and Social Services, the lead for the Yellowknife shelter and sobering centre. I know the Minister is familiar with the social-licence approach of the Good Neighbour Agreement. I related some of the feedback I have received on creating a similar agreement for our centre's operations yesterday. Can the Minister tell us if there are plans to introduce such an agreement here and, if so, outline the status of that work? Mahsi.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Masi. Minister of Health and Social Services.

**HON. GLEN ABERNETHY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. A number of months ago, the mayor of Yellowknife actually approached me with information on these Good Neighbour Agreements. At that time, I did direct the department to do the research into the Good Neighbour Agreements and approach the neighbours to see if there was any interest in actually pursuing those agreements here in Yellowknife with the neighbours around the day shelter sobering centre. There appears to be some interest.

One of the neighbours has actually submitted a draft for consideration, recognizing that this is about getting an agreement from all the partners, all the proponents, including City of Yellowknife, RCMP, Health and Social Services, the day shelter staff, sobering centre staff and operators, as well as those who have businesses or their homes immediately adjacent. I have now directed the department to work with the neighbours to see if they are interested in actually doing a facilitated process where we can come together with a facilitator and find a way to come to a mutually

agreeable Good Neighbour Agreement. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MS. GREEN:** I appreciate the Minister's response that he is prepared to enter into a facilitated process. One of the features that is common to these types of agreements is a liaison mechanism such as a committee where all the stakeholders the Minister listed can gather and consult on how responsibilities are being met and where solutions are considered. As usual, of course, there are some resources, primarily administrative, to run the committee like this. Will the Minister commit to providing the necessary support to run a Good Neighbour committee?

**HON. GLEN ABERNETHY:** In the absence of a Good Neighbour Agreement, we have already made a commitment to working with our partners in bringing them together on a regular basis to receive their input and feedback on how things are going. I do appreciate the Member's description of an organization or committee that might be struck. I am prepared to have that discussion, but I would hate to presuppose what a facilitated Good Neighbour Agreement is going to look like. I think we need to leave it in the hands of the individuals, those who are going to be the signatories, to come up with a plan that meets their needs as opposed to us presupposing what that agreement will look like.

**MS. GREEN:** I'd be very surprised to know that the neighbours don't want to have a regular mechanism of input into the agreement should they reach one. Just as the day shelter and the sobering centre is a 24-hour operation, neighbours have suggested the need for an around-the-clock phone line that can be used to report problems and incidents. Is that something that the Minister would consider introducing through the operator of the day shelter and sobering centre?

**HON. GLEN ABERNETHY:** I wasn't suggesting it wouldn't be part of the agreement. I just suggested it's too early to presuppose what that agreement is going to look like, so I appreciate the Member suggesting that I said or suggested something else. With respect to a phone line, we're totally open to that. It actually does make some sense. We've tried to set up a situation to give those neighbours an opportunity to call somebody within the system already. If it needs to be clearer, if we need to set it up in a more structured way, we're happy to do that. I think it's important that we work with our neighbours. This is an incredibly important program, the service being delivered here in Yellowknife, and our neighbours are essential to its success. I will certainly pursue that.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Oral questions. Member for Yellowknife Centre.

**MS. GREEN:** Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. I appreciate that strong endorsement of neighbourliness from the Minister. My final point is about timing. There will be a request for proposals for a new operator coming out sometime in the near future. It seems to me that a Good Neighbour Agreement might be an essential part of that RFP. Can the Minister say whether this Good Neighbour Agreement is intended to be part of that RFP? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**HON. GLEN ABERNETHY:** I'm certainly not waiting for the RFP to be issued before we actually make progress on a Good Neighbour Agreement. I think we need to have a Good Neighbour Agreement now. I've given the department the direction to work with a facilitator to see if our neighbours are interested in working with a facilitator to come to an agreement on a Good Neighbour Agreement.

Having said that, yes, we will be issuing a new RFP. I have asked the department to reach out to the current proponent, other interested proponents, the public, and others on types of things we need to do to strengthen those services, to enhance those, and include new ideas which may be things like security and other things into the new RFP. I will certainly encourage them to find a way to make sure that the Good Neighbour Agreement is built into that, but I'm not going to wait for that to happen before we move on this Good Neighbour Agreement. If we end up with the same proponents, the Good Neighbour Agreement will stand. If we end up with different proponents, we may need to do a little bit of negotiation again to get a new Good Neighbour Agreement, but I do believe it needs to be part of this operation, this service, and this community. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Masi. Oral questions. Member for Mackenzie Delta.

QUESTION 735-18(3):  
MARINE TRAINING CENTRE

**MR. BLAKE:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In follow-up to my member's statement, I have a few questions for the Minister of Infrastructure. As I mentioned, there are a lot of positive things happening with the Marine Training Centre. I'd like to ask the Minister: since the opening of the Marine Training Centre, how many people have completed their training? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Masi. Minister of Infrastructure.

**HON. WALLY SCHUMANN:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As of May 7<sup>th</sup>, we've had 98 people attend the training centre.

**MR. BLAKE:** That's a pretty good turnout. Out of the people who completed the training, how many have been hired by either MTS or ferry operations or the Coast Guard?

**HON. WALLY SCHUMANN:** I don't know the exact number, but what I can tell happened this year: MTS has identified six people for our operations, one for each tug, and I think two for Kakisa operating out of the harbour. Canadian Coast Guard has made six job offers to people who have graduated out of their class, and I think four have accepted to date.

**MR. BLAKE:** Is there a guarantee for employment once completed at the Marine Training Centre?

**HON. WALLY SCHUMANN:** Some of these courses that are offered at the Marine Training Centre are actually lifesaving stuff for the fishermen and these sorts of things, different skills that need to be set. Some of the courses that are going to be offered this coming season, because they've already expanded their mandate at the training centre, it's going to include a bridge watch rating program, a small vessel operator proficiency, and fishing master programs. These things are targeted towards NWT residents, of course, Indigenous people, and women. Myself and the Member from the Sahtu actually had the opportunity to stop there probably about a month ago, and just surprised the class that was ongoing there, and there were a couple of young ladies from his particular region who sought the desire to actually be on the Imperial Esso boat in Norman Wells. That was interesting. We had a good conversation with them. There's no guarantee for a job when you come out of there because there are so many different types of related training. There is opportunity with the Government of Northwest Territories to continue to grow the non-positions that we will need, and the boat captains and the deckhands. This is a large industry. Last year, I think we had 170 or 180 people who were working on our boat systems, so there's a lot of opportunity for these people to move on.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Oral questions. Member for Mackenzie Delta.

**MR. BLAKE:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to ask the Minister: will the marine training also focus on engineers to maintain our vessels? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**HON. WALLY SCHUMANN:** Actually, earlier this year, our senior management hosted a meeting with Canadian Coast Guard and transportation officials and the Marine Training Society, as well, and we actually proposed that we have a serious look at some of the trades in the industry, and we're going to start having those discussions on moving

that forward. MTS, as I said, has a number of positions there as well, and we'll be looking at opportunities for residents in the Northwest Territories to get some type of apprenticeships there as we identify them. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Masi. Oral questions. Member for Nunakput.

QUESTION 736-18(3):  
MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES

**MR. NAKIMAYAK:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Throughout this Assembly, we have started to see the significant impacts of maintaining good mental health. The de-stigmatization of mental health and the promotion of best practices, and the emphasis on culturally based healing, is becoming more apparent as we enter the era of reconciliation. Mr. Speaker, can the Minister of Health and Social Services tell me if the progressive features of this hospital, the Stanton Territorial Hospital, can be made towards the hospitals in the Beaufort Delta so that it's within reach of constituents in Nunakput? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Masi. Minister of Health and Social Services.

**HON. GLEN ABERNETHY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Our commitment to cultural safety and culturally respectful healing is a system-wide endeavour, and the Health and Social Services system is making changes to service delivery to ensure that this commitment is reflected across the entire Northwest Territories. Yes, a number of activities have taken place in the new Stanton. We are hoping to learn from these initiatives to make sure that, where we can roll them out in different communities, we will. Some of them are infrastructure-related and may not be able to be done in hospitals that are already constructed, but, where we can actually implement some of the concepts and ideas, we certainly will do that.

Food services is certainly an example. We've been pretty creative about it during an ability to provide traditional foods in Stanton. That doesn't actually start until July 1<sup>st</sup>, but we brought in special freezers. We're doing training with our providers, and we found ways to make that happen, and we'll certainly learn from that and apply it where necessary.

Having said that, I do want to point out that the Inuvik Hospital is also continually improving its delivery of culturally relevant services and trying to incorporate local ideas and local concepts. They've tried really hard to bring in local art and make the place a little bit more welcoming to the local residents of the region, and they'll continue to do that. We're doing it at the territorial level. We'll take

what we learn from Stanton and apply it where appropriate, but Inuvik is not waiting. They're doing things themselves, as well.

**MR. NAKIMAYAK:** It's good to see that the Department of Health and Social Services is working with Indigenous governments and our federal government. Mr. Speaker, it takes funding from federal programs, and also, it takes implementation from the Government of the Northwest Territories, as that's where the majority of the capacity is when it comes to mental health and wellness. I appreciate the response from the Minister. My second question is: can the Minister tell me what health efforts have been provided to Stanton Territorial Hospital to address the underlying causes for mental health and suicide?

**HON. GLEN ABERNETHY:** Stanton is an acute care facility, so often, by the time an individual has shown up at Stanton, there is already a health issue under way, but we want to make sure that we're respectful. We want to make sure that we're supporting. To do that within Stanton itself, recognizing that it is an acute care facility, they have recently introduced the behavioural health work model, which is actually replacing the old standard security model in the psychiatric unit. A behaviour health worker is a non-professional staff member who has received focussed, job-specific training, and they are both intended to build relationships with our clients and intervene when aggression occurs, but the training also includes identifying early warning signs and escalation and de-escalation approaches and techniques and provide support to mental health clients. So they're not just seen as a uniform; they're there to actually support the individuals and provide some opportunities for discussion in addressing some of the issues.

This is, obviously, more aligned with the recovery-oriented model of care that is presented in the Mental Health Framework, so there are things in the hospital we're trying to do to better support our residents, as opposed to the old models that have been in place.

Now, as far as trying to address some of the underlying causes, that's not being done within Stanton. I think that's being done at a territorial level. It's a multi-department responsibility. We have a number of action plans we're moving forward with for youth and adults at a territorial level.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Masi. Oral questions. Member for Nunakput.

**MR. NAKIMAYAK:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I appreciate the response information from the Minister. Mr. Speaker, during his statement

yesterday, the Minister stated that Health and Social Services would focus on culturally appropriate food for patients at Stanton Territorial Hospital. Can the Minister give us a timeline of when this healthy initiative will be carried out in the Beaufort Region, as well as regional centres around the Northwest Territories? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**HON. GLEN ABERNETHY:** This is an incredibly important area. I don't think there's a Member from a small community throughout the Northwest Territories, an MLA, who has not raised traditional foods as an issue. The designer of Stanton, the Health and Social Services Authority, has recognized the value in that, and we have taken steps to make sure that we can provide traditional foods in Stanton, and from there we can learn and develop opportunities to look at other locations.

Having said that, they're not serving traditional food today. The targeted rollout date of the availability of traditional foods, as I said earlier, remains July 1<sup>st</sup> at the new Stanton. The staff within are currently focussing on training of staff, and staffing up processes with the contractor, who is Dexterra. Stanton Indigenous wellness staff and Dexterra plan to visit the Whitehorse Hospital in mid-June to meet with their traditional foods program staff and learn everything they can from them, so that we can bring it back here. The implementation at Stanton will provide a model, as I said, for other facilities across the Northwest Territories, whether that's long-term care, regional health centres, anywhere that we are providing food. So we hope to see this grow out across the Northwest Territories, with Stanton being the kick-off. Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Masi. Oral questions. Member for Kam Lake.

QUESTION 737-18(3):  
MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES FOR YOUTH

**MR. TESTART:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In my Member's statement, I talked about some of the work that our young parliamentarians did when they were here earlier this month on mental health. It was a very impassioned debate, and I think they offered a lot of things. Of course, our government has a Youth Mental Health Action Plan and there are some major changes to how mental health supports are offered in schools that were made in the last operational budget. I'm wondering if the Minister of Health and Social Services can speak to some of the concerns raised in the motion that was debated in Youth Parliament. The motion called for all high schools and communities having access to dedicated youth mental health specialists, and if the Minister could speak to whether or not that's been achieved and to whether or not the changes that were made have expanded and increased access

to mental health supports for young people in the Northwest Territories in their schools. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Masi, Minister of Health and Social Services.

**HON. GLEN ABERNETHY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The Member is correct, we rolled out a Youth Mental Health and Addictions Action Plan last fiscal year. It's a four-year plan, including rolling out travelling youth counsellors, who are the professionals the Member is highlighting throughout the Northwest Territories, 49 positions over four years. We're in year two. We staffed up in the Tlicho and the Deh Cho last fiscal year. This year, we are staffing up in the Beaufort-Delta and the Sahtu region. Next fiscal year, we will be staffing up in Yellowknife, and the fourth year, we will be staffing up in the South Slave. I can tell you that it's my understanding that there is only one vacancy in the positions that were identified last fiscal year, and we are making good progress in staffing up for this fiscal year. The school year starts in September; that's when we're hoping to have the positions all in place. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. TESTART:** That's great news, and I think that this is a really key initiative that young people are speaking out and speaking up on, and that's why we need to really pay attention to it. It sounds like we're making good progress.

They also brought forward the need for online mental health resources for youth to be made available, including online peer support and anonymous counselling options. In many ways, young people want to engage through mobile devices or by keeping their identity somewhat depersonalized. Does the department offer these services, or are these services offered in schools or some other mechanism that youth can access in the NWT?

**HON. GLEN ABERNETHY:** I had an opportunity to sit in the gallery and listen to the youth parliamentarians during their debate, and it was great to be there, it was great to hear everything they had to say. I have to say, one of the things that I found unfortunate is many of the things they were talking about, including the ability to have some supports online and using tools that are useful to them, they didn't seem to recognize that they existed, which means we have failed to do our job to help get that information out to them.

What I can tell you is we have a significant number of supports that are available online to do exactly the types of things they were talking about. I've asked the department to reach out to youth to see if there is any opportunity to figure out how we get that message to them because, although we have

these programs in place, many people don't seem to know.

I can give you an example of some of the types of things that we do have. The department does partner with the Kids Help Phone to promote services to NWT youth, so there is the 1-800 line, but on top of that there is live chat with Kids Help Phone counsellors. We have an informative website, including the Resources Around Me, which connects youth in need to local resources and more information that is available at a national level, things like the kidshelpphone.ca. There is a button on that link that connects to you Resources Around Me that articulates what is around you, what is in the Northwest Territories. There is also some text options. You can text to a crisis line, if that's the technology that you're comfortable with.

In addition to this work, the department is working towards the implementation of eMental Health options for NWT residents, including an app specifically for youth with depression or anxiety. I could keep going, Mr. Speaker. There is more, but I do take the Member's point, and I do take the point from the youth that they want it. If they don't know it exists, it doesn't matter that it does, and we need to do a better job of making sure that they're aware that it exists so that they can use it when they want it. So we'll be working to find a way to get that information into the youths' hands and technology.

**MR. TESTART:** The Minister has a reputation as a mind reader in some of these exchanges we have in question period, and that was my next question. I know that a lot of these supports are already there. We've seen them in business planning reviews; we've seen them in budget reviews, and it seems like a lot of the kids who came forward just didn't know about them. I know that all kids are connected, now, through online. My son has a Google account, and he is nine years old. So is there a way for the Minister to work with his colleagues in the Department of Education, Culture and Employment and the school boards to put some of these resources into those online learning materials that are already going on? So there could be an online resource when kids are going to the computer labs, when they're using their tablets, they can just access it right there, it's built in. Can the Minister work on that?

**HON. GLEN ABERNETHY:** I've already directed the department to reach out to youth and partners like Education, Culture and Employment to figure out how best to get that information, and this is consistent with what we heard from youth when we held Back to the Trail, which helped our Youth Mental Health and Addictions Action Plan, but another thing that I've learned from talking to young people is they don't want old people like me telling them how to use technology or how to get that

information. They want to tell us how they want to access that information. So I think, in addition to working with our partners at Education, Culture and Employment and school authorities, it's also going to be important to reach out to them and find out how they want us to get that information, and I've asked the department to do that work.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Masi. Oral questions. Member for Kam Lake.

**MR. TESTART:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thank you to the Minister. The final recommendation I might propose, and I am wondering if the Minister would take this up, is to form some sort of mental health advisory body specifically for youth mental health and specifically representative or made up of youth from across the territory. Can the Minister work to establish some sort of advisory body to inform the department's operations? Clearly, they have a lot of good stuff going on. It's just not getting to the target audience, so I think having a body like that, made up of young people, would greatly enhance the department's ability to get its resources to their intended clients.

**HON. GLEN ABERNETHY:** The Department of Health has an amazing division called Indigenous Health and Community Wellness that actually helps facilitate Back to the Trail, which is exactly the type of thing the Member is talking about. We brought youth from every community in the Northwest Territories to talk about this very important issue and make recommendations on how to improve youth mental health and addictions issues here in the Northwest Territories. I am not going to commit to forming an advisory committee. I am sure people are tired of hearing this: we have three months of life left in this Assembly.

It is certainly an idea I think is worthy of pursuing. Whether it's a full-time advisory or whether we reconvene Back to the Trail annually or every two years, there is a way to get this done. I think we need to hear the voice of the youth moving forward, and I will make sure the department is working on some mechanisms, whether it's an advisory committee or reconvening Back to the Trail, to get that information into our ears and our minds. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Masi. Oral questions. Member for Tu Nedhe-Willideh.

QUESTION 738-18(3):  
AFFIRMATIVE ACTION POLICY

**MR. BEAULIEU:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In my Member's statement, I spoke of the Affirmative Action Policy, indicating that I feel that Affirmative Action Policy is not working. I would like to ask the Minister of Finance questions on that. I will begin by

asking the Minister of Finance if the Minister can get the department to look at other forms of preferential hiring processes as an alternative to affirmative action?

**MR. SPEAKER:** Masi. Minister of Finance.

**HON. ROBERT MCLEOD:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. For many of us who started our careers in the public service in the government way back in the day, and that was quite a while ago, we have seen a lot of involvement amongst the Aboriginal people. The jobs that we would get, there were very few working in the system back in the day. I think the Affirmative Action is one way that it's working. We have, I think, 5,289 employees. Of that, there are about 1,500, I believe, who are P1 candidates, so that tells me, that is an indication, that we have come a long way. There is still some work to do, obviously, but there are opportunities now throughout the government system for those P1 candidates who want to try through their merit and their hard work to work their way through the system, and I think there are opportunities for them to do that.

**MR. BEAULIEU:** I would like to ask the Minister if the Minister will review the regional recruitment program to see if the regional recruitment program is being followed by the various departments, following the initial intent of the regional recruitment program.

**HON. ROBERT MCLEOD:** I can commit. We are always trying to have a look at our programs to see what's working and what needs to be improved. Under the program, we had up to four Aboriginal Indigenous employees who were targeted each year. With the new Indigenous management development program introduced in October of 2018, we already have seven Aboriginals enrolled in the program. The desired intake for that is actually 15, so there is a bit more uptake on that, and we are looking forward to seeing the results of this particular program.

**MR. BEAULIEU:** Previously, the GNWT had a program for emerging managers or emerging directors, a program that placed some Indigenous employees into higher positions. I would like to ask the Minister: how many Priority 1 candidates are enrolled or have been enrolled in the emerging managers or directors program?

**HON. ROBERT MCLEOD:** That detail of information, I would have to gather. We did compile some information here on some of the questions we were expecting, but, that level of detail, I did not get. I will endeavour to work with the department to get the details shared with the Member.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Masi. Oral questions. Member for Tu Nedhe-Willideh.

**MR. BEAULIEU:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Just shifting gears a little, but still along the human resources and priority candidates, I was wondering if the Minister could share preliminary results of the Priority 1, 2, and other students hired by the GNWT for the summer student program this year?

**HON. ROBERT MCLEOD:** The summer student program is one that we promote and we are quite proud of. Last year, I think we had some of the best numbers we have had in the past. The year before, I think we had some very good numbers. I can say that, as of today, we have a total of 247 students who have been hired and job offers pending for another 36, as well, we also know of 21 students who have been hired from our student listing by other organizations, such as NTPC, the LHO, and some with the federal government. So I think we are in a good position to hopefully equal or eclipse last year's number. As far as the P1 candidates, of the 247, I think there are 119 who are P1, 122 are P2, and I think there were about six of them with no priority. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Masi. Oral questions. Member for Frame Lake.

QUESTION 739-18(3):  
GIANT MINE REMEDIATION PROJECT

**MR. O'REILLY:** Merci, Monsieur le President. Earlier today, I spoke about the poor efforts by the federal government to complete the legally required long-term funding study for Giant Mine. As the lead for GNWT on this file, can the Minister of Environment and Natural Resources tell us what role our government has had with regard to the work on this long-term funding study? Mahsi, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Masi. Minister of Environment and Natural Resources.

**HON. ROBERT MCLEOD:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As per measure 6 of the report on the environmental assessment, the Giant Mine Remediation Project team is exploring long-term funding options for the project. The GNWT is a co-proponent on the Giant Mine Remediation Project, and has assisted the project team in exploring options for long-term funding.

**MR. O'REILLY:** I want to thank the Minister for that. Giant Mine Oversight Board has released a scathing review of the second draft of the study that has been prepared by an accounting firm. I tabled that letter last week in the House. Can the Minister tell the public whether the study meets the requirements of measure 6 from the Giant Mine

environmental assessment to provide a full review of long-term funding options, and does the work to date meet our government's interests?

**HON. ROBERT MCLEOD:** In regard to measure 6, a draft report was developed in 2017. The project team presented this draft to the Giant Mine working group, and members had outstanding concerns. As a result, a consultant was hired to further develop the report. The project team is working towards finalizing the report and anticipate that this will be complete in 2019 and shared publicly.

**MR. O'REILLY:** I want to thank the Minister for that. During the original environmental assessment of the Giant Mine Remediation Project, the review board concluded that "there remains a likelihood of significant impacts from the project from risks related to funding." Further, the board recommended that a trust model be investigated for long-term funding. What is the Minister doing to ensure that there is adequate consideration given to a trust fund and other models beyond annual appropriations to fund perpetual care to Giant Mine?

**HON. ROBERT MCLEOD:** The report as required under measure 6 investigates options for long-term funding. Discussions on this issue will continue with stakeholders. The northern abandoned mine reclamation program announced their budget in 2019, which will cover the full implementation costs for the project for the next 15 years.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Masi. Oral questions. Member for Frame Lake.

**MR. O'REILLY:** Merci, Monsieur le President. I want to thank the Minister for that. That is great for the remediation, the active remediation phase, but I am worried about the long-term funding. Care and maintenance is going to be required at that site forever. The purpose of this study is to try to make sure that that funding is in place. Annual appropriations, people in Ottawa deciding that they are going to fund something in Yellowknife or not, that is not a great place to be. One of the criticisms of the work to date is that it is far behind schedule, is almost two years overdue, and this has the potential to delay water licensing of the project. So what is the Minister and his staff doing to ensure that this study is completed in a timely fashion and that there is an opportunity for the public to review and comment on it?

**HON. ROBERT MCLEOD:** As I mentioned, the project team is working towards finalizing the report and anticipate this will be done in 2019 and shared publicly. We do not foresee this work resulting in any delays in the water licensing process. Again, we have a significant interest in this particular project, so I will work with Members of this

Assembly to ensure that the interests of the Northwest Territories and the City of Yellowknife are taken into consideration. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Masi. Oral questions. Member for Yellowknife Centre.

QUESTION 740-18(3):  
NAMING OF GOVERNMENT BUILDINGS

**MS. GREEN:** Mr. Speaker, my questions are for the Premier as the Minister responsible for implementing the Cabinet policy on naming new government buildings. On November 1<sup>st</sup> last year, I asked the Premier to start the process of finding a name for the government's new office building in Yellowknife. Four months later, a call went out for suggestions to name buildings in Yellowknife, Fort Simpson, and Inuvik, with nominations closing March 15<sup>th</sup>. Where do we stand now on getting names selected, and what is the target date for the announcement? Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Masi. The Honourable Premier.

**HON. BOB MCLEOD:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Northwest Territories residents were invited to submit their ideas for naming the Government of the Northwest Territories-owned buildings through an ad campaign that started the week of February 18<sup>th</sup>. Nominations were open until the 15<sup>th</sup> of March. I am pleased to advise the Member and this House that the Government of the Northwest Territories has received a total of 89 naming ideas from the public for the naming of three government office buildings located in Fort Simpson, Inuvik, and Yellowknife.

**MS. GREEN:** Thank you to the Premier for that answer. So, leading on from the 89 suggestions, could the Minister tell us what process is in place to make a selection of those names and who is part of that selection process?

**HON. BOB MCLEOD:** Twenty-two submissions were for the Inuvik government building, three submissions were received for the Fort Simpson government building, and 64 submissions were received for the Yellowknife government building. The campaign to name these buildings was launched with a website, in the newspaper, and on social media platforms. Letters were also sent to the Standing Committee on Priorities and Planning as well as Indigenous governments and municipal heritage committees. The guidelines for selecting names for Government of the Northwest Territories-owned office buildings sets out how the nominations will be evaluated. Nominations received in honour of deceased persons who have made significant contributions to public life and the

well-being of residents are also eligible for consideration.

**MS. GREEN:** Using the answer that the Premier just gave, then there were 109 ideas for names, in any case, a lot of names. Who is going to evaluate the selection? Who is going to evaluate the possibilities using the criteria established?

**HON. BOB MCLEOD:** Each nomination will be considered based on how the proposed building name reflects historical, cultural, and geographic significance. The submissions have been referred to the Northwest Territories Honours Advisory Council to provide a recommendation to the Executive Council on a name for each of the three government office buildings. Executive Council will consider the recommendations once they are received.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Masi. Oral questions. Member for Yellowknife Centre.

**MS. GREEN:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thank you to the Premier for that answer. At what point should we expect to hear a recommendation or in fact a decision from the Executive Council?

**HON. BOB MCLEOD:** My expectation is that we should expect something within the next few months, hopefully before the August session. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Masi. Oral questions. Member for Nahendeh.

QUESTION 741-18(3):  
EQUITY LEASES

**MR. THOMPSON:** Mr. Speaker, yesterday, I asked the Minister of Lands some questions about equity leases, and I would like to follow up more today.

---Laughter

Well, I am just trying to make the Minister of Infrastructure happy here today. Mr. Speaker, my question again is to the Minister of Lands. My first question is: if all equity lease payments are made by lessee under equity leases and the lease is assigned, does the lessee who makes the payments get reimbursed? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Masi. Minister of Lands.

**HON. LOUIS SEBERT:** Thank you. I would like to thank the Member for his question. I would also like to clarify and correct the responses I made yesterday to the questions from the Member for Nahendeh. In my response, I referred to a lease and stated I looked at a lease where there was a partial refunded equity. What I should have said

was that I looked at an amendment to lease which contained a clause allowing for a refund of equity in certain circumstances and subject to certain conditions. I have had a chance to look at several documents today dealing with the issue of refund of equity or partial refund of equity, and they deal with the situations where a lease surrendered or cancelled, in one case, or surrendered or terminated.

In situations where there is an assignment of an equity lease, the new lessee takes over the lease, including the amount that's been paid as equity into the lease, and, unless the lease says something to the contrary, there would be no reimbursement to the prior lessee who had made the payments prior to the assignment.

**MR. THOMPSON:** Can the Minister advise us in what circumstances can a partial refund of equity lease payments be made under the equity lease process?

**HON. LOUIS SEBERT:** As I mentioned, I do not know if these occur in all equity leases, but I certainly have seen a partial refund of equity in one document and a refund of equity in another. However, that dealt with situations of surrender or termination and dealt with circumstances in which a refund or a partial refund could be made. However, I am informed by my department that they have not come across a situation in Lands/MACA where a full or partial refund has been paid out. The clause may exist. It is subject to many conditions, and, apparently, as I say, they are not aware of any refunds having been paid out in situations where there was termination, surrender, cancellation or assignment. Certainly, there does not appear to be, even though this clause exist, much use of it, and certainly, there would not be and should not be in situations where there is an assignment of the lease.

**MR. THOMPSON:** Yesterday, the Minister talked about new leases or new existing leases or there's no new equity leases. The situation is that, if I bought a car and I sold it to the Minister, he doesn't have to go back and pay the dealership. It doesn't happen that way. I get the money, and then we move on and I get the rights to the vehicle. Again, I'm not talking about new leases. I'm speaking about honouring the equity lease which existed with the original owner. Will the department honour the existing leases to the new owner as they purchased that? That was what they're trying to do. They're trying to enhance their business or home, and that's what they're trying to do.

**HON. LOUIS SEBERT:** Of course, if the lease is assigned, it is a contract that is assigned, and the government will honour the terms of that lease. We are, however, not issuing new equity leases.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Oral questions. Member for Nahendeh.

**MR. THOMPSON:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and I thank the Minister for allowing us this exchange here today, and I appreciate the information he's providing here. Again, I'm not talking about a new equity lease. I'm talking about an existing equity lease that the person purchased, because right now, as soon as they purchase a lot and it turns over to a lease, there's a whole bunch more rules to it, which puts up blocks for businesses and opportunity for people to build homes, because then there's a clause there that they have to actually pay money to look after it, to remediate it back to its original state. Will the department look at the three decisions that I'm aware of and return them to equity leases until the file is fixed, until equity leases are dealt with? In other words, give the person the opportunity to have an equity lease with these lots?

**HON. LOUIS SEBERT:** As I have said, we're not issuing new equity leases, and haven't been doing so for some time. I appreciate, when a new lease is issued, it is not an equity lease, and the parties would be simply bound by the terms of a new lease if a new lease is entered into. As I have said, we are not issuing new equity leases. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Oral questions. Item 9, written questions. Item 10, returns to written questions. Item 11, replies to Commissioner's opening address. Item 12, petitions. Item 13, reports of committees on the review of bills. Item 14, tabling of documents. Minister of Industry, Tourism and Investment.

### Tabling of Documents

TABLED DOCUMENT 432-18(3):  
2018 SOCIO-ECONOMIC AGREEMENT REPORT

**HON. WALLY SCHUMANN:** Mr. Speaker, I wish to table the documents entitled "2018 Socio-Economic Agreement Report." Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Tabling of documents. Minister of Health and Social Services.

TABLED DOCUMENT 433-18(3):  
2019-20 HEALTH AND SOCIAL SERVICES  
AUTHORITY BUDGETS

TABLED DOCUMENT 434-18(3):  
IMPACTS OF THE NWT ON THE LAND  
COLLABORATIVE & LAND-BASED  
PROGRAMMING

**HON. GLEN ABERNETHY:** Mr. Speaker, I wish to table the following two documents entitled "2019-20

Health and Social Services Authority Budgets"; and "Impacts of the NWT on the Land Collaborative & Land-Based Programming." Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Masi. Tabling of documents. Minister of Education, Culture and Employment.

TABLED DOCUMENT 435-18(3):  
FOLLOW-UP LETTER FOR ORAL QUESTION  
605-18(3): JUNIOR KINDERGARTEN PROGRAM

TABLED DOCUMENT 436-18(3):  
FOLLOW-UP LETTER FOR ORAL QUESTION  
620-18(3): INDIGENOUS LANGUAGES IN  
JUNIOR KINDERGARTEN

TABLED DOCUMENT 437-18(3):  
FOLLOW-UP LETTER FOR ORAL QUESTION  
696-18(3): ONLINE SAFETY FOR CHILDREN

**HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE:** Mr. Speaker, wish to table the following three documents entitled "Follow-up Letter for Oral Question 605-18(3): Junior Kindergarten Program"; "Follow-up Letter for Oral Question 620-18(3): Indigenous Languages in Junior Kindergarten"; and "Follow-up Letter for Oral Question 696-18(3): Online Safety for Children." Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Masi. Tabling of documents. Item 15, notices of motion. Member for Yellowknife Centre.

### Notice of Motion

MOTION 38-18(3):  
EXTENDED ADJOURNMENT OF THE HOUSE TO  
JUNE 4, 2019

**MS. GREEN:** Mr. Speaker, I give notice that on Thursday, May 30th, 2019, I will move the following motion: I move, seconded by the honourable Member for Great Slave, that, notwithstanding rule 4, when this House adjourns on Thursday, May 30, 2019, it shall be adjourned until Tuesday, June 4, 2019; and further, that at any time prior to June 4, 2019, 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. Mahsi, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Masi. Notices of motion. Item 17, notices of motion for first reading of bills. Minister of Finance.

### Notice of Motion for First Reading of Bills

BILL 54: SPECIAL INTEREST RATE STATUTE  
AMENDMENT ACT

**HON. ROBERT MCLEOD:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I give notice that, on Thursday, May 30, 2019, I will move that Bill 54, Special Interest Rate Statute Amendment Act, be read for the first time. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Notices of motion for first reading of bills. Member for Mackenzie Delta.

BILL 55:  
AN ACT TO AMEND THE LEGISLATIVE  
ASSEMBLY AND EXECUTIVE COUNCIL ACT,  
NO. 1

**MR. BLAKE:** Mr. Speaker, I give notice that, on Thursday, May 30, 2019, I will move that Bill 55, An Act to Amend the Legislative Assembly and Executive Council Act, No. 1, be read for the first time. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Masi. Notices of motion for first reading of bills. Member for Yellowknife North.

BILL 56:  
AN ACT TO AMEND THE LEGISLATIVE  
ASSEMBLY AND EXECUTIVE COUNCIL ACT,  
NO. 2

**MR. VANTHUYNE:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I give notice that, on Thursday, May 30, 2019, I will move that Bill 56, An Act to Amend the Legislative Assembly and Executive Council Act, No. 2, be read for the first time. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Masi. Notices of motion for first reading of bills. Item 17, motions. Item 18, first reading of bills. Item 19, second reading of bills. Item 20, consideration in Committee of the Whole of bills and other matters: Bill 29, An Act to Amend the Access to Information and Protection of Privacy Act; Bill 30, An Act to Amend the Human Rights Act; Committee Report 15-18(3), Standing Committee on Government Operations Report on the Review of Bill 30, An Act to Amend the Human Rights Act; Minister's Statement 151-18(3), New Federal Infrastructure Agreement; Minister's Statement 158-18(3), Developments in Early Childhood Programs and Services, with the Member for Hay River North in the chair.

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

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson):** I will now call Committee of the Whole to order. What is the wish of committee? Mr. Testart.

**MR. TESTART:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. The committee would like to consider Minister's Statement 158-18(3), Developments in Early Childhood Programs and Services. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson):** Thank you, Mr. Testart. Does committee agree?

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson):** I understand that the Minister has some opening comments that she would... No? There are no opening comments. The Minister's statement itself, I guess, is like opening comments. I understand the Minister has witnesses she would wish to bring into the Chamber. Sergeant-at-Arms, please escort the witnesses into the Chamber, and Minister, you may take a seat at the witness table.

Thank you, Committee. For those who are a little confused, generally, when a Minister's statement is discussed in Committee of the Whole, Members are just allowed to speak on it for 10 minutes as an item under discussion, but the Minister has been gracious enough to invite witnesses in and sit at the witness table and answer questions, is my understanding. Is that correct, Minister Cochrane?

**HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE:** Absolutely correct, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson):** Thank you, Minister. Consensus government at work. Minister, would you please introduce your witnesses to the Chamber.

**HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. On my right, I have Mr. John MacDonald. He is the assistant deputy minister for education and culture. On my left, I have Shelley Kapraelian, who is the director of early childhood development. I brought them as witnesses in case there is any more in-depth information that they can provide. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson):** Thank you, Minister. As per the rules of the Assembly, each Member will be allotted 10 minutes to speak to the item under consideration. The Member can ask the Minister questions and, if the Minister wishes, the Minister may respond. I will go to committee if there are any comments. We will begin with Ms. Green.

**MS. GREEN:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. My thanks to the Minister and her staff for appearing today to answer some questions about her ministerial statement on early childhood programs and services. There are a couple of different issues that I want to address in here. I am going to start with licensed childcare. When we started in this Assembly, there were 10 communities that didn't have any licensed childcare programs. It is my understanding that, today, we have 11 communities without childcare programs. Can the Minister confirm that 11 communities is the right number? Thank you.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson):** Thank you, Minister.

**HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. Currently, yes, there are 11 communities that don't have licensed childcare provision. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson):** Thank you, Ms. Green.

**MS. GREEN:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. The Minister reported on October 31<sup>st</sup> that the department was working diligently in the 11 communities to find providers for childcare. Six months on, it doesn't sound like there has been any progress. Can the Minister describe what the barriers are to bringing more childcare into the small communities? Thank you.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson):** Thank you, Minister.

**HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. There are a number of issues that affect bringing licensed childcare into communities. We don't keep records of unlicensed childcare, so I have to state that. There are a lot of communities that use their aunties, grandmothers, et cetera. Those ones, we don't record. There are two that I can think of right now, Fort Liard and Tsiigehtchic, came on. Sometimes, you get a licensed childcare centre, and then they don't get the staff properly. There were some internal issues with the community, family issues with communities. Sometimes, they fall apart. The reality is, in smaller communities, the challenge is often the number of children. We have some communities that only have six children, total, in schools. Children who are of the daycare age might only be a couple. That deters from the community wanting to do a licensed childcare.

The other issue is, in small communities, you have to look at the economic development, the number of jobs. Often, it is one person at the municipal and one person at the Indigenous governments. There might be 10 people in the community, I am just

giving a number, who might be employed. That also impacts the number of children who would need that service and the amount of interest in the communities. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson):** Thank you. Ms. Green.

**MS. GREEN:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. Yes, I appreciate the Minister's point on that. On October 31<sup>st</sup>, she stated that the department was then working with Norman Wells and Enterprise. Could she tell us what happened with those negotiations or with those meetings? Thank you.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson):** Thank you. Ms. Kapraelian.

**MS. KAPRAELIAN:** With the case of Norman Wells, we are in the process of licensing a family day home in that community, and there is interest again from a parent group. There is a facility that has been identified through the town that is available. We are working with that group to see if we can license a childcare centre in that community, as well. That is one of the 11. Then, in terms of Enterprise, they have an after-school program. They do not have childcare for zero to three, but they do have a licensed after-school program.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson):** Thank you. Ms. Green.

**MS. GREEN:** Thank you very much for that information. The Minister just mentioned Fort Liard and Tsiigehtchic, so what progress is being made there to provide licensed childcare? Thank you.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson):** Thank you. Minister.

**HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. Fort Liard is now operational, with a licensed daycare provider. Tsiigehtchic was open for a total of one month and, at this moment, is having some internal issues, I would say. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson):** Thank you. Ms. Green.

**MS. GREEN:** Yes. Thank you very much. That is very disappointing, obviously. The previous Minister of this department decided to allocate the bulk of the bilateral funding from the federal government to training staff and giving grants to staff to supplement their wages. Can the Minister tell us what uptake there has been on the increased number of scholarships and grants available to people training as early childhood development staff? Thank you.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson):** Thank you. Minister.

**HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. To clarify, the bulk of the money from the bilateral wasn't all put into training. It was given out through a variety of early childhood intervention programming. Of the money, I think that it was wise of the previous Minister. It is not only about getting licensed childcare; it is actually having the credentials. The Minister before me realized that was an issue, and so instituted the change to the one-year early childhood development program from one year to actually a two-year program and moved from 10 scholarships to 30 scholarships. At this point, my belief is that there is 19 scholarships that have been accessed through this program. Thank you.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson):** Thank you. Ms. Green.

**MS. GREEN:** Thank you. Just to clarify, my understanding was there were 30 scholarships per year. Is the Minister saying that there are 19 per year, or 19 over what period of time? Thank you.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson):** Thank you. Minister.

**HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. I do need to clarify my last answer. The last time I had seen a briefing note, it was 19, but we are actually up to 26 now. The total number of scholarships is 30 scholarships available a year, and we are at 26 as of today. They are given out in the fall. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson):** Thank you. Ms. Green.

**MS. GREEN:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. It is good news that people do want to take up this training. I wonder, without opening additional daycares, what all these additional trained early childhood development staff workers will be doing. What is the outlook for employment in this field? Thank you.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson):** Thank you. Minister.

**HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. There is a high demand, actually, for people who are licensed, who have the qualifications for early childhood development. I know that from personal experience. My previous job before I came into the Assembly, I operated a non-profit organization that had a daycare facility. Of that daycare, only one person had the qualifications, which leaves daycares in jeopardy around supervision of children, around capacity of getting people, and parents' concerns.

Is it okay that we have children in licensed daycare providers' homes that we are paying good money for, that the government is supplementing with taxpayers' money, and that they don't have the training that is necessary to provide appropriate early childhood intervention? I think this is well-spent money. I know that, in Yellowknife alone, our demand is huge. I am hoping that, in every community, people not just see daycares as babysitters, because they are more than babysitters. They are our hope for the future. It is early childhood development versus babysitting. Therefore, we need to advocate that people get trained in this and that we have qualified people. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson):** Thank you. Ms. Green.

**MS. GREEN:** Thank you. I appreciate the Minister's passion for the training, and I agree that it is very important. What I just can't get my head around, though, is where these 26 new licensed staff are going to go. It is my understanding that, while there is lots of demand for childcare, there is not very much supply, so where does the Minister see these people going? Thank you.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson):** Thank you. Minister, one minute on the clock.

**HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. My hope is that a lot of these people actually return to their communities and offer licensed daycare provision, recognizing that not all daycare providers are licensed centres. We are also looking for the smaller communities to get licensed day homes. Then, of course, like I had said, there is always, in Yellowknife, a huge demand. The turnover is huge. Again, my previous experience is that a lot of people who do get the early childhood development go on. They look at other occupations. They move into schools. They apply for government jobs. They sometimes go into social work, my own background. The turnover is high, and we need to make sure that we have qualified people. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson):** Thank you. Thirty seconds, Ms. Green.

**MS. GREEN:** Yes. The mandate commits the department to create childcare that is available and affordable by showing us a plan about how that is going to be achieved. Could the Minister update us on the status of that plan? Thank you.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson):** Thank you. Minister.

**HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. Our department is just finalizing our draft. In fairness, I have not seen it myself. We are

expecting that that plan will be tabled and presented to committee or offered to committee in August, at the next sitting. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson):** Thank you. Time has expired. Next on the list is Mr. Vanthuyne.

**MR. VANTHUYNE:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and I want to thank the Minister for what has been outlined in the Minister's statement. I appreciate the ongoing work that the Minister and the department are doing in early childhood.

However, the statement indicates a lot of good things as it relates to programming, it relates a lot of good things from age four on, but a lot of this may be for naught if we cannot invest in zero-to-three in the right way, as well. The Minister is aware that, of course, absolutely the basic needs of families and communities is to be able to take care of their children, and the Minister is aware of a circumstance in my riding that happened late last year, where a daycare closed suddenly and there were 30 families, I believe about 42 kids, who were kind of scrambling to find an alternative for daycare, but they clearly had no options. A lot of the daycare facilities within the city, brand new ones, in fact, have waiting lists of over 100 kids.

The department has stated in the past that it does not want to interfere in the private-market-driven industry of daycare, but I am here to tell you that the private market is not providing daycare spaces. Our communities are simply too small to generate a business case for the private market to invest in, and there is no return on investment; the building and fire codes are a big challenge, and so there is nobody who is going to put an investment into the market of getting into the daycare business.

Clearly, in my view, there just will not be the required daycare spaces that we need without a government commitment to new capital for infrastructure funding. I am not talking about programming anymore. I am not talking about services anymore. I am talking about the department starting to identify a need for investment in capital infrastructure. I am of the belief that, once these structures are in place, that these assets are in place, that these daycares in place, that NGOs and parent organizations can start to organize to be able to operate them, but they are not going to put the investment into the bricks and mortar.

We know that, for sure, there is a dire need for infrastructure. We know that there are big waiting lists. We know that there are 11 communities without daycares. We know that this is also driving families or parents to have to take kids to unlicensed daycares, and, of course, we do not want to see that. We are a government that puts

hundreds of millions of dollars into our healthcare infrastructure. We have done a lot of that in recent years. We are putting a lot of money into junior kindergarten as well as schools and Aurora College for our education infrastructure. However, we have seemingly no vision, much less commitment to capital investment, in daycare infrastructure.

The Minister is well aware of a recent request. We are grateful for the support on that request. That shows that little pockets of money can go to improving an existing asset to help get that asset up to code so that we can turn it or convert it into a daycare. That can happen in many of the communities. The Housing Corporation in fact owns a lot of assets in communities that are borderline boarded up, not because they are necessarily derelict, but because maybe they do not have enough people to fulfill programming, so maybe that could be a building that could be considered to be converted over into daycare.

Essentially what I would like to do is just simply ask the Minister what her views are around this and does she recognize that this actually is a dire situation that we have as it relates to supporting daycares? Will the Minister start to have discussions with her department, with stakeholders, with parents and others about what the department and what the Government of the Northwest Territories might be able to do to start investing in daycare infrastructure, similar to schools, similar to healthcare facilities? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson):** Thank you, Minister.

**HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. I will start by saying, definitely, there is a need for infrastructure for daycares. It is not in our program mandates at this time. I think it is something that we need to look at in the next Assembly. It's the end of this one. It's a couple of months left. However, I think it's bigger than that. I mean, thinking in the box says: give me a building, and I can make a daycare. However, I want to challenge it a little bit.

When I first took over the position of Minister of Education in April last year, my issue was not just about daycares. I talked about residential schools, and I talked about the drop-outs in schools and the absentees, the issues of parents even getting their children to school, which is a huge issue in our communities, some of the smaller ones. Again, I have been accused of being a visionary, and I often say, "What's the good of a politician without a vision?"

My vision actually, and that was from April last year, was that any new build in smaller communities of schools, we should be looking at those schools as

hubs, not just the literacy and numeracy, which we need, but also having a place like we did with housing, that the health department can stop in, so nurses can do immunizations, so that we can have a daycare, maybe Aboriginal Head Start, within the school, so changing the dynamic, making the schools the hubs of communities so that people who have been traumatized by the residential schools, by our own systems of schools, will break down those barriers and they will actually start looking at schools in a positive light.

What I am saying is that that's not going to happen overnight. We have 20-year plans in capital, but what I am saying is that we need to challenge our own beliefs on what daycares look like and think outside the box. We need to look at infrastructure where we can for buildings, standalone, but we also need to look, in my opinion, as schools as hubs of communities to deal with the issues, multitude of issues, that we have with helping children to succeed. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson):** Thank you, Mr. Vanthuyne.

**MR. VANTHUYNE:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. Geez, you know, I really appreciate where the Minister went with this a little bit. There could be some means to build some infrastructure in communities or at least support communities to put some infrastructure in place like I described earlier, like maybe an existing housing unit, NWT Housing Corporation unit, could be converted, that sort of thing, those are things that could be done, say, in the next couple, handful, of years, especially in those eleven communities that have no daycares, and it would be, in the big picture, it would be nominal kind of expenditure that could go a long way.

However, why don't we have schools that have all-inclusive from zero-to-12, like from age zero-to-three, which has built-in daycare? We are building a number of schools. We just finished the Ecole Allain St-Cyr. We are going to build a brand new J.H. Sissons. I mean why can't a parent who has a kid who's going to be from junior kindergarten on, who also might have a zero-to-three-year-old, not be able to drop the two kids off at the same facility rather than having to go to a daycare, licensed or unlicensed, somewhere across town and then having to go over here to drop their child off for school or make arrangements for the child to get onto a bus? I mean why can't schools be a multi-age, all-inclusive, daycare-to-grade-12 type vision? I don't see. Again, there might have to be certain regulations and certain zones where certain kids can go at certain times and others can't sort of thing, for safety reasons or what have you.

Is this something that you are looking towards? Is this the type of visioning that you are talking about, is that the future of schooling could be all-in, multiuse facilities for all age groups? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson):** Thank you, Minister.

**HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. So, yes, my vision is all-inclusive and not just zero-to-12, but the community. I have had Aboriginal governments that have approached me and said, "Can we partner in communities so that the school is not only for children but it's our community events in the evenings and the weekends happening there, as well?" So I think more people are getting onboard to make the idea of school communities as hubs.

However, again, not one size fits all, and we have to be careful with that. We have to try it slowly as a pilot because, some communities, we might open it and say, "Great idea," and then we have one child who is one year old, and then how do you pay that worker? So these are issues that we have to look at very carefully, but I do think that we have to think outside the box and we have to address not only the daycare, but the whole idea on how people are seeing our education system.

Education is a lifelong process. It is not just JK-to-12, and, as long as we keep saying "JK-to-12," we are not even acknowledging that it's lifelong, so I think we need to change the way we talk, the way we think, and then we have to try new ideas, recognizing the flexibility in each community. Yes, that is an expansion of that answer. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson):** Thank you, Minister. Five seconds on the clock. Nothing further from Mr. Vanthuyne. Next, we have Mr. O'Reilly.

**MR. O'REILLY:** Thanks, Mr. Chair. One of the points that I think is a bit troubling for me, more than a bit troubling, in the Minister's statement was the early development instrument results of, over a three-year period, vulnerability rates actually increased from 38 percent to 42 percent. That is more than a 10-percent increase, which is probably statistically valid. What is going on? Thanks Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson):** Thank you, Minister.

**HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. I remember, actually, when the first EDI was done a few years back. It was only six years ago, so I think some of that is baseline data, when you first start. I mean it's only been a couple of times that we have done this. I am hoping that it will get

better. In all honestly, "what is going on" is the question we all need to be asking, so that is why we are working really closely with Health and Social Services on this issue. We are all concerned. It is not okay.

If our children went from 38 percent to 42 percent who have developmental deficiencies before they are ready for school, we need to address that. It's really difficult when a child comes into the school at JK or kindergarten and they are so far behind, so we need to bump up the services that we provide to preschool children all around. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson):** Thank you, Mr. O'Reilly.

**MR. O'REILLY:** Thanks, Mr. Chair. I think I heard from the Minister that we don't know what's causing this. What are the solutions, then? Thanks, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson):** Thank you, Minister.

**HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. Again, like I said, some of that is just the testing. It might get better as we go along. There are a multitude of variables. I mean, when I have talked to schools, they say "parents." When I talk to communities, they say "schools." It's not okay. It could be a multitude of things. It could be a child was born with some concerns. It could be lack of parental nurturing with that. It could be a lack of intervention in the communities. There are a hundred different variables that assess why a child is developmentally delayed, but the key to that is not about what's happening to that child. The key is actually asking: what are we doing?

We need to focus more on the early intervention before daycares because, by the time they get to daycares, I mean sometimes, the daycares, like we just talked about the skill levels. That is why we are working closely with Health and Social Services, as well, so that, hopefully, we can get better assessments when the children are born, when they go for immunizations, when they go to daycares, all around, that we can actually have earlier diagnoses and proper supports. I do think that all of the departments recognize that, and we are trying to bump up the occupational, the assets, the skills to support daycares throughout to help with that issue.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson):** Thank you, Mr. O'Reilly.

**MR. O'REILLY:** Thanks, Mr. Chair. I think I have really pushed the idea of midwifery in this Assembly, and I do want to compliment the Minister for making some progress on midwifery because I think that is a very important component of getting

kids born into better families and making sure that we have healthier families right from the start.

Any study I have ever seen indicates that the most important period in a child's life is zero-to-three and that we can get the absolute biggest bang for our buck by spending money when a kid is zero-to-three, way better than roads, way better than roads. So how are we actually increasing our investment in early childhood zero-to-three over some of the other priorities that Cabinet has identified? Thanks, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson):** Thank you, Minister.

**HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. Whenever there is an issue that we approach Cabinet and we try to secure money for any new programs, et cetera, the reality is the economy is bad, we all know that, and so it's tight. We are doing our best. I mean it's not okay. We need to do that.

One thing I did not mention, and I just got a note from John MacDonald, actually, was that the other thing we are doing is because I believe that parenting courses have a lot to do with it, and it's not just parenting we have to tell people what to do; it's that social interaction that happens with that.

When I was a single mom, my first child and became a single mom, I did not know how to bathe my baby. I came from a home. I was a street kid at 13 years old. I had no idea how to bathe my baby. I was afraid of my baby. I was afraid of dropping him. I was afraid to tell anybody of anything. My child was almost four years old before I had that child assessed with Tourette syndrome. Even though I saw the visual signs, the movements, the motor ticks, et cetera, I did not want to see it. That, I do not think I am an abnormality. Especially people who have hard lives, we do not want to bring out any more things that are bad about us. We internalize enough.

So one thing I am excited that the department is doing, and it will take a few years, probably three years John has told me, is that we are looking at new classes, curriculum in schools to actually address parenting before they get out of school, because a lot of these people are young parents. I know it was a hard sell, and I may take some flack. I am okay with that. Just the same way it was important that we got sex education into schools, I think now is the time that it's important to talk about parenting in schools so that people, students, start to realize that having a baby is not just about keeping that person because I want to keep them for love. It's 20, often 30, years of serious commitment. Sorry, some of my colleagues understand the dilemma of that.

We have an obligation as society. We cannot make the assumption anymore that parents are getting that support from their grandparents, especially Indigenous children. People who have lost their parenting skills because of residential school, how can we expect them to automatically know how to parent without giving them those tools? So we have an obligation as society, and I am glad to say that education is moving towards that direction, that within a couple of years we will actually have parenting courses within schools. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson):** Thank you. We were on Mr. O'Reilly. Mr. O'Reilly.

**MR. O'REILLY:** Thanks, Mr. Chair. I think we got off on a bit of a tangent. I am father, too. Any of the studies I have seen about early childhood development investment, the payoff is 7 to 1, 10 to 1, way better than a road, way, way, better than a road. Can the Minister tell us: have we actually increased our spending on early childhood development in the course of the 18<sup>th</sup> Assembly? Thanks, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson):** Thank you. I think you might have stumped them, Mr. O'Reilly.

**HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. We are just trying to figure out if it's new money or old money. This year's investment into early childhood development is \$11.6 million for 2019-2020; \$8.9 million of that is from the GNWT, \$2.6 million is from Canada, for a total of \$11.6 million in investments. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson):** Thank you. Mr. O'Reilly.

**MR. O'REILLY:** Thanks, Mr. Chair. Yes, I note I think we are spending \$60 million on the Ticho all-season road this year; spending on the Tuktoyaktuk road was \$300 million over three years. I think I've made my case.

If we want to improve the future prospects of this territory, we have to put more money into early childhood development, case closed. Thanks, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson):** Thank you, Minister.

**HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE:** Thank you. Again, the three-year total for the federal is \$7 million, and two point something of that a year, so it's a three-year funding agreement.

You're right. I have to say the MLAs are right. We're not putting enough investment into early childhood development, but, as has been said by many Ministers at the table, our whole budget is \$1.6

billion, or something like that, and there's not enough money to go around. I don't see that we should take all from one. I think maybe we need to look at the balance, but I do believe in balance. I believe that we need to have early childhood development, we need to have justice services, we need to have health services, housing programs, and we need infrastructure. Those highways actually bring economic development, and they bring jobs for communities. Not to say that I'd like to spend as much, but I do think that we need to look at a balance across all. It can't be one or the other. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson):** Thank you. Mr. O'Reilly, your time has expired. Next, we have Mr. Blake.

**MR. BLAKE:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. The Minister is bringing up Tsiigehtchic here, and the community did identify one of their buildings, which they renovated. Everything was all set to go, but then, because we didn't get the attendance that's required, it seems that we lost our funding. So I think, in cases like this, we need to be more flexible. I know the community was estimating 15 to 20 children attending, but when we had only three to five at times, it all depends on the parents' schedules. If there's no work in the mornings, then they bring them in in the afternoon, but it seemed like the timing of ECE's staff is visiting the community, it seems to me they felt like there was inadequate attendance. It seems like that's what was the big holdup on all our funding.

In cases like this, will the Minister be more flexible with the community? It's creating jobs in the community, plus giving the children a good start, learning different things with the child care providers. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson):** Thank you, Minister.

**HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. I agree with the Member, again. Tsiigehtchic is a good example of how we tried to go in there. The attendance was low, but it wasn't ECE that pulled the funding. It was a decision by the community. We're more than willing to go back in and reinstate the funding, but it's sustainability of programs. That's why I'm saying that we need to start looking outside the box. We need to look at different solutions, because right now we base it on head count, between \$15-something a day up to \$49 a day for children. \$49 a day, \$50 a day, is a pretty good supplement, and then parents do that on top. So it's a matter of equity. If we do that in Yellowknife, with the regional centres, and we pay \$50 a day in Tsiigehtchic and they only have one child, that \$50 a day might not make that person want to stay there, especially if the parent doesn't

want to pay anything, which I've seen in some communities that they don't want to pay any money.

In the regional centres, especially Yellowknife, they're more used to it. A parent knows that, when they go to daycare, they have to pay up to \$1,000 a month. That's an expectation, but the smaller communities aren't always on that. So, like I had said before, we need to be flexible. We need to look outside the box. I'm not willing to be unfair and say, okay, we'll pay 100 percent in one community and we'll only supplement another community, because that's not being equitable, but working with the communities closely and seeing how we can address their needs, and I'll go back to Enterprise, because it was brought up by MLA Green, Enterprise is one of the communities that had an issue. They thought outside the box. So when I was there, actually, they were saying that the smaller children, because it was Aboriginal Head Start versus JK, and that's how we started the conversation, so they said they were worried about Aboriginal Head Start being sustainable with the introduction of JK. We gave funding to the school for JK. The kids enrolled, and then they didn't want to be in JK. Those children decided to go to Aboriginal Head start, so our JK there is empty.

What I did like about the Aboriginal Head Start, and that's thinking out of the box, is that a wonderful woman said that, "We take the younger children, too." So their Aboriginal Head Start is not defined by the parameters of the program; they've actually been flexible, and I think that's what I say, is that we need to look at each community individually and see how we can work to support those children. Does Enterprise now need a licensed daycare centre? Probably not. If they're numbers for Aboriginal Head Start are not full, like my understanding is, if they're accommodating the younger children, then why wouldn't we support that kind of programming?

Again, it's thinking outside the box. Each community is different, and we need to look at those communities, making sure that we have a lens that is equal. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely):** Thank you, Minister Cochrane. Mr. Blake.

**MR. BLAKE:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. Just moving forward, the concern always comes up in the community to have a daycare and, moving forward, it seems like the Minister is leaning towards being a little more flexible of the rules, so I guess that's a good start, and we'll just take it from there. I'll hold her to her word. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely):** Thank you, Mr. Blake. Mr. Beaulieu.

**MR. BEAULIEU:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I'd like to start off with a question for the Minister on junior kindergarten. Although junior kindergarten is not compulsive at this time, I was wondering if, when they do get into school and they are signed up, at that point does attendance become compulsory? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely):** Thank you, Mr. Beaulieu. Minister.

**HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE:** Thank you. Attendance being compulsory is not something that I would actually commit to at this moment. The reason I'm not willing to commit to that is because we need to look at that. At my last education meeting with the superintendents and chairs of all the school boards across the Northwest Territories, I brought up the issue of attendance because it's a concern of mine, and I said that, in the next Assembly, we need to look at attendance because, if we can't get the kids to school, we're not going to be able to get them educated and they're not going to succeed.

One thing I did hear, and I believe it was the Tlicho Government, actually, that said to me, "We tried the truancy officer thing. It did not work." So that told me that I don't want to go to a system where attendance is mandatory, and all of a sudden we're locking up children or parents, because that will drive them underground more. So what we need to do is find a better way to support them. I don't know what that answer is, whether it's picking up children, knocking on doors. I know that some communities have done that, smaller communities. They've actually gone and knocked on doors. That might not be feasible in big communities, but we need to start thinking, again, outside the box. It needs to be a discussion. If we can't get the kids to the school, we can't help them succeed, so it is a huge concern that we need to address. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely):** Thank you, Minister Cochrane. Mr. Beaulieu, anything further?

**MR. BEAULIEU:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. I don't think I made myself clear. I'm asking if, once a junior kindergarten student has registered, does their attendance become compulsory like everybody else in the school? I'm going to make the assumption, whether you want to call it compulsory or mandatory, kids who enter kindergarten, grade one, two, three, to 12 or up to 10 or whatever, that attendance is mandatory. My question is: I recognize that junior kindergarten is not compulsory, but once they become students, is their attendance compulsory at that point?

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson):** Thank you, Mr. Beaulieu. Minister.

**HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. Right at the current time, junior kindergarten and kindergarten are not compulsory. We need to be flexible with them, and I'm not sure if we want to actually broach on making them compulsory because we need the flexibility to be able to work with communities such as communities that have Aboriginal Head Start. I'm an advocate of Aboriginal Head Start. I think it's a great program. They've asked us to be flexible in the programming, so some programs like Fort Providence are not even doing their JK. Actually, they're doing just the Aboriginal Head Start. Other places are having Aboriginal Head Start in the schools. Other places are doing half-time junior kindergarten and half-time Aboriginal Head Start. Some people are just doing JK. We need that flexibility because no community is the same. Each community has unique situations, and we need to work with the communities where they are to address their needs to provide services for children. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson):** Minister, could you clarify? If a child enrolls in junior kindergarten, is that child's attendance then compulsory? Thank you.

**HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. No child who is enrolled in junior kindergarten or kindergarten is it compulsory that they attend. It's an optional programming, both of them. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson):** Thank you. Mr. Beaulieu.

**MR. BEAULIEU:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I have a real issue with that. I recognize that people have the option to put their children in junior kindergarten or kindergarten. Once they make the decision to go to junior kindergarten, or send their children to junior kindergarten or kindergarten, once they make that decision in September and the kid enrolls in school, then the Minister is saying that kid can come and go as they please throughout the whole year; that, if they want to attend two or three days a month, that's still okay. I think we have to nail down that first before we start talking about even the early development instrument. I think the early development instrument, I believe, is actually something that occurs in February of kindergarten year. How do we keep track of these if the kids who sign up to go to school, then, once they're enrolled in school, are free to come and go as they please? I'm wondering what the policy is around that? That doesn't sound correct to me. I'd like to just look for clarification on that at this point. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson):** Thank you. Minister.

**HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. At this point, anyone who is in junior kindergarten, it is an optional program. They don't have to be there. They can have the flexibility. Like I said, some are in half days, some are full days, some don't even choose. Not every child who is four years old is in junior kindergarten in the Northwest Territories.

I'd be a little bit leery to say that, once you enrol, that's it, you're locked in, and you have to be there every day, because I'm not sure if that's the intent. We've had kindergarten in the Northwest Territories. I'm 58 years old, and we had kindergarten. I remember when I think it came in, like 50 years ago. Kindergarten has never been compulsory, so I'm not sure why we would be expecting that we would turn it into a compulsory JK and kindergarten. Children who are four years old are pretty sensitive. Do we want to say that, or do we want to be able to have the flexibility that, if that four-year-old child is feeling like staying at home with mom or dad or grandma, that they have that option to do that without being penalized? We have to look at the developmental assets of that age cohort, as well. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson):** Thank you. Mr. Beaulieu.

**MR. BEAULIEU:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. I thought this was a real simple question because I wanted to lead onto something else, but I've spent my entire time trying to determine whether or not, once a student is four years old or five years old and they're put in school, once they are enroled, do they have to attend? I recognize that they don't have to enrol them. That's very clear to me. My question is, once they're enroled, do they have to attend? That's a simple question. Either yes, they have to attend, or no, they don't have to attend. They can come every second Friday if they want. Whatever the response is, I just need a response so I can move onto my actual question. Thank you.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson):** Thank you, Minister.

**HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE:** I thought I was clear. For clarification, Mr. Chair, any child who is in junior kindergarten or kindergarten is not compelled to be in school. It is not a mandatory requirement, although we try to work with the parents, and encourage them to attend. Any child from Grade 1 to 12 is mandatory to be in that. There are some repercussions for it. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson):** Thank you. Mr. Beaulieu.

**MR. BEAULIEU:** I don't understand what is so difficult about my question. I know that junior

kindergarten and kindergarten is not compulsory. I know that the students can stay at home if they want to. I know that the parents don't have to enrol them in school if they don't have to. My question is, once they make the decision to enrol the four-year-olds and five-year-olds into school, into junior kindergarten and kindergarten, is it compulsory that they attend like everybody else from 1 to 12?

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson):** The Minister just stated that it is not compulsory for kindergarten and junior kindergarten the way it is for grades 1 to 12. That's what the Minister just stated.

**MR. BEAULIEU:** Mr. Chairman, I've used up all my time, but once a junior kindergarten student has enroled, we'll just stick with one of the groups, okay, the junior kindergartens. Once they're enroled, then after they've enroled in September, then after that, they can come and go as they please? It's no longer compulsory? I recognize that it's not compulsory for them to enrol, but once they enrol, do they have to attend school? That's my question.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson):** The answer is no, they don't have to attend once they've enroled. That's what the Minister has stated. That's correct, yes. Given that information, I will let you have a follow-up question, Mr. Beaulieu.

**MR. BEAULIEU:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. No wonder it doesn't work. I mean, no wonder it doesn't work. I mean, they enrol in school, and then they don't have to attend. That's very strange. My question was to be, when we're dealing with five-year-olds and four-year-olds who are in school, does the funding that's targeted in inclusive schooling also apply to four-year-olds and five-year-olds? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson):** Thank you. Minister.

**HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. Yes, the inclusive schooling money is applied to the junior kindergarten and the kindergarten, the four- and five-year-olds. I do want to clarify, Mr. Chair, that I feel that it's unfair to say that junior kindergarten is not working. We just started. This is the second time that we have actually done the results. The first one was six years ago. We just had the baseline data. We don't even know how correct that was. We just implemented junior kindergarten across the Northwest Territories in the last couple of years. It's really premature to say that the program is not working. Lots of research says that early childhood development programming does work, whether children are there every day or not. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson):** Thank you, Minister. We have 10 more minutes, and we have two speakers left, so I will allow Mr. Thompson to go. Mr. Thompson.

**MR. THOMPSON:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. I will try to be quick. Can the Minister tell us what percentage of the enrolments are for fours and fives in our system? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson):** Thank you, Minister.

**HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. I'm sorry, I can't give you a percentage of the total children in JK or kindergarten compared to all the other students. I don't have that on hand at the moment. I can get it, if it is a request. I can say that the enrolment currently for junior kindergarten is 552 children. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson):** Thank you, Mr. Thompson.

**MR. THOMPSON:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. My next question is: when we have junior kindergarten and kindergarten, are they part of the funding formally that we have presently? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson):** Thank you, Minister.

**HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. That is correct. They are fully funded under the funding formula that we have now. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson):** Thank you, Mr. Thompson.

**MR. THOMPSON:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. Attendance is very important come September until October. They are part of the funding formula. How is this fair if they don't have a requirement to be in school? To me, we shouldn't have them as part of the funding formula. I think they should be left out because they have the option to come and go as they please and as the parents please, which I understand. They are part of the funding formula, so if you register 35 kids in junior kindergarten on September 1<sup>st</sup> and the attendance is sporadic and you want the school boards to be honest about it, we are going to see a decline in attendance. That is my question: how do we identify this? How can we fix this so that it is not part of the funding formula? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson):** Thank you, Minister.

**HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. Any student who is not attending from JK right to grade 12, the teacher is expected to actually

try to reach out and to try to find out what is going on with that child. That is just good practice. It is not a policy or an act, but it is good practice. I believe teachers act well. The funding formula works that way for all. That is why I said we need to revise that. We need to look at it, so we are researching it now. We need to relook at that funding formula because it is not only JK.

Any student who enrolls in September, whether they leave and they enrol in Sissons and they go the Catholic school or they go to Behchoko or they go to any other community, they go down south, that child is included in the funding formula because of September. Anyone at the end of September, so that is not just JK. It is not only the issue that we need to just take out JK and kindergarten. We need to look at the whole funding program. Anyone who enrolls in September and they all go down south, is it fair that they get funded for that? It is a bigger issue than just JK. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson):** Thank you, Mr. Thompson.

**MR. THOMPSON:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. I totally agree with the Minister on that. I greatly appreciate that answer. This is just more of a commentary, and I am going to try to be real quick. I know, in the Deh Cho proper, they are doing some pretty amazing things. They have a new system. They are looking at it because of the challenges that we are facing. Our EDI scores are not as great as they should be. We had junior kindergarten in our region prior. We used that as a pilot project.

I have to give credit to the education system, the divisional board. They are trying to find new ways of doing it, trying to be more creative. They are trying to focus on literacy. They are trying to focus on trades. I know it is beyond the other scope of it. I have to give credit where credit is due. I would like to say that the divisional board is trying to address these issues and they are trying to think outside the box. I have to give them credit for that. I thank you for your time. I will turn the floor over to the next speaker. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson):** Thank you, Mr. Testart.

**MR. TESTART:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. Reflecting on some other commentary that has been made, I think junior kindergarten is a good idea, but the devil is always in the details. One of the unintended consequences of the program has been making the private daycare industry basically untenable from a revenue standpoint and pricing private spaces out of the market. We have dealt with that in this Assembly very recently, and it was not a straightforward solution.

Given that, given that there is going to be an ever-increasing need for daycare when the Minister has said earlier that parents in Yellowknife understand they have to pay \$800 to \$1,000. I remember paying that, and it did not make my life easy. It was very difficult. For many parents who are either in a single-income household or even modest income, that is living paycheque to paycheque because of daycare fees. You need to work in this town. There is no option around it. We do need to head for these spaces. Things like initiatives, the policy environment that supports junior kindergarten has also shut down viable private industry.

I guess the idea is: we have seen well-costed proposals for universal daycare in the Northwest Territories with, I think, a \$20-million price tag that this Assembly considered early on and then dropped because it wasn't fiscally feasible in our current lifespan. If we don't do something, if we just kind of keep trying to tweak things here and there or hope that incremental change will solve this problem, we are never going to address these kind of fundamental challenges of creating daycare spaces for families in the Northwest Territories. There are communities where the GNWT is sitting on many assets that aren't currently in use that could be repurposed to that.

The Minister spoke about her long-term vision, but when are we actually going to start developing that long-term vision? Because, if we continue on this path, we are always going to leave some families unrepresented with their childcare needs. If you can't deliver that as a government that has set out to do this as a way to address the cost of live, a way to ensure kids have healthy starts, et cetera, et cetera, we are going to be failing the people we have set out to help if we don't address these unintended consequences.

We need more than just tweaks. We need more than just subsidies. We need to find a real transformative change to the system that is going to create more spaces, affordable spaces. If that means the government has to be the daycare provider for parents of the Northwest Territories, then so be it. What is the Minister planning to do with these long-term problems? I know it is a future government's issue, but we need to start that work now. Thank you.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson):** Minister Cochrane.

**HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. We are doing a lot, and we need to keep going. Like I said, we have increased the supplement to daycare providers directly. We have increased the supplement to daycare workers who are licensed, all those are licensed. If they are not licensed, they don't get the supplements. We are

doing the training for people. We have expanded our post-secondary education for people. We did JK. It's huge; 552 kids in the Northwest Territories are getting free daycare for four-year-olds. We are looking at parenting in our programs for in school in a couple year.

I want to challenge a little bit because the assumption that I am hearing is that daycare is the answer. Daycare is not the answer. Daycare is part of the answer. We have some communities that have zero daycare, and their children are struggling. The smaller communities are struggling. Is daycare the answer? You know what? As a mother, a woman who bore children, and I have said this many times, I wish I had the choice that I could stay home with my children until my children were six years old. I did not want my children to be taken out of my arms and be put in a daycare, somebody else to raise my children for that many times, especially people who are Indigenous and experienced residential school who have lost our children, lost our families.

We can't look at universal daycare as the only answer. We need to look at daycare for people who want that service. We need to look at parenting support for people who want that service. We need to look at social interaction for people who want that service. We need to have a continuum of care to address the needs of early childhood development. One answer is not the answer. I would not want my child at one year old to be wrenched out of my arms and be put into a daycare where I did not know. If it is an option, that is fine, but it needs to be a continuum. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson):** Thank you. Mr. Testart.

**MR. TESTART:** Thank you. Look, I appreciate the Minister's passion on this, but we are not talking about forcibly apprehending children and forcing them into daycare with no parental consent. We are saying that parents, the people in the communities, the people in Yellowknife, hard-working Northerners who, because of how our economy works, which is very expensive, we all know the cost of living is very high, that you need to work. If single mothers are going to work, if families are going to work, then they need those options available to them.

Junior kindergarten and other policies have priced the private sector out of the market so the spaces aren't available. That is what we have heard on this side of the House. That is what we have heard, and we brought it forward to the Minister. We brought it forward to the government. There has been some progress on one issue we brought forward, but there are many more out there.

The question is: what are we going to do to provide the same opportunities that wealthy people in Yellowknife can currently afford throughout the Northwest Territories? Because the government has, again, created a policy environment where there can be no competitive private sector options.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson):** Mr. Testart, I'm afraid the answer will have to wait, because, noting the clock, I will have to rise and report progress. I want to thank the Minister for appearing. A warning to any Minister who wants to make a far-flung Minister's statement: you'll be opened up to all types of questions. Thank you to the witnesses for appearing. Sergeant-at-Arms, please escort the witnesses from the Chamber. I will now rise and report progress.

**MR. SPEAKER:** May I have the report, Member for Hay River North.

### Report of Committee of the Whole

**MR. SIMPSON:** Mr. Speaker, your committee has been considering Minister's Statement 158-18(3), Developments in Early Childhood Programs and Services, and would like to report progress, and, Mr. Speaker, I move that the report of the Committee of the Whole be concurred with.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you. Do I have a seconder? Member for Kam Lake. The motion is in order. All those in favour. All those opposed. Motion carried.

---Carried

Masi. Item 22, third reading of bills. Minister of Finance.

### Third Reading of Bills

#### BILL 26: STATISTICS ACT

**HON. ROBERT MCLEOD:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I move, seconded by the honourable Member for Yellowknife South, that Bill 26, Statistics Act, be read for the third time and, Mr. Speaker, I would request a recorded vote. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

#### RECORDED VOTE

**MR. SPEAKER:** The Member has requested a recorded vote. The motion is in order. To the motion.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Question.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Question has been called. All those in favour, please stand.

**CLERK OF THE HOUSE (Mr. Mercer):** The Member for Inuvik Twin Lakes, the Member for Hay River South, the Member for Thebacha, the Member for Hay River North, the Member for Sahtu, the Member for Yellowknife North, the Member for Kam Lake, the Member for Tu Nedhe-Wiilideh, the Member for Nahendeh, the Member for Frame Lake, the Member for Yellowknife Centre, the Member for Inuvik Boot Lake, the Member for Range Lake, the Member for Great Slave, the Member for Yellowknife South.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Masi. All those opposed, please stand. All those abstaining, please stand. The results of the recorded vote are 15 in favour, zero opposed, zero abstentions. The motion is carried.

---Carried

Bill 26 has had its third reading. Third reading of bills. Mr. Clerk, orders of the day.

### Orders of the Day

**CLERK OF THE HOUSE (Mr. Mercer):** Orders of the day for Wednesday, May 29, 2019, 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 the Commissioner's 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

- Bill 29, An Act to Amend the Access to Information and Protection of Privacy Act
- Bill 30, An Act to Amend the Human Rights Act
- Bill 35, Supply Chain Management Professional Designation Act
- Committee Report 15-18(3), Standing Committee on Government Operations Report on the Review of Bill 30: An Act to Amend the Human Rights Act
- Minister's Statement 151-18(3), New Federal Infrastructure Agreement
- Minister's Statement 158-18(3), Developments in Early Childhood Programs and Services

## 21. Report of Committee of the Whole

## 22. Third Reading of Bills

## 23. Orders of the Day

**MR. SPEAKER:** Masi. [Translation]This House stands adjourned until Wednesday, May 29, 2019, at 1:30 p.m. [Translation ends]

---ADJOURNMENT

The House adjourned at 6:06 p.m.

