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**The Honourable Frederick Blake Jr, Speaker**

# Legislative Assembly of the Northwest Territories

## Members of the Legislative Assembly

### Speaker

**Hon. Frederick Blake Jr.**  
(Mackenzie Delta)

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**Mr. Ronald Bonnetrouge**  
(Deh Cho)

**Ms. Caitlin Cleveland**  
(Kam Lake)

**Hon. Paulie Chinna**  
(Sahtu)  
*Minister responsible for NWT Housing Corporation*  
*Minister responsible for Homelessness*

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*Minister of Executive and Indigenous Affairs*  
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**Mr. Jackie Jacobson**  
(Nunakput)

**Mr. Rylund Johnson**  
(Yellowknife North)

**Mr. Jackson Lafferty**  
(Monfwi)

**Ms. Frieda Martselos**  
(Thebacha)

**Hon. Katrina Nokleby**  
(Great Slave)  
*Minister of Industry, Tourism and Investment*  
*Minister of Infrastructure*  
*Minister responsible for the Workers' Safety and Compensation Commission*

**Mr. Steve Norn**  
(Tu Nedhe-Wiilideh)

**Mr. Kevin O'Reilly**  
(Frame Lake)

**Ms. Lesa Semmler**  
(Inuvik Twin Lakes)

**Mr. Rocky Simpson**  
(Hay River South)

**Hon. R.J. Simpson**  
(Hay River North)  
*Government House Leader*  
*Minister of Education, Culture & Employment*  
*Minister responsible for the Public Utilities Board*

**Hon. Diane Thom**  
(Inuvik Boot Lake)  
*Deputy Premier*  
*Minister of Health and Social Services*  
*Minister responsible for the Status of Women*  
*Minister responsible for Persons with Disabilities*

**Hon. Shane Thompson**  
(Nahendeh)  
*Minister of Environment and Natural Resources*  
*Minister of Lands*  
*Minister responsible for NWT Power Corporation*  
*Minister responsible for Seniors*  
*Minister responsible for Youth*

**Hon. Caroline Wawzonek**  
(Yellowknife South)  
*Minister of Finance*  
*Minister of Justice*

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**YELLOWKNIFE, NORTHWEST TERRITORIES****Tuesday, June 9, 2020****Members Present**

Hon. Frederick Blake Jr, Mr. Bonnetrouge, Hon. Paulie Chinna, Ms. Cleveland, Hon. Caroline Cochrane, Ms. Green, Mr. Jacobson, Mr. Johnson, Mr. Lafferty, Ms. Martselos, Hon. Katrina Nokleby, Mr. Norn, Mr. O'Reilly, Ms. Semmler, Hon. R.J. Simpson, Mr. Rocky Simpson, Hon. Diane Thom, Hon. Shane Thompson, Hon. Caroline Wawzonek.

The House met at 1:32 p.m.

**Prayer**

---Prayer

**SPEAKER (Hon. Frederick Blake Jr):** Item 2, Ministers' statements. Minister of Lands.

**Ministers' Statements**

Minister's Statement 51-19(2):  
COVID-19

**HON. SHANE THOMPSON:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to begin today by commending the courage and resolve of our front-line staff responding to this unprecedented public health emergency. From medical personnel, to the folks stocking shelves and keeping the grocery stores open, to the water and fuel delivery staff and the officers in our communities and at the borders, I am grateful to you all for this selfless work. It is because you are at work that others, in fact, much of the Government of the Northwest Territories workforce, have been able to work remotely through this crisis.

Mr. Speaker, it has indeed been a challenge with so many people working from home, many with added responsibilities, to ensure each department can continue to fulfill its critical functions. From processing applications for land leases, to issuing permits for wildlife and forestry, and to keep the lights on across the Northwest Territories, has required extra time and attention. For the Northwest Territories Power Corporation, this includes new protocols for entering communities and performing emergency work or required maintenance. Importantly, this also means working with the Emergency Measures Office to acquire personal protective equipment to keep those essential workers safe.

COVID-19 has changed the way we work, but the work to protect our land, water, and air must continue. Staff at the Departments of Lands and Environment and Natural Resources have worked diligently to develop new protocols to ensure the important work of protecting our environment and

managing land use can continue in a way that is safe for our employees and residents. This includes new ways of carrying out inspections, research, and environmental monitoring while maintaining physical distance and respecting the public health orders that are in place.

Environmental assessments are a critical part of our regulatory system in the Northwest Territories and involve a high level of coordination between departments, agencies, and Indigenous governments. Despite the challenges caused by the pandemic, I am proud to say that we are on track to meet the legislated timeline of June 6, 2020, to complete our response to the Review Board on the Diavik Environmental Assessment.

As you know, Mr. Speaker, many Northerners are going out on the land in response to COVID-19. As a result, Environment and Natural Resources and Lands officers have increased wildlife monitoring, enforcement activities, and inspections.

Of course, the way that we fight fires this summer will be unlike any other season before. Environment and Natural Resources has been preparing for months, reviewing best practices in other jurisdictions, and adapting our operations to reduce the risks to our staff and our communities.

On top of their regular duties, many of our Environment and Natural Resources and Lands officers have also stepped up to support the larger Government of the Northwest Territories-wide effort to combat the spread of COVID-19. These efforts are critical to keeping our families and communities safe and healthy.

Between Environment and Natural Resources and Lands, well over 70 staff have taken on extra duties or lent their expertise to other departments over the last couple of months, notably the Emergency Management Organization, the COVID Compliance and Enforcement Taskforce, and at border crossing check stations.

The level of collaboration and cooperation throughout the Government of the Northwest Territories has been incredible. At Lands alone, a full 25 percent of the department's employees are

on redeployment or reassignment as part of the COVID-19 efforts.

Mr. Speaker, I would also like to give a special shout out to Environment and Natural Resources' Taiga Environmental Laboratory. The lab has been hard at work in recent weeks producing hand sanitizer for our frontline workers, including the officers I just mentioned.

Getting the supplies and the okay from Health Canada to produce took a lot of time and effort, but it is truly paying off. At last count, the lab has produced more than 4,000 litres of hand sanitizer.

Mr. Speaker, the physical distancing and isolation measures put in place to combat the spread of COVID-19 have created new and very real economic stressors on Northwest Territories residents, families, businesses, Indigenous governments, and communities. That's why the Department of Lands is helping to ease some of the burden by waiving rent for leaseholders on public land for the fiscal year 2020-2021. Looking forward, we hope to be able to open our regional and local offices to the public very soon under appropriate health order protocols.

That's not all. To help customers impacted by the crisis, Northwest Territories Power Corporation removed all load limiters and suspended disconnections and collection activity. At the same time, Northwest Territories Power Corporation is coordinating their response with its counterparts across the country and with the territorial Emergency Management Organization. Through it all, Northwest Territories Power Corporation is keeping its workers safe while maintaining optimum service levels for Northwest Territories residents.

I am grateful to the many individuals across my departments who have taken on extra duties to ensure we continue to protect our land, air, and water and to ensure the wise use of our natural resources. I appreciate your commitment to the important work that we do. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

MINISTER'S STATEMENT 52-19(2):  
AURORA COLLEGE COVID-19 RESPONSE AND  
BEYOND

**HON. R.J. SIMPSON:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. When students at Aurora College left for March break, they were unaware of the uncertainty that the pandemic would bring to so many aspects of their lives, including if they would remain on track to achieving their education and career goals. I would like to share with you today some of the challenges

and innovative solutions that the team at Aurora College implemented to support their students and their communities.

When the pandemic hit the Northwest Territories, all Aurora College programming was temporarily suspended while the college team planned and executed a fundamental shift in how they would teach. In a two-week period, Aurora College transitioned from classroom-based learning to a distance-learning format for all of its full-time certificate, diploma, and degree programs. Through innovation and determination on the part of instructors, the majority of students remained on track to complete their semester.

Mr. Speaker, students who previously relied on access to a shared computer lab faced the challenge of not having the technology typically required to learn from a distance. In response to this challenge, Aurora College collaborated with Computers for Schools to provide computers to students who identified that they needed one to continue their studies.

All throughout these changes to the program delivery, the college continued to consider how suspended and cancelled programs might restart, and the Aurora College team stayed in touch and followed up with affected students to support their continued educational journey, ensuring continued relationships between the students and staff during this difficult time of transition.

Mr. Speaker, in addition to a monumental shift in their teaching method, Aurora College was also able to assist with the broader Government of the Northwest Territories' response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Student housing in Fort Smith was repurposed to accommodate travellers returning to the Northwest Territories who needed to isolate for 14 days. In addition, the Aurora College Centre for Mine and Industry Training facility became the solution to address the need for a drive-through COVID-19 testing site for the Department of Health and Social Services.

At the Yellowknife-North Slave campus, the Bachelor of Science in Nursing staff stepped up to inventory medical equipment and supplies used in that program and designated for use by health authorities if required. Aurora College engaged with the Department of Health and Social Services to determine how current students in the Bachelor of Science in Nursing, Practical Nursing Diploma, and Personal Support Worker programs could play a role in the emergency response at healthcare facilities. These students also participated in the emergency response either through casual employment or through their scheduled practicum.

There have also been engagements with Education, Culture and Employment to determine how students in the Early Childhood Development program could support the re-opening of daycare facilities under emergency conditions.

Mr. Speaker, at the Inuvik Campus, the Arts, Crafts and Technology Micro-Manufacturing Centre has been using 3D printers to make mask tension relievers for hospital workers and developing prototypes for door openers that allow you to open a door with your arm instead of hand. In addition, it has all the supplies and is on standby to produce face shields should they be required. As well, the single-student housing facility is being provided as a temporary solution to address the emergency isolation needs of the town's vulnerable population.

Mr. Speaker, as the college plans for how to deliver programming in the fall of 2020, their primary responsibility remains the health and safety of students, staff, and residents. In response to the Government of the Northwest Territories' Emerging Wisely reopening plan and to its ongoing commitment to student success, the majority of Aurora College programs and courses offered in the 2020 fall semester will be delivered entirely by distance learning. Acknowledging the importance of hands-on and face-to-face learning, Aurora College continues to determine how and when critical in-person programming can happen, based on advice from Office of the Chief Public Health Officer and the Workers' Safety and Compensation Commission.

Mr. Speaker, all of the challenges faced and changes made have strengthened the college and shown that the institution is ready and capable of making the changes necessary to transform into a polytechnic university. The transformation remains on target and is more important than ever for the Northwest Territories.

There are wide-ranging benefits to establishing a polytechnic university in the Northwest Territories, many of which could contribute to the social and economic recovery in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic.

The combined short- and long-term benefits could make the transformation a focal point for drawing post-COVID-related investment, primarily from the Government of Canada, but it may also draw attention from wide-ranging sources.

Mr. Speaker, Aurora College currently serves a student population that is 75 percent Indigenous and oversees several academic and research programs in partnership with Indigenous governments. Engaging our Indigenous partners in a meaningful way in transformation is critical to its success. That is why I have written to Indigenous

leaders to collaborate on an approach to how and when they are engaged in the transformation, based on the principles of United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.

It is also important to highlight that what we are building is a post-secondary institution that reflects the values and interests of our residents. Beyond the simple mechanics of economic stimulus, residents must be inspired by new short- and long-term opportunities.

Mr. Speaker, in closing, I would like to say that, despite the additional challenges Aurora College students have faced, it has been heartening to see their continued dedication to advancing their education. I also have to congratulate all of the Aurora College graduates of 2020 who, in the face of adversity, successfully completed their programs. They should be very proud of their achievement. Their commitment to success will serve them well throughout their lives. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Minister. Ministers' statements. Item 3, Members' statements. Member for Hay River South.

### Members' Statements

#### MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON RACISM IN THE NORTHWEST TERRITORIES

**MR. ROCKY SIMPSON:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to discuss the issue of racism, as the death of George Floyd has placed it front and centre in the news. When I look at what is happening, not just around the world but in Canada and the Northwest Territories, I am deeply disturbed at what people of colour are being subjected to. It is easy to think of this as an American problem, that Canada is somehow better or that we don't have this problem in the North. The truth is that, if you were to ask any person of colour in the territory, or even this room, whether they have been subjected to racism, the answer would almost certainly be, "Yes."

Mr. Speaker, racism takes many forms. It is not always outright or violent. It is often quiet and whispered, but what all forms have in common is that they are specifically directed at people because of the colour of their skin, their culture, or their nationality.

If we truly believe racism is wrong, then we must speak up against it: challenge people; speak up when we hear those so-called jokes and people laughing at them; speak up when we see these things being done at our workplace or in our departments that perpetuate it. It is not enough to see these things as wrong but then sit and stay silent. If we do nothing, then those with racist

attitudes feel validated in their thinking and beliefs. This feeling of validation is what leads to some police officers knowing that they can, in broad daylight, with people watching, kill an innocent man or shoot an innocent woman and not face repercussions. It leads to ordinary citizens feeling they have the right to hunt a man down while he is out for a jog, shoot him multiple times, and it being a defensible action.

Mr. Speaker, my only grandchild is of mixed race. I do not want her or any other person of colour to face violence or prejudice because of the colour of their skin. I do not want people of colour to have to continue to fight for respect and equal treatment. Our responsibility is to be the stimulus of change so that fighting and protesting is no longer necessary. I know that, as long as I am alive, I will protect my granddaughter and those of colour against racism and the hatred it breeds. Thank you Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Member for Hay River South. Members' statements. Member for Nunakput.

#### MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON POLICING IN THE NORTHWEST TERRITORIES

**MR. JACOBSON:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Policing across our territory: in the wake of Mr. George Floyd's death weeks ago, people across North America are taking a stand that black lives matter. Of course, police brutality cannot be condoned in any way. It is unacceptable under any circumstance. It's not acceptable that people of colour, including, in Canada, Indigenous people, are frequently victims of this brutality.

High-profile incidents like George Floyd's case also put a spotlight on the RCMP. Today, Nunavut is calling for a systemic review of the RCMP services provided to their territory. Understandably, anti-police sentiment is spotlighted in the media right now. Listening to the radio this morning, I really feel for them. I wonder how much this is being influenced by the fears of COVID-19 on the lockdown, Mr. Speaker. People are anxious about new powers and authorities that have dictated how we should be living in these times.

I want to take a moment to remember all the hard-working RCMP officers out there who put their lives on the line daily to keep our communities safe. With a group in any profession, there are unfortunately some bad apples who cast a shadow on the good work being done by others. Police in the North are hard-working members in dangerous situations, including that they work by themselves half the time. Our correctional officers, our highway patrol officers, our territorial park officers, our municipal enforcement officers, our police, our peace officers, regularly work in difficult environments, dangerous

situations, times of crisis. They respond quickly with personal danger. Many RCMP officers work alone, with little or no backup. They put their lives on the line every single day and they pay the ultimate cost. Let us not forget the sacrifices of Constable Christopher Worden, who was killed on duty in Hay River in 2007, or parole officer Louise Pargeter, killed in the line of duty here in Yellowknife in 2004.

So, while condemning police brutality, let's also remember that not all police officers are the same. Many are caring, giving members of our communities. I want to encourage all northern leaders to reach out to detachment commanders, sergeants. Mr. Speaker, I seek unanimous consent to conclude my statement.

---Unanimous consent granted

**MR. JACOBSON:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I encourage all our leadership across our territory, all 33 communities, to reach out to detachment commanders and dialogue on policing, how can it be improved in our communities. I also want to thank all those who serve and keep our communities safe, the RCMP officers, the persons who stay on call 24 hours a day. In our small communities, they also have to be the ambulance drivers. I want to thank them for their sacrifices and appreciate their services. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Member for Nunakput. Members' statements. Member for Deh Cho.

#### MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON RECOGNITION OF 2020 GRADUATES

**MR. BONNETROUGE:** Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. Each year, we celebrate the accomplishments of our graduating students with best wishes for the future in their chosen field of study. This is no small feat, but a monumental task for the graduating students, as they endured many years of homework and studying to prepare them for the next steps in their journey, postsecondary education.

Today, on behalf of the community of Fort Providence, we congratulate and recognize the graduating class of 2020 from Deh Gah School: Rainla Bonnetrouge, Nyssa McKenzie, Anthony Betsaka, Kelly Leischman, Julia Gargan, Jacob Gargin, Shannan Bonnetrouge, Grace Allison, and Alex Canadian. We support you as you follow your dreams.

Mr. Speaker, further to this, I would also like to acknowledge the accomplishments of a postsecondary graduate of 2020, Ms. Caroline Minakosh of Fort Providence. Caroline completed a four-year Bachelor of Arts program with a major in Political Science and a minor in Indigenous Studies at Carleton University in Ottawa. We wish Caroline

all the success in finding work within her field of study.

The community of Fort Providence would like to provide encouragement to the following students in postsecondary institutions: Brandon Thom, Bachelor of Sport and Fitness; Elainie Bandel, Nursing Program; Mikaila Bandel, Bachelor of Arts; Nanette Saffron, Hospitality Management; Patricia Bouvier, Indigenous Teacher Education Degree; Lindsay Landry, Bachelor of Fine Arts and Design; Edmund Gargan, Motorcycle Mechanic Program; Nonda Canadian, International Baccalaureate; Derek Vandel, Parts and Materials Technician Program.

Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the residents of Fort Providence, we wish them all the best for what the future may hold for them. Mahsi.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Member for Deh Cho. Members' statements. Member for Frame Lake.

#### MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON GREAT POTATO COLLABORATION

**MR. O'REILLY:** Merci, Monsieur le President. I had a chance to get my hands really dirty on the weekend. We drove down to the Northern Farm Training Institute, or NFTI, near Hay River to volunteer. On the first morning, we built trellises for pumpkins and squash, but in the afternoon we each bagged about 1,000 pounds of potatoes.

The Great Potato Collaboration is now under way. NFTI put out a call for potatoes for the NWT during the pandemic to help build food security. The Potato Growers of Alberta helped identify one of its members, Sunnycrest Farms, that could help. John and Marlene Ekkel own Sunnycrest Farm in Lacombe, and answered the call by agreeing to give 50,000 pounds of seed potatoes to NFTI. That's more than a pound of seed potatoes for each person in the Northwest Territories. What a tremendous gift, thank you.

When we were at NFTI, we bagged potatoes for Aklavik and brought some back to Yellowknife for the Inuvik Greenhouse. Virtually every community will get some of the seed potatoes, and several transport companies have agreed to carry them for free. Our staycation at NFTI included a comfortable yurt and some meals with volunteers from France, Germany and Canada. NFTI is doing a fantastic job of building food security and deserves greater investment from this government.

While we were in Hay River, we christened the brand new Porritt's Landing picnic area and fire pits with some whitefish provided by the Honourable Member for Hay River South. He was right as the

lake shore proved to be too cold for us with ice near shore, but we still had an excellent dinner.

During our travels, we visited Fort Providence where huge candling ice slabs flowed down the Dehcho, tinkling along the way. We would like to thank Russell Chase who showed us his rabbit farm near Enterprise. We also had a chance to discuss how GNWT could better support food security. We had a quick tour of Kakisa, which I had not visited in over a decade. Black bears, bison, sandhill cranes, and other birds were spotted along the way.

More seriously, Mr. Speaker, our trip reminded me of what a great place we live in and the tremendous tourism opportunities we should better promote this summer. Mahsi, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Member for Frame Lake. Members' statements. Member for Tu Nedhe-Willideh.

#### MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON LUTSELK'E UNITED NATIONS AWARD

**MR. NORN:** Marsi cho, Mr. Speaker. Today I would like to congratulate the Lutsel K'e Dene First Nation for being selected to win a United Nations award known as the Equator Prize. Mr. Speaker, for those who don't know, the Equator Prize is an award which recognizes outstanding community efforts to reduce poverty through the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity.

Lutsel K'e won this award for their tireless work on the establishment of Thaidene Nene, or Land of the Ancestors, National Park Reserve. The area of the park reserve is 26,000 square kilometres, encompassing areas of Boreal forest and Arctic tundra and dozens of lakes, rivers, waterfalls, and wildlife.

Mr. Speaker, Lutsel K'e is one of 10 global winners of this prestigious award, selected among 600 nominations spanning 120 countries, and this is the first time a Canadian group has won this award. The award also carries a \$10,000 cash prize, and the winners will be honoured in New York City later this year as part of Climate Week and Nature Summit at the UN.

There are a number of people whom the LKDFN would like to thank for their long efforts and their hard work that was put into making Thaidene Nene into a reality. First, we want to thank Chief Marlowe and the entire council; as well as Steve Nitah, the lead negotiator for Thaidene Nene; along with all the elders and other community members who contributed to this massive project, which spanned decades to produce.

Mr. Speaker, Thaidene Nene has a website called Land of the Ancestors. I encourage the public to check it out and see the wonderful work that was put into making this park a reality. Marsi cho, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Member for Tu Nedhe-Willideh. Members' statements. Member for Thebacha.

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON  
INSTITUTIONAL RACISM AGAINST INDIGENOUS  
AND PEOPLE OF COLOUR

**MS. MARTSELOS:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Over the last two weeks, people across North America and the world have been taking to the streets to protest against the excessive use of force by law enforcement and police brutality towards black, Indigenous, and all peoples of colour.

These protests began in Minnesota after footage was released of a Minneapolis police officer kneeling on the neck of an unarmed black man named George Floyd, who later died because of this brutal police interaction. Why did the police use excessive force on George Floyd? A cashier alleged he had a counterfeit \$20 bill.

George Floyd's death might have been the catalyst triggering these protests; however, his death symbolizes a much larger issue within our society, which is institutional racism against black, Indigenous, and all peoples of colour.

Mr. Speaker, as a Dene woman and a former Chief, I have heard of hundreds of cases of police brutality towards unarmed Indigenous people and other people of colour, both in the NWT and across Canada. Even this past weekend, my friend, Alan Adam, Chief of Athabasca Chipewyan First Nation, publicly discussed an incident of police brutality that he experienced with the RCMP in March of this year. In fact, Chief Adam has shared images of his beaten and battered face from this brutal police interaction. Why did the RCMP use excessive force on Chief Adam? Expired vehicle registration.

Systemic racism is a fact of life, and if these two stories aren't enough to show the over-policing of black and brown bodies, here are some statistics. According to a CBC analysis of data from fatal police encounters from 2000-2017, while Indigenous people make up only 4.8 percent of the general population, they account for 15 percent of all police fatality victims. Conversely, black Canadians account for only 3.4 percent of the general population, yet account for 9 percent of all police fatality victims. These stats show that racialized people experience disproportionate levels of police violence than others.

Mr. Speaker, structural racism has persisted in our government and legal systems for far too long in this country. Canada and the RCMP have a deep colonial history that cannot be ignored, and we must call out and root out the learned behaviours of racism at all levels of government. We have had dozens of reports, national inquiries, and royal commissions, and they all share this same conclusion. I seek unanimous consent to finish my statement.

---Unanimous consent granted

**MS. MARTSELOS:** We have had dozens of reports, national inquiries, and royal commissions, and they all share this same conclusion, so we must continue to actively improve these systems wherever possible. Mr. Speaker, black lives matter, and Indigenous lives matter. I will have questions for the Minister of Justice later today. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Member for Thebacha. Members' statements. Member for Inuvik Twin Lakes.

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON  
CAMPING IN TERRITORIAL PARKS

**MS. SEMMLER:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Since March, we have been following the rules. A lot of my constituents have been doing what they need to do, but now it's June. In May, it got nice and warm towards the end, and now it's beautiful at home. Although I agree with the fact that the ITI department needed time to get their staff and campgrounds ready, I wanted the Minister to know that, at home, our camping season starts May long weekend. It usually runs until July, as these are our warm weather months. We still have people who like to go in August and September to the campgrounds, but this is when it's full. Yes, I am aware that our campground in my region doesn't open until June 1<sup>st</sup>, but that's another issue that we can also work on.

While we prepare for summer, and we, as a territory, prepare to enter into phase 2 of opening our territory to what will hopefully be a smooth and easy transition, the NWT has not had a case, I mention this again, for over two months. People in my region and, I imagine, in other regions are eager to enjoy what this territory offers, including the use of our territorial parks for overnight camping. As I learned this morning, all campgrounds in the NWT will be open this Friday for overnight camping.

Mr. Speaker, the Gwich'in Territorial Park and Caribou Creek campgrounds are examples of important destinations for the residents of my community and region during the summer months. These locations not only offer a place where

residents can get out of the house but to enjoy the outdoors after a long, dark, cold winter. For those who don't have on-the-land camps, they are very popular for picnics and overnight camping.

NWT residents have been recommended to avoid all non-essential travel out of the NWT, but yet we can't even overnight camp in our campgrounds. Mr. Speaker, I believe now is the time where we can open up our parks to our residents for overnight camping and do it safely. I am glad that the Department of ITI agrees with me. I will have questions for the Minister of ITI. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Member for Inuvik Twin Lakes. Members' statements. Member for Yellowknife Centre.

#### MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON POVERTY TRACK

**MS. GREEN:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I am going to talk about the poverty trap today. I have talked about this concept before, but, as a reminder, a poverty trap is a self-reinforcing cycle that allows poverty to persist. In particular, it's a situation in which an increase in income results in a decrease in benefits so that, in the end, you are no further ahead.

Mr. Speaker, this pandemic has been difficult for all of us but particular for people with low or no income. The federal and territorial governments have provided additional benefits to low-income residents. To its credit, the territorial government has permitted income assistance recipients to keep this extra money without reducing its financial support to them. As you will hear later today when the Standing Committee on Social Development tables its pandemic response report, we would like this exemption to stay in place and to increase the limit on keeping unearned income over the year.

Mr. Speaker, a particular problem within the poverty trap is finding affordable housing. I have a constituent who is a single dad with two children who is currently living with family. It's a chaotic and overcrowded situation where it's difficult to get the rest they all need. He has a skill, but he hasn't been able to work because of the pandemic lockdown. What he would like to do is get a job and get a place of his own, but he's running into barriers. The first barrier is that he doesn't have a job right now; he's on income assistance. That more or less rules out renting from the private market as he doesn't have a steady income. Income Assistance will provide a three-month income guarantee, but most landlords want a year, especially during the pandemic. Landlords no longer have the opportunity to evict tenants for non-payment, so they are taking fewer risks. A possible solution is to get into public housing. We all know that the waiting

list in Yellowknife and many places throughout the territory is very long. He's been told he's number 20-something on the list. In other words, he's not going to get into public housing anytime soon. Mr. Speaker, my constituent has a skill, and he wants to work. He wants his own place for his children. It seems like a simple ask but it's not. That's a poverty trap. If we want people to not only survive but thrive, we need to identify these poverty traps.

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

---Unanimous consent granted

**MS. GREEN:** Thank you, colleagues. Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We need to identify these poverty traps and eliminate them. One solution is to introduce a guaranteed basic income. I will have questions on that point for the Minister of Education, Culture and Employment. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Member for Yellowknife Centre. Members' statements. Member for Kam Lake.

#### MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON RACISM AND THE DEATH OF GEORGE FLOYD

**MS. CLEVELAND:** Mr. Speaker, today is 15 days after the last breath was pressed out of George Floyd while a police officer knelt on his neck for nine minutes. In empathy for his family and all who are suffering, I ask this House to show compassion and join me in nine seconds of silence.

Mr. Speaker, as I speak, Yellowknifers march down our main streets to declare unequivocally that Black lives matter. I struggle with my absence, and I struggle that it will be mistaken as silence, the silence of complicity. This world suffers two pandemics simultaneously: COVID-19 and racism. Black people have suffered from both disproportionately. COVID arrived on this continent 101 days ago and racism centuries ago. Both persist, both are insidious, both are a disease, and both require our ears and our action. Racism uses the colour of someone's skin to strip them of their unique individuality and to herd them into a group of stereotypes where personhood is extinguished. This lack of understand and personal relationship breeds fear and mutual isolation. Racism is woven tightly into the fabric of our society with the threads of white privilege.

Thirty-two years ago, Peggy McIntosh wrote an article unpacking the invisible knapsack of privileges that white people have learned to take for granted, not because they don't know poverty or haven't struggled but because they have

unquestioned access to power and resources systemically denied to people of colour. Last year, Cory Collins wrote about the power unconsciously enjoyed and consciously perpetuated by white society, both as a weightless knapsack full of opportunity and a weapon brandished to preserve it. He mentioned three exclusive powers: the power of normalcy, that white is the normal against what everyone else is judged; the power of benefit of the doubt, where white people are granted individual potential, the ability to survive mistakes and given compassion when struck by hardship; and three, the power of accumulated power, this is the inheritance of law, policy, and wealth that continue to compound to the advantage of white people.

Mr. Speaker, while people of colour have spent lifetimes enduring racism, privilege has afforded white people the choice to stand up. The anger fear resentment, and frustration we see stems from a lifetime of standing up out of survival. People of colour have run lifetimes of marathons while the rest of us show up wondering why everyone else seems to be tired when we have barely begun to run and some don't even have their shoes on yet. Fifteen days ago, as he died, George Floyd begged for his mama. Today, he is being buried next to her. Yellowknife's Inemesit Graham said, "As long as we're the only ones screaming, our voices will be drowned out. We need the majority to be just as angry, to be just as aware and to stand up for us."

Mr. Speaker, today, as George Floyd is laid to rest, I call on all those who have benefited from white privilege to reflect on that privilege, to imagine what your life would be like if you weren't considered normal, given the benefit of the doubt, and able to enjoy accumulated power, then make a vow to stand up for the change we need so that we can live in a society where all people are valued equally for their unique attributes and their humanity. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Member for Kam Lake. Members' statements. Member for Monfwi.

#### MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON RECOGNITION OF FRONT LINE AND ESSENTIAL WORKERS

**MR. LAFFERTY:** Masi, Mr. Speaker. I rise to express my solemn gratitude and solemn gratitude for those Northerners who risked their health and well-being to save Northwest Territories against the ravages of COVID-19. First on everyone's mind are the front-line healthcare professions who stood guard, ever vigilant and caring. The NWT is blessed with the best, most dedicated doctors, nurses, healthcare professions, the technicians, and support staff in the world. Mr. Speaker, the gratitude doesn't stop there. We cannot forget the unsung heroes who maintain our critical northern

chain of supplies from the truck drivers, postal workers, to the store clerks who stuck by their cash registers and stocked the shelves in spite of the real threat of personal infections.

Mr. Speaker, on behalf of my constituents, I also want to thank the essential public service workers, teachers, school administrators, and public utility workers who answer duty's calls. These stalwart people keep the territory running smoothly in spite of the heightened tension and increased demand of their time. Our gratitude is also extended to all those municipal and also band employees who put their communities first as always. Mr. Speaker, COVID-19 has been a moral threat to all of us, but it has been a reminder to Northerners of their interconnectedness and their mutual reliance on each other. It has highlighted the generosity, the courage, the resourcefulness of our citizens, NWT citizens. The actions of our people, the actions of our governments at all levels, our labour unions, as well, make them extremely proud to be a Northerner. I cannot think of a better, safe, more blessed place anywhere to wait for the passing of this difficult, world-wide health crisis. Masi, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Member for Monfwi. Members' statements. Member for Yellowknife North.

#### MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON REALITY OF RACISM OF CANADA

**MR. JOHNSON:** Mr. Speaker, it saddens me that I still hear people downplay the reality of racism in Canada. Yet, I ask anyone who wishes to downplay the pain of those protesting as we speak, I ask a white person to ask themselves if their child was Black whether life would be easier or harder for that child. We should not have to use such analogies to show the importance, but maybe the fact that we do is commentary of where we are as a nation. There is no doubt that a person of colour has a harder time and the game is rigged against them from the moment they are born. That is what is meant by systemic racism. It is not just the hatred that rots people's souls. It is a series of subtle and somewhat invisible cultural norms that make life harder for anyone whose skin is not white. A culture which makes it a young Indigenous boy or girl search for self-esteem unnecessarily harder.

Mr. Speaker, we cannot let those voices go unheard. We in this House have a job to break the cycle. There is no shortage of systemic issues we can face in this House. When we pass a budget that gives \$47 million to the RCMP and only \$400,000 to First Nations policing, that's institutional racism. When we negotiate self-government agreements, but the entire criminal justice system and the criminal code is off the table,

that is institutional racism, Mr. Speaker. When the Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls go out and conduct interviews across this country and then the federal government and our government fails to get an action plan in place, that is systemic racism, Mr. Speaker. These are not overt acts of hatred. These are a misalignment of priorities and a shying away from the very difficult work we are tasked to do.

Mr. Speaker, when the RCMP uses the entire North as a place to hide officers who have been convicted of sexual assault, that's institutional racism. When some new rookie officer shows up and decides that integrating themselves into the community and building an understanding of the culture is not their priority, that is institutional racism.

There is an inherent privilege awarded to whiteness in this country, Mr. Speaker. That is a fact, and it is a fact we all need to change. If we are truly committed to ending racism, it requires a serious reconfiguration of all our systems. It requires societal and cultural change where people give up their privilege, where people recognize the systems they operate in and work to change them. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Member for Yellowknife North. Members' statements. Item 4, recognition of visitors in the gallery. Item 5, reports of committees on the review of bills. Item 6, reports of standing and special committees. Member for Nunakput.

### Reports of Standing and Special Committees

#### COMMITTEE REPORT 1-19(2): REPORT ON LONG-TERM POST-PANDEMIC RECOVERY: RECOMMENDATIONS TO THE GNWT

**MR. JACOBSON:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Your Standing Committee of Economic Development and Environment is pleased to provide the "Report on Long-Term Post-Pandemic Recovery: Recommendations to the GNWT" and commends it to the House.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Member for Nunakput. Please proceed.

**MR. JACOBSON:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Uncertainty of the global pandemic -- sorry, Mr. Speaker, one page ahead of myself.

#### Introduction

The Standing Committee on Economic Development and Environment (SCEDE) has witnessed the acute and severe decline in the

NWT's private sector from COVID-19. The decline in business activity continues to affect NWT businesses today. While the path through the pandemic may be short term, for some businesses and others it will take much longer to recover.

Businesses across the NWT were ordered to reduce or completely shut down their operations. A handful of businesses were able to innovate and provide altered services to remain open. Many small and medium businesses, however, have quickly depleted their financial reserves and are struggling to survive.

Total employment in the NWT fell by 400 persons in April, while the employment rate dropped to 62.3, the lowest for that month in the past 10 years. Compared to last year at the same time, unemployment rates rose among major worker groups, the highest among those who live outside the territory or outside the capital of Yellowknife are female, aged from 25 and older.

The NWT economy relies heavily on the extractive, non-renewable resource sector, especially the diamond mining industry, representing 21 percent of the overall economy. Although mining, oil, and gas have declined drastically since 2007, it still remains the NWT's most dominant economic sector. Next to mining, oil, and gas, the services industry comprises the vast majority of the remaining economy, at 68 percent, and is dominated by public administration at 32 percent.

The private sector, which is narrowly comprised of non-renewable exports, is volatile as it is subject to global commodity prices. The NWT has witnessed Dominion Diamond Mines ULC, the controlling owner of Ekati Diamond Mine and 40 percent owner of Diavik Diamond Mine, suspend operations at the Ekati mine site and file for a creditor protection order, leaving over \$13 million hung up in unpaid expenses to NWT businesses during COVID-19. The NWT resource sector support services, arguably the most important economic linkage in the NWT economy, continues to wait out the uncertainty of the global pandemic as diamonds remain volatile, which furthers the NWT's private sector uncertainty at this time.

The GNWT is heavily reliant on federal financial support as its primary revenue source, accounting for slightly more than 80 percent of the GNWT's total revenues of \$2.186 billion. While the GNWT's total operational expenditures, pre-pandemic, is estimated at \$1.983 billion, the GNWT can largely run on federal government transfer alone. Government administration can act as a stabilizing force to the NWT economy through this recession. The NWT economy will remain much more stable through the recovery of COVID-19 than other Canadian jurisdictions dependent on private sector

activity to fund government services. The medium- and long-term outlook for the NWT was concerning before COVID-19 and is even more concerning now, as we emerge out of this, post-pandemic. The NWT economy is stable but stagnant.

Due to the NWT's small population, there are limitations for the GNWT to increase own-source revenues. Since 2015, during the construction of the Gahcho Kue diamond mine, private investment has trended downward, while public investment has trended upward.

The government walks a fine balance of moving forward with large public infrastructure projects that reduce the cost of living for residents and make the NWT more attractive for investment, while minimizing borrowing debt and stimulating local business development.

The GNWT across all departments needs to train and instill client-service skills that support and promote small businesses across the NWT. The value of well-trained front line GNWT staff knowledgeable and familiar with the potential capabilities of NWT businesses cannot be underestimated at this time in our economic recession.

Small businesses need to risk start-up and be supported through small government contracts over time to enable a diversified and healthy private sector that contributes to the GNWT's own-source revenue through tax regimes. The larger businesses are pillars of the economy and need to be engaged and supported to expand into larger territorial, domestic, and even international markets.

Although the GNWT may be in a healthy credit position today, the long-term plan for the economy has to increase own-source revenues through the acceleration of a vibrant private sector in order to maintain a positive credit rating.

Mr. Speaker, I pass on to the MLA for Deh Cho. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Member for Nunakput. Member for Deh Cho.

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

### **Enhancing Business Development Investment Corporation Programs**

Committee recognizes the swift action of the NWT Business Development Investment Corporation (BDIC) to implement two new support programs in response to COVID-19.

Committee had concerns that the loan programs available to businesses are not sufficient without being guaranteed or forgiven by the government.

Businesses in the NWT incur high operating costs and in many cases have already taken on loans or debts and cannot further extend themselves to take on additional loans through COVID-19 without any certainty for when their businesses might recover. Many businesses do not have the equity or liquidity to be sure they can pay back the loan.

Until Canada withstands the potential second and third wave of COVID-19 and the NWT lifts all public health orders, many businesses in the NWT will be under extreme pressure. BDIC programs delivered in response to COVID-19 should extend support measures until the economy recovers.

Further, committee is concerned the application process may be too onerous for small businesses. As such, the Standing Committee on Economic Development and Environment encourages the government to: simplify and shorten the application process; provide loan forgiveness options; flexible repayment options; as well as deferral payment options (without accumulating interest) for businesses until the economic depression caused by the public health crisis has subsided.

Additionally, committee wants to see the BDIC prioritize developmental lending opportunities in small communities. Programs such as the Venture Investment Program hold great potential to expand the private sector by providing equity investment into businesses. Equity investment opportunities should be pursued and actively promoted by the BDIC especially at this time.

### **Recommendation 1**

SCEDE recommends that the GNWT, through amendment of BDIC programs, increase business relief efforts through measures not limited to extending loan payment remission and providing loan forgiveness options. SCEDE also recommends the BDIC expand investment programs to stimulate economic development. SCEDE recommends the amendments to the loan program, and a plan to expand the investment program be completed and reported back to committee as per Recommendation 5.

Mr. Speaker, I pass this on to the MLA for Yellowknife North. Mahsi.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Member for Deh Cho. Member for Yellowknife North.

**MR. JOHNSON:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to speak to revising the Business Incentive Policy.

The GNWT spends over \$260 million annually on products and services. The GNWT alone can be a primary driver of economic recovery in the NWT

through purchasing power. The purpose of the Business Incentive Policy is to give preference to businesses that are owned and operated within the NWT. It is designed to promote economic growth and capacity within NWT businesses and the economy. Yet Members hear from constituents territory-wide of the challenges accessing government procurement opportunities.

Members have heard of the success stories in other circumpolar regions that level the playing field for small businesses competing for government contracts. Small business agencies provide financial and contractual assistance, as well as business development advice.

Committee is urging the GNWT to implement more forward-thinking policies and services that more effectively support and develop capacity among NWT businesses to compete for government contracts. Specifically, increasing client services and support to compete for GNWT contracting opportunities beyond the anticipated workshops and online one-stop-shop would be valuable.

50.7 percent of the total population is Indigenous, and yet there is no specific policy in the NWT that supports the development of Indigenous businesses. At the national level, and across the country, governments have established Indigenous business policies and strategies, with incentives such as advance communication, set-asides, and sole-source contracts to build capacity and competitive edge within the Indigenous private sector.

Revising the GNWT Business Incentive Policy to strengthen Indigenous participation in the NWT supports the economic measures laid out under the Tlicho Agreement, the Sahtu Dene Metis Comprehensive Land Claims, the Gwich'in Comprehensive Land Claim Agreement, the Inuvialuit Final Agreement, and the NWT Metis Nation Land and Resources Agreement-in-Principle.

Specifically, the committee is recommending the GNWT:

- review and revise criteria for eligibility under Schedule 3: Majority Non-Resident Owned Businesses (grandfathered businesses);
- revise eligibility requirements to include NWT labour force requirements;
- revise the 'lowest bidder' evaluation process to provide weight to other aspects of the bid, such as NWT and Indigenous labour development;
- review bid adjustment percentages for contracts over \$1,000,000; and

- expand provisions for monitoring and compliance of BIP companies.

In addition to the revisions of policy, the GNWT needs to improve interdepartmental awareness, training, and procedures that enable large contracts to be broken down to sizes where NWT businesses can successfully compete. GNWT staff must understand NWT business capabilities better. Processes need to be established to ensure staff persons are seeking out, engaging, and working collaboratively with NWT businesses, especially Indigenous businesses, in all competitive processes.

The committee further recommends that the GNWT increase awareness of tools that can be used in procurement to encourage northern manufacturing. Committee notes the proactive actions from government to communicate with, support, and promote manufacturers of COVID-19 related supplies and would like to see this continue and be expanded upon.

Committee recognizes the commitment under the mandate to strengthen procurement policies and practices and improving participation in the Business Incentive Policy by NWT companies. Committee is recommending tangible action on this in a shorter term. Committee stresses the urgency to have an amended Business Incentive Policy integrated into government services as soon as possible.

A key pillar of the NWT economy is the private sector. The business decisions of the GNWT will directly impact the ability of businesses to grow, expand, diversify, and innovate. Building capacity and encouraging innovation within the private sector needs to be top priority for all contracts and business opportunities by all GNWT departments. The effective participation of the private sector is not only integral to community resilience but has been demonstrated to greatly assist in the recovery phases of a crisis.

## **Recommendation 2**

SCEDE recommends the GNWT review and revise the Business Incentive Policy in collaboration with the business community as well as Members of the Legislative Assembly. SCEDE recommends this work commence immediately, and notwithstanding Recommendation 5, report to committee on the status of work by September 1, 2020, including a comprehensive work plan and a projected implementation date for the updated Business Incentive Policy.

Mr. Speaker, I would ask the MLA for Thebacha to read the report next. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Member for Yellowknife North. Member for Thebacha.

**MS. MARTSELOS:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

### Critical Infrastructure Development

Strategic investments in energy infrastructure will contribute to higher standards of living for Northerners, lower the territory's high-energy costs, and improve private-sector business cases for future investments. Investing in infrastructure today sets up tomorrow's economic growth.

Moving forward through COVID-19, the need to be resilient and self-sufficient is increasingly apparent to all NWT residents. Sustainable energy (for residents, business, and industry) is a priority item for committee.

The Energy Action Plan 2019-2022 has identified the expansion of transmission line development to Fort Providence and Whati. Longer term goals include: hydropower expansion; connecting the transmission line south to the North American electrical grid; as well as north to potential future mining projects. The total capital investment required for this project is over \$1 billion.

The committee recognizes Indigenous ownership in this project is critical and acknowledges the federal funding provided in 2019 to support Indigenous engagement of the Taltson Hydro Expansion project. Committee would like to know the results of this funding. Committee also acknowledges the mandate of the GNWT to establish collaborative partnerships with Indigenous governments for the Taltson Hydro Expansion Project.

The committee is additionally concerned of the capacity for northern businesses to maximize benefits in the construction phase. The GNWT can engage stakeholders and work interdepartmentally to lead efforts that advance NWT business capacity for the purposes of maximizing northern benefits from the construction, operations, and maintenance phases.

Committee also recognizes the GNWT is making efforts to modernize GNWT procurement to reflect best practices, and notes that these practices should be formalized prior to future construction of major projects.

### Recommendation 3

SCEDE recommends the GNWT work with Indigenous stakeholders and define the Indigenous ownership of the Taltson Hydro Expansion. Committee further recommends the GNWT lead interdepartmental efforts with project stakeholders to develop a plan that builds capacity among

northern businesses to maximize benefits from the construction of this project.

The next to come up is the MLA for Frame Lake. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Member for Thebacha. Member for Frame Lake.

**MR. O'REILLY:** Merci, Monsieur le President. In today's digital world, the Internet is integrated into every aspect of our lives, and we increasingly rely upon it for ever-expanding uses, including social, recreational, educational, health, employment, financial, business, and innovation opportunities. While all communities in the NWT have access to the Internet, the northern part of the territory is still largely connected on outdated, slow, intermittent infrastructure. The southern part of the territory, while connected to the fibre link, lacks redundancy and is subject to outages.

While the Mackenzie Valley Fibre Link Project has been completed, the distribution system in northern communities is still lacking and the residents remain disconnected from the benefits of high-speed Internet access. The user price for northern communication services remains the highest in the country.

Furthermore, 20.3 percent of NWT households do not have Internet access. When looking at households without Internet connection across the territory, the regions with lowest access are the Tlicho and Dehcho, at nearly half of households not connected, followed by the Sahtu and Beaufort-Delta, at 30 percent not connected. Most major highways in the NWT have intermittent cellular service at best. COVID-19 has highlighted the critical importance of ensuring all NWT residents have consistent, reliable, and faster access to information from their homes.

Canada's Connectivity Strategy features two main objectives: that all Canadian have access to broadband at speeds of at least 50 Mbps download and 10Mbps upload; and that mobile wireless services coverage is available where Canadians live and work, and along major road corridors.

Included in the new Universal Broadband fund, the Government of Canada will look to secure advanced, new low-latency Low Earth Orbit Satellite capacity. A process was launched in the spring of 2019 to bring reliable high-speed Internet access to even the most challenging-to-reach rural and remote homes and communities in Canada.

Northwestel's vision aligns with Canada's to bring 50/10Mbps Internet with unlimited data options to every community in the NWT. The company has submitted an application to Canadian Radio-television and Telecommunications Commission to

invest in Fiber-to-the-Home and LEO satellites to deliver on these objectives.

Improving the Internet connection in the NWT must be done in collaboration with industry, and supported through GNWT and Government of Canada investments. Committee acknowledges the GNWT mandate to advance work to support fast and reliable broadband Internet services in all NWT communities and would like to see this work prioritized in response to COVID-19. In support of the efforts to secure funding and produce community business cases, committee is looking for initial costed plans for the development of community distribution systems off the Mackenzie Valley Fiber Link, as well as LEO satellites to the most remote communities.

#### **Recommendation 4**

SCEDE recommends the GNWT complete a costed plan to provide broadband Internet connectivity across the territory comparable to the rest of Canada. In addition to the financial costs of extending broadband distribution into all communities, the plan should identify ownership model options, such as public, private, or partnership, for the delivery of broadband services. Notwithstanding Recommendation 5, committee recommends the costed plan be provided to committee by September 1, 2020.

Mr. Speaker, I'd like to turn the final part of the report over to the chair of the committee, the honourable Member for Nunakput. Mahsi, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Member for Frame Lake. Member for Nunakput.

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

#### **Recommendation 5**

The Standing Committee on Economic Development and Environment recommends the Government provide a response to the recommendations contained in this report within 120 days. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Member for Nunakput. Reports of standing and special committees. Member for Thebacha.

#### COMMITTEE REPORT 2-19(2): REPORT ON LONG-TERM POST-PANDEMIC RECOVERY: RECOMMENDATIONS TO THE GNWT

**MS. MARTSELOS:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Your Standing Committee on Government Operations is pleased to provide its Report on Long-term Post-pandemic Recovery: Recommendations to the

Government of the Northwest Territories, and commends it to the House.

The Standing Committee on Government Operations has developed the following recommendations to the Government of the Northwest Territories concerning the Northwest Territories long-term, post-pandemic recovery, with a specific focus on the departments for which the standing committee has oversight: Executive and Indigenous Affairs, Finance, and Municipal and Community Affairs.

#### **Coordination of Overall Government Response to Pandemic**

Committee is generally satisfied with the government's response to COVID-19, but feels that lessons can be learned to improve the Government of the Northwest Territories' response to future pandemics, including a potential second wave of COVID-19 infections requiring the Northwest Territories to return to a containment phase, as described in the Government of the Northwest Territories' plan for safely easing pandemic restrictions, *Emerging Wisely: Continued Public Health Response to COVID-19 in the Northwest Territories*.

With respect to the Government of the Northwest Territories' overall response to the pandemic, the standing committee feels that the Government of the Northwest Territories must build on the lessons learned from this experience to ensure that future emergency responses are as prompt as possible. Committee also feels that strong, visible leadership on the part of the Premier and her Cabinet Ministers is essential to ensuring a successful emergency response. With respect to the overall government response to future emergencies, committee makes recommendations in the following areas: the emergency response legislative framework; public communications; and enforcement.

I will now turn the reading over to Ms. Green. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Member for Thebacha. Member for Yellowknife Centre.

**MS. GREEN:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

#### **Emergency Response Legislative Framework**

In response to the COVID-19 global pandemic and to protect public health in the Northwest Territories, the Minister of Health and Social Services declared a territory-wide public health emergency on March 18, 2020, pursuant to the Northwest Territories Public Health Act. This declaration invested the Chief Public Health Officer with expanded powers, including the power to:

- Authorize qualified people to provide additional aid and services, as needed;
- Expedite emergency licensing of additional healthcare providers;
- Make orders and provide directions restricting or prohibiting travel to or from any area within the Northwest Territories;
- Coordinate and provide for the delivery of medical services; and
- Procure and provide for the distribution of medical supplies and equipment across the NWT.

On March 24, the Minister of Municipal and Community Affairs declared a territorial state of emergency, pursuant to the Emergency Management Act. Similar to the declaration made under the Public Health Act, this declaration has also allowed for expanded powers, in this instance to the Minister of Municipal and Community Affairs and the Emergency Management Organization (EMO) under MACA's administration. This enabled the GNWT to control and direct the actions of the government and its agencies to support the orders of the Chief Public Health Officer.

The authority of the GNWT to declare a public health emergency pursuant to the Public Health Act and a territorial state of emergency under the Emergency Management Act underlined a potential legislative void, in that it did not expressly provide the Premier with the authority to coordinate and manage the overall response. This lack of authority prompted Premier Cochrane to appoint a new associate deputy minister of Municipal and Community Affairs on March 30, 2020, and to subsequently assume responsibility for the entire MACA portfolio on April 7, 2020.

Committee supports the Premier's decision to take steps to assume clear authority for the overall government response, but notes that it can be destabilizing to replace a Cabinet Minister in the midst of an emergency and that such a move would not have been necessary had the appropriate legislative structure been in place to allow the Premier to take overall control of the emergency response without also having to assume the role of Minister of Municipal and Community Affairs.

### Recommendation 1

The Standing Committee on Government Operations recommends that the GNWT undertake a review of the legislative framework supporting the GNWT's emergency response, with a view to determining what amendments are necessary to ensure that the Premier has overall administrative control whenever a public health emergency and a

territorial state of emergency are declared under their respective acts at the same time. Committee further recommends that the GNWT bring forward a legislative proposal to make the necessary amendments to the GNWT's emergency response legislative framework during the life of the 19<sup>th</sup> Legislative Assembly.

I will now turn the report over to the honourable Member for Kam Lake.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Member for Yellowknife Centre. Member for Kam Lake.

**MS. CLEVELAND:** Thank you.

### Public Communications

Centralized, clear, and consistent communications to the public are important during an emergency. Such communications can ensure that people understand what is expected of them and that they know where to turn for help and further information. This is most important at the outset, when an emergency is called, because that is the time when public fears and uncertainty are at their highest. Again, committee is generally satisfied with the GNWT's communications response to the COVID-19 pandemic but feels that more should have been done, sooner, to put the government's emergency communications response in place.

During the earliest days of the GNWT's response, around the time that staff were instructed to begin working from home, Premier Cochrane found it necessary to self-isolate as a result of having travelled. Lack of visibility by the Premier, while understandable, reflected the lack of a clear communications plan for the Premier and her Cabinet to lead the public through this emergency.

Committee members appreciate the briefings that came to be held by the Premier and the Chief Medical Health Officer but notes that these could have been more effective if they had been scheduled to occur on a regular basis at a fixed time and if they had been clearly publicized through a variety of media channels. Committee believes the example set by the Prime Minister, who held regular daily briefings for the nation, should be emulated by the GNWT during any future emergency response.

Committee believes that the implementation of the 811 NWT COVID Support Hotline was a positive move but notes that it was not opened to the public until April 17, more than a month after GNWT employees were instructed to begin working from home. Committee encourages the GNWT to prioritize the opening of such a hotline in future so that the public has a number to call from the outset of a declaration of emergency. Committee further suggests that the GNWT should not move to close

the existing hotline until well after the final pandemic response measures are lifted pursuant to Emerging Wisely.

Committee feels that, if ever there is a time when the GNWT should strive to speak as one government, with one voice, it is during an emergency such as that created by COVID-19. Members strongly encourage the GNWT to design and execute a public communications approach with this overarching objective in mind. Members note that multiple government websites and channels of communication created uncertainty for their constituents, who looked to their MLAs to confirm facts and quell misinformation. This uncertainty was exacerbated by the fact that information was not always kept current in all locations at the same time, leading to a lack of consistency in the information being made available to the public.

Committee was pleased to see the GNWT launch a definitive single COVID-19 website on May 9, 2020 but again notes that this was not done until almost two months after the onset of the pandemic. In future, the GNWT should strive to make such a website available from the outset of an emergency. Members also note constituent complaints about the lack of information in languages other than English and therefore feel that more effort must be made to provide information in as many of the NWT's official languages as possible.

Members also feel strongly that, particularly in the smaller communities, the availability of information by electronic means should not supplant the need for the GNWT to provide visible leadership to assist residents. In future emergencies, committee would like to see the GNWT keep a single office open in each of the smaller communities, where people can go to ask questions and seek clarity. Committee notes that the government service officers in the department of executive's single-window service centres might be best positioned to fulfil this role, provided they are equipped with the appropriate social distancing measures and personal protective equipment necessary to ensure their safety and that of their clients.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to turn it over to the honourable Member for Yellowknife North at this time.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Member for Kam Lake. Member for Yellowknife North.

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

Committee further believes that the GNWT needs to do more to communicate with its most vulnerable populations, many of whom do not have access to computers or who found their access limited as a

result of the closure of schools and libraries. Such communications should focus on pamphlets, mail-outs, radio, and cable messaging designed specifically to reach residents who do not have access to computers.

### **Recommendation 2**

The Standing Committee on Government Operations recommends that the GNWT develop an emergency response communications protocol that ensures regularly scheduled updates to the public by the Premier and the appropriate emergency authorities whenever an emergency is declared under either or both the Public Health Act and the Emergency Measures Act. This protocol should also ensure that the GNWT's public response via electronic means is supplemented by non-electronic communications mechanisms.

### **Enforcement**

The standing committee acknowledges the importance of ensuring that the public complies with the orders of the Chief Public Health Officer and supports the GNWT's efforts to mobilize and deploy an enforcement task force. Again, however, committee notes that the government's response was not as prompt as it could have been, pointing out that the announcement of the task force on April 8 did not come until a full three weeks after the declaration of a public emergency. It is committee's hope that gaps in existing enforcement efforts can be corrected now and that planning for future enforcement will include the identification of individuals and positions that can be seconded to work on enforcement, thereby allowing earlier deployment of an enforcement task force.

A number of issues arose with respect to enforcement that will need to be better addressed in future emergencies, including a possible second wave of COVID-19. The GNWT will need to work in collaboration with Indigenous and municipal governments to clarify the authority for establishing highway check stops outside of border crossings and to ensure that, where they are established, there are guidelines for their operation and consistency in how they are managed. The committee encourages the GNWT to obtain input from community representatives about how their issues and concerns were addressed in the COVID-19 response and to determine how to improve collaboration and make changes to any future response. This should include obtaining feedback about the efficiency and effectiveness of the isolation centres established in Inuvik, Yellowknife, Hay River, and Fort Smith.

Members have heard complaints from constituents who arrived at the border to discover that the GNWT did not have handouts containing

information, or copies of forms that travellers were expected to complete. In some cases, the information that was disseminated did not include contact information for authorities.

There also appeared to be little consistency in follow-up with respect to ensuring that those in isolation are complying with orders. Committee believes that better enforcement would be supported by the development of a policy framework that, among other things, distinguishes between discretionary self-isolation, mandatory self-isolation, and mandatory isolation ordered by authorities; specifies how these differ with respect to enforcement; and which provides enforcement officers with guidance when verbal or written warnings are advisable, compared with fines or other punitive measures.

### Recommendation 3

The Standing Committee on Government Operations recommends that the GNWT undertake steps now to address the public concerns about gaps in enforcement so that remedies are put in place before the possibility of a second wave of COVID-19 this autumn. Committee further recommends the planning necessary to ensure that an enforcement task force can be mobilized within 48 hours of a future declaration of emergency. The committee also recommends that the GNWT undertakes a dialogue with municipal and Indigenous governments to obtain their input on enforcement measures and to use this information to guide the development of a policy framework for the future enforcement of orders issued during a public health or territorial emergency.

Mr. Speaker, I will ask MLA Semmler to read the rest of the report. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Member for Yellowknife North. Member for Inuvik Twin Lakes.

**MS. SEMMLER:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

### Northwest Territories Digital Infrastructure

The global response to the COVID pandemic has illustrated the vital importance of digital communications for both human interaction and business continuity. The ability of individuals and families to connect online has been critical to ensuring that people can work and study from home, stay abreast of the changing global situation, and nurture vital family and community networks to support community cohesion and individual mental health.

In 2017, the GNWT completed construction of the Mackenzie Valley Fibre Link project, a 1,200-kilometre fibre-optic line from Alberta to Inuvik. This public-private partnership project cost the GNWT

\$95 million in capital costs and will cost an additional \$64 million in operational costs over the 23-year duration of the contract. The GNWT claimed to have "connected" six communities with a high speed, fibre optic, digital internet connection. However, the Finance Minister later stated, "Linking this backbone to the community is what's called the 'last mile.' This service is provided by the local service provider as GNWT is not in the business of providing local Internet service...We own Mackenzie Valley fibre optic line. I think we're responsible for getting it out to pop-out, as it's called in the community, and then their service provider would go from there." This has left it unclear which communities are directly linked to the Mackenzie Valley Fibre Link and which are still waiting for local service providers to make the connection a reality.

There is also no clear plan for connecting those outlying communities that could have access to the Mackenzie Valley Fibre Link, but which are not located directly on the path of the fibre link.

Lack of access to the NWT's digital infrastructure can put businesses, students, and vulnerable populations at a greater disadvantage during a pandemic. The GNWT must do all it can to ensure not only that the NWT has a robust digital infrastructure, but that all NWT communities are able to benefit from its existence. Committee takes note of initiatives such as the Yukon Government's decision to provide prepaid cell phones to at-risk populations during the COVID-19 emergency, and the provision of Wi-Fi in low-cost housing by some community housing associations. Committee encourages the GNWT to investigate some of the initiatives used in other jurisdictions and consider how they could be adapted for use in the Northwest Territories.

### Recommendation 4

The Standing Committee on Government Operations recommends that the GNWT develop digital communications plan for the Northwest Territories, that: assesses the state of telecommunications infrastructure serving each NWT community; identifies the costs and timelines associated with ensuring that all NWT communities have access to high-speed, digital telecommunications; and identifies who will be responsible for the work and how it will be achieved. The GNWT's long-term pandemic response must also include provisions ensuring that vulnerable populations have access to the Internet during a pandemic lockdown, by developing plans on a community-by-community basis for ensuring Internet access for individuals when libraries and community centres are ordered closed during a lockdown.

### Human Resource Practices

In the middle of March, the GNWT took the unprecedented step, as did many governments and businesses around the world, of directing its employees to begin working from home. This extreme but necessary decision allowed the GNWT to best protect the health and safety of its employees, while allowing for business continuity. It will, undoubtedly, yield lessons that can benefit the GNWT in preparing for future emergencies and help shape future business operations.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to turn it over to the Member for Thebacha. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Member for Inuvik Twin Lakes. Member for Thebacha.

**MS. MARTSELOS:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Committee Members have heard a variety of concerns raised by their constituents about the experience of working from home. Front-line workers have expressed frustration that they are being required to risk their lives and put in long hours, while other GNWT employees are collecting their full paycheques while working from home, where they may or may not be working a full work week. Some constituents feel that the GNWT could be providing better support to employees to assist them to be productive while working from home.

The committee would like to see the GNWT undertake some analysis of employees' experiences while working from home, with a view to developing a "Working from Home Policy" to guide employees, should it become necessary for large numbers of employees to work from home in future. This policy should address the unique circumstances of front-line workers, should include accountability measures for all employees working from home, should identify the supports that will be provided by the GNWT to employees working from home, and should identify circumstances under which employees may be eligible to work from home during non-emergency periods, including circumstances necessitated by the GNWT's duty to accommodate ill or injured employees.

### Recommendation 5

The Standing Committee on Government Operations recommends that the GNWT prepare a "lessons learned" report, based on employee input, which can be used to inform the development of a "Working from Home Policy" designed to identify the circumstances under which employees will be authorized or directed to work from home, what supports are available to employees, and what expectations the GNWT has with respect to the accountability of staff members who are working from home. The committee further recommends

that this work be completed by August 31, 2020, and shared with the standing committee for input, consistent with the 19<sup>th</sup> Legislative Assembly's Process Convention on the Standing Committee Review of Proposed Policy Initiatives and Implementation Plans.

### Conclusion

This concludes the Standing Committee on Government Operations' Report on Long-term Post-pandemic Recovery: Recommendations to the GNWT.

### Recommendation 6

The Standing Committee on Government Operations recommends that the GNWT provide a response to the recommendations contained in this report within 120 days.

MOTION TO RECEIVE COMMITTEE REPORT 2-19(2) AND MOVE INTO COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE,  
CARRIED

Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the honourable Member for Yellowknife North, that Committee Report 2-19(2), Standing Committee on Government Operations' Report on Long-term Post-pandemic Recovery: Recommendations to the GNWT, be received by the Assembly and moved into Committee of the Whole for further consideration. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Member for Thebacha. To the motion.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Question.

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

---Carried

The report has been moved into Committee of the Whole. Member for Nunakput.

**MR. JACOBSON:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I move, seconded by the honourable Member for Deh Cho, that Committee Report 1-19(2), Standing Committee on Economic Development and Environment's Report on Long-term Post-pandemic Recovery: Recommendations to the GNWT, be received by the Assembly and moved into Committee of the Whole for further consideration. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Member for Nunakput. 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? Any abstentions? The motion is carried.

---Carried

The report has been moved into Committee of the Whole. Colleagues, before we continue, I would like to draw your attention to Mr. James Thomas, our new intern to the Clerk's Office. Today is his first day in this House. Welcome.

Reports of standing and special committees. Member for Kam Lake.

COMMITTEE REPORT 3-19(2):  
REPORT ON LONG-TERM POST-PANDEMIC  
RECOVERY: RECOMMENDATIONS TO THE  
GNWT

**MS. CLEVELAND:** Mr. Speaker, your Standing Committee on Social Development is pleased to provide its report on long-term post-pandemic recovery recommendations to the GNWT and commends it to the House.

### Introduction

The Standing Committee on Social Development developed the following recommendations to the Government of the Northwest Territories concerning the Northwest Territories long-term, post-pandemic recovery, with a specific focus on the departments for which the Standing Committee has oversight: NWT Housing Corporation, Education Culture and Employment, Department of Health and Social Services, and the Department of Justice.

### Coordination of Social and Health Responses to Pandemic

Overall, committee appreciates the work of the GNWT to integrate and align systems and resources to address the needs of NWT during COVID. Committee is especially supportive of coordinated efforts taken to make available housing, income, health, and addictions supports to residents most in need. Committee will be focusing on these areas in more detail as longer-term work undertaken over the four years of the 19<sup>th</sup> Assembly.

Limited access to programs and services in small communities is a long-standing concern. Throughout the government's COVID response, committee Members observed differences between the resources and planning made available to address the needs of residents in communities and those made available to address the needs of residents in Yellowknife. To improve the GNWT's response to future pandemics, including a potential second wave of COVID, committee would like to

see an increased focus in the coordination of social development resources, policies, and programming to support emergency management planning with Indigenous and community governments.

At this time Committee recommends the following important resources and policies remain in place to support NWT residents during the GNWT's post COVID recovery efforts. Committee acknowledges that additional research and cost analysis may be needed by the GNWT in order to fully investigate and advance the following recommendations.

### Income Supports

Committee appreciates ECE's recognition and responsiveness throughout the pandemic to support clients by making key policy changes to the territory's Income Assistance Program. Committee fully supports the department's use of client-focused policy and programming to address immediate financial needs. Preventative measures that have been put in place by all levels of government to cope with the pandemic and slow its spread appear to have succeeded in fending off worst-case scenarios. Preventative measures include ensuring vulnerable populations have access to stable and consistent income.

Stable income is one of the most important socioeconomic factors to positively influence all aspects of life and reduce downstream costs on other areas of social systems. The lack of adequate income underlies poverty and contributes to nutritional vulnerability, inadequate shelter, and compromised health and well-being. Committee recognizes economic recovery planning may increase the use of the Income Assistance Program as many NWT residents were ordered to reduce their hours, stop going to work, and have lost jobs. Many private businesses have been ordered to shut down or reduce operations and are now struggling financially to reopen. Committee feels continued support from ECE is required to support NWT residents to access a stable and reliable source of income.

### Recommendation 1

Standing Committee on Social Development recommends ECE make permanent the policy changes made to support clients in response to COVID:

- to continue to reduce the amount of verification information required to apply for Income Assistance, to ensure clients are registered as quickly as possible, and automatically assessed for both basic needs and enhanced benefits;
- to continue with the allowable income exemptions and to increase the annual income

limit for unearned income per year, on top of the money received from Impact Benefit Agreements, Treaty, or Land Claim agreements;

- to continue to allow for clients to select self-care as a productive choice option, and reduce the requirement for face-to-face monthly reporting; and
- to continue to payroll long-term, vulnerable IA clients, to increase consistent payments to a three-month reporting.

Mr. Speaker, I'd like to turn it over to the honourable Member for the Deh Cho at this time. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Member for Kam Lake. Member for Deh Cho.

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

### Health

Committee appreciates the concerted efforts made by the GNWT to prevent the spread of COVID in the NWT. While the GNWT has done a remarkable job in preventing the spread of COVID, committee is concerned about the supply of standard and rapid testing kits available to the NWT residents, both currently and for future waves of the COVID. Testing units assist in diagnosing at a more rapid rate for situations where contact tracing is critical and actions to contain transmission can be put in place faster. With global shortages in the supply chain, the DHSS reports that the number of tests received weekly may fluctuate and is expected to continue to fluctuate going forward. Committee understands all COVID tests need to be validated through an accredited lab. For the NWT, the closest accredited lab is in Alberta. Committee shares concerns about potential delays in receiving test results, given the NWT's remote geographic area spread across 33 communities.

### Recommendation 2

Standing Committee on Social Development recommends DHSS continue to work with national partners to increase testing supplies, materials, and Personal Protective Equipment to maintain a robust inventory for the anticipated second wave of COVID-19.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to turn it over to the Member for Yellowknife Centre. Mahsi.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Member for Deh Cho. Member for Yellowknife Centre.

**MS. GREEN:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

### Housing Affordability

Committee supports the changes in policy and processes made to the Transitional Rent Supplement Program, or the TRSP, to create greater accessibility for those renting in the private market. In Yellowknife and Inuvik, where most private market rentals are located, many renters experience challenges with affordable housing as a result of the high rent and shelter costs. In 2016, CMHC's Market Rental Report states Yellowknife has the highest rent in Canada. In 2020, results from the Energy Hub on energy rates across Canada also report that Northwest Territories residents are paying the most for electricity in Canada, contributing to the high cost of living in the territory. Recently, CMHC has reported on the potential for a new affordability measure. The current affordability measure, known as the 30 percent shelter cost-to-income ratio, or STIR, is a similar metric used to calculate the NWT subsidy rate under the TRSP. The Housing as a Hardship measure considers both housing and non-housing expenses when assessing affordability and is more sensitive to family size and location than the commonly used 30 percent standard. Committee recognizes COVID has brought many social issues front and centre, including the lack of housing and housing affordability in the NWT. As the GNWT begins the Emerging Wisely process, committee is interested in resilient action from government to ensure residents struggling with housing affordability issues are stabilized and for residents who do not have housing to receive financial support to access healthy affordable housing.

### Recommendation 3

Standing Committee on Social Development recommends the NWTHC retain the policy changes made to the TRSP during the pandemic and to continue to improve access and affordability within private market housing until such a time that the Canadian Housing Benefit is operational.

Mr. Speaker, I'd like to turn the reading of the report over to the Member for Inuvik Twin Lakes. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Member for Yellowknife Centre. Member for Inuvik Twin Lakes.

**MS. SEMMLER:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

### Childcare Supports

Committee supports the additional financial resources provided by ECE to licensed childcare programs and services to address costs associated with the pandemic and measures to sustain programming. Committee understands the continued need for affordable childcare and recognizes the fiscal and organizational challenges in the developing and maintaining childcare

organizations in the NWT. Some of the challenges noted within ECE's review of administrative funding processes under Early Childhood Programs include the need to revise the funding allocations to meet the needs of child daycare facilities. This includes improving and increasing funding models to address challenges with fixed operating costs. Issues childcare organizations face include attendance-based funding. Problems occur when attendance drops and operation costs remain the same, leaving childcare organizations without enough funds to continue to pay for fixed overhead costs. Other issues for childcare programs include having enough funding for staffing costs, which represent approximately 80 percent of childcare programming costs. Subsidy rates vary depending on community, location, age of children, and full- or part-time status. In communities, the barriers to establishing a non-profit society and oversight board for childcare programs is particularly difficult, including locating safe, adequate, and affordable spaces, and the high maintenance costs and lack of funding to support necessary renovations.

#### **Recommendation 4**

Committee recommends the GNWT advance universal childcare by maintaining the additional funding provided during the pandemic to support operational, cleaning costs, employee wage subsidies, and food insecurity issues anticipated to be more severe post-COVID.

#### **Education Supports**

Committee supports ECE in efforts to provide home-based schooling during the pandemic, including the District Education Councils' approach to provide learning opportunities for JK to 12 students with flexible, home-based resources. Some examples from DECs' home-based supports include supplying jump drives, turbo sticks, devices and modems for digital learning, and distributing paper learning packages to students and families. DECs provide support to families to address food security and financial challenges through the distribution of gift cards. DECs also support mental health initiatives, like wellness checks and online or phone-in counselling services. Committee recognizes there are socioeconomic and geographical factors that contribute the limited access to technology and Internet in the NWT and that this can interfere with home-based learning. Approximately 20 percent of homes in the NWT are without Internet access, and in regions like the Deh Cho and Tlcho, 50 percent of homes are without Internet access. In a recent international review of children without access to Internet or digital technology, educators and policymakers have been called to expand their education strategies beyond online learning to include community-based resources, like radio and television broadcasts.

Another important area committee felt was necessary to make school systems stronger is the need for family outreach and engagement in education. Committee is aware students often do better when parents are engaged in their child's education, particularly when they ask questions about what they are learning at school.

Children of low-income families in the smaller communities are of interest to committee, as Members observe and have been informed schools frequently struggle to build meaningful connections with parents. To reduce any further inequalities caused by school closures during COVID, committee believes that, for students living in vulnerable homes, greater financial and peer support and outreach is needed to help parents work with their children to complete school work. To do this, committee feels it is important for schools to build meaningful and non-judgemental relationships with families deemed "high risk" to ensure families feel they can accept supports or reach out for help from schools.

#### **Recommendation 5**

Committee recommends ECE to direct the district education councils to keep technology to support student home-based learning during COVID. Committee also recommends ECE focus on positive interventions and outreach to improve relationships between families of high-risk or vulnerable students.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to turn it over to the Member for Hay River South.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Member for Inuvik Twin Lakes. Member for Hay River South.

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

#### **Wage Top-Up**

Committee appreciates the work of the Department of Finance to increase support to low-income workers during the COVID-19 pandemic. The GNWT made it possible for businesses to increase wages for employees 15 years and older earning less than \$18 per hour through a temporary wage top-up. NWT minimum wage legislation states that employers must pay workers a minimum of \$13.46 per hour. In contrast to the minimum wage, living wage is what full-time workers must earn to afford basic living expenses, based as closely as possible on the actual cost of goods and services within their community. In this way, community living wage rates can be an indicator of affordability.

In 2019, Alternatives North released living wage estimates for Yellowknife, Inuvik, and Hay River. All three communities came in at more than \$23 an hour. A living wage is what it takes for a household

to cover its basic expenses without severe financial stress. The calculation is based on a household with two full-time working adults and two young children. It accounts for government benefits and deductions, such as the Canada Child Benefit and income taxes. It doesn't factor in things like debt payments, home ownership, saving for children's future education, or the costs associated with caring for a disabled or elderly family member.

In the NWT there are approximately 2,999 households who report they had difficulties paying for living expenses, including transportation, housing, food, clothing, and other necessary expenses. Committee believes a wage top-up program can assist with economic recovery by supporting service-sector workers providing key programs and services to continue to employ NWT residents.

### Recommendation 6

Committee recommends the GNWT continue to offer the wage top-up as a permanent program to businesses, providing financial assistance to NWT workers aged 15 or over and earning less than \$18 per hour.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to turn it over to the Member for Kam Lake.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Member for Hay River South. Member for Kam Lake.

**MS. CLEVELAND:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

### Conclusion

This concludes the Standing Committee on Social Development, Report on Long-term Post-pandemic Recovery: Recommendations to the GNWT.

### Recommendation 7

The Standing Committee on Social Development recommends that the GNWT provide a response to the recommendations contained in this report within 120 days. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Member for Kam Lake. Member for Kam Lake.

MOTION TO RECEIVE COMMITTEE REPORT 3-19(2) AND MOVE INTO COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE,  
CARRIED

**MS. CLEVELAND:** Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the honourable Member for Inuvik Twin Lakes, that Committee Report 13-19(2), Standing Committee on Social Development Report on Long-Term Post-Pandemic Recovery: Recommendations to the GNWT, be received by the Assembly and

moved into Committee of the Whole for further consideration. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Member for Kam Lake. 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? Any abstentions? The motion is carried.

---Carried

The report will be moved into Committee of the Whole. Colleagues, we will take a short recess. Thank you.

---SHORT RECESS

**MR. SPEAKER:** Item 7, returns to oral questions. Item 8, acknowledgements. Item 9, oral questions. Member for Thebacha.

### Oral Questions

QUESTION 304-19(2):  
INJUSTICE TO INDIGENOUS CORRECTIONS  
EMPLOYEES

**MS. MARTSELOS:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In previous private statements to the Justice Minister, I made statements regarding Indigenous staff members within corrections not having a neutral mechanism to air grievances. Staff are sometimes terminated before the issue is even dealt with by the Union of Northern Workers. My question is: how is the Minister and her department going to deal with this type of injustice to our Indigenous public employees? Is this what accountability and transparency in the Department of Justice looks like? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Member for Thebacha. Minister of Justice.

**HON. CAROLINE WAWAZONEK:** Thank you, Madam Speaker. There are well-established processes within all of the public service that allow people to report wrongdoing to their supervisors and managers. There are also processes in place that allow for whistleblowing through an agreement that we have so far. There are different ways that people can go about reporting what they perceive to be wrongdoing, and certainly, Mr. Speaker, all unionized employees are encouraged to engage in their unions, specifically to corrections.

Mr. Speaker, this is a challenging work environment, which is why already, earlier in January, we established a connection, a working group between justice and human resources section. They do have a work plan in place. There

were some delays in terms of some of the rollout that was expected to happen this spring and some of the responding measures that were expected to happen this spring, but I did check back in with corrections, and it is my understanding that they are now back on track to have some very specific human resources work done so that they can continue to improve that workplace for its staff. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MS. MARTSELOS:** As a former Chief, I've seen first hand the mistreatment of Indigenous peoples by the RCMP, the courts, and the corrections system. As mentioned in my statement, I have seen countless cases of police brutality, along with more severe punishments for Indigenous people and greater rates of incarceration for Indigenous people, too. My question is: does the Minister believe that a review of our courts, corrections, and policing systems are needed in the NWT, and, if so, what would that look like?

**HON. CAROLINE WAWZONEK:** Earlier today, a number of MLAs spoke very passionately about systemic racism, its presence, and its reality in Canada and in the Northwest Territories, and no department is immune to that. The Department of Justice isn't immune to that. As far as a review, an overall review of corrections, courts, policing, no, Mr. Speaker, in my view, that's not the direction that we're intending to go right now. It doesn't mean we don't have a lot of work to do to improve the systems that we are within. There are certainly a lot of efforts underway already to increase engagement with individual communities, with Indigenous communities, to reduce the over-incarceration of Indigenous people, to improve the connections between RCMP and Indigenous people. This is something that is really system-wide, Mr. Speaker, and at this point, it's not a review. I think we've had a lot, the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Missing and Murdered national inquiry, and frankly, the Royal Commission on Aboriginal People is going back to 1996. We know what the solutions are. They are out there. We just need to start acting on them. Mr. Speaker, what it's going to look like is that we have to start looking very meaningfully at what those recommendations are and start to actually take some steps to achieve them.

**MS. MARTSELOS:** In a recent CBC interview, the Premier discussed potential ideas to help improve the RCMP and its relationship with the communities it serves. With respect, Mr. Speaker, I want to recall some previous conversations with the justice Minister regarding a lack of enforcement on drug dealers and of the RCMP interactions regarding concerned citizens. I was told repeatedly that the RCMP is a separate entity and that it's arm's length from our government. My question is: since our Premier and our Member of parliament are now

weighing in on RCMP activity, can the Minister clarify what role and responsibility our government holds in preventing the use of excessive force and police brutality in the Northwest Territories?

**HON. CAROLINE WAWZONEK:** The RCMP are the police force in the Northwest Territories by virtue of the Territorial Police Services Agreement. That is an agreement that we have through the federal Department of Justice, given that, indeed, the RCMP are a national police force. As such, we don't have operational control over their operations. We don't necessarily have the right or ability to direct, for example, who is hired, who is placed where, or how investigations are conducted. That said, Mr. Speaker, we do have the ability, through that agreement, to do what is called the Minister's police priorities. We do support having the RCMP in the communities, acting on those priorities to have community policing engagements.

While we are not directing the operations, we do have a role in engaging and directing the overall direction of the police within the Northwest Territories. As far as continuing to hold the police accountable, all are a number of avenues that individuals can take to report behaviours that are inconsistent with the values of the Northwest Territories, values of Canada, and values of the charter. I would certainly encourage anyone to continue to use those avenues, and we will continue to use our avenues to engage and ensure the priorities of the RCMP match up with the priorities that were espoused here in the House.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Minister. Final supplementary, Member for Thebacha.

**MS. MARTSELOS:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In a recent interview, the Prime Minister said he would be seeking feedback from all Canadian Premiers about how to improve policing across Canada. My question is: what recommendations, if any, will our government be giving to the Prime Minister about how to improve policing in the NWT and reduce police brutality on residents? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**HON. CAROLINE WAWZONEK:** I believe our Premier's already spoken quite forcefully about the importance of this initiative and about the importance of looking for options to increase trust between law enforcement and citizenry. Mr. Speaker, there are a number of programs already underway and initiatives underway, not the least of which is the First Nations' Policing Program, which, through a lot of advocacy through the Department of Justice, they have been able to add five positions to a regional cohort here in the Northwest Territories with the hope that, with more people on the ground, more officers on the ground, it will

better allow them to engage with communities and have presence in the communities.

Mr. Speaker, though there is much more that we can do in my view, in my view, again, as I've said, there are recommendations within the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women. There are recommendations in the TRC. We should be looking at those recommendations and being strong advocates with our federal partners so that they are acting on them and so that they are helping us to fund the actions that are being recommended. Mr. Speaker, I will be taking, certainly, another look at them and looking at where we can help advocate for those changes. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Minister. Oral questions. Member for Hay River South.

QUESTION 305-19(2):  
STATUS OF NORTHWEST TERRITORIES  
BORDERS

**MR. ROCKY SIMPSON:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The questions will be for the Minister of health. Over the last few days the community of Hay River has been swirling with rumours that the NWT border is going to be thrown wide open as of Friday and that anyone will be able to enter the NWT. It's going to be a free-for-all. Can the Minister of Health and Social Services please outline what is going on with the border at this time? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Member for Hay River South. Minister of Health and Social Services.

**HON. DIANE THOM:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We have come to the realization that the border restrictions we had in place were restrictive and possibly in contravention with the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms as it relates to mobility. We have adjusted our policies accordingly. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. ROCKY SIMPSON:** Can the Minister confirm who will be allowed into the Northwest Territories under the new border rules? Can anyone just come in to the NWT now? Is it going to be a free-for-all, or do we have different people identified?

**HON. DIANE THOM:** The new order is primarily focused on people who are looking to move into the Northwest Territories and are starting or looking for a job in the Northwest Territories and students who may want to study at a post-secondary institution. Leisure travel in the Northwest Territories is still prohibited. If you do not have a job offer, a letter of acceptance from a post-secondary institution, or a signed-off statutory declaration along with an approved self-isolation plan from Protect Northwest

Territories or an exception for a family reunification visit for compassionate grounds from the Chief Public Health Officer, you will not be allowed to travel further in the Northwest Territories.

**MR. ROCKY SIMPSON:** Can the Minister tell me how allowing more people into the NWT will keep the people of the NWT safe? That is a big concern in the South Slave, and I would like a nice, concise answer to that question.

**HON. DIANE THOM:** The one thing I do want to make clear to your constituents and to the residents of the Northwest Territories is that the requirement is: self-isolate for 14 days in a designated community is still in place for the revised order for residents returning to the Northwest Territories and for people looking to move into the Northwest Territories. Once a person is in the territories, it's very clear that the Chief Public Health Officer's authority to restrict travel in the Northwest Territories is in play. If you do not have an approved self-isolation plan in place, you will not be allowed to travel further in the territories. If your proposed self-isolation plan is not approved and you cannot come without an acceptable alternative, you will be expected to do your 14-day self-isolation in one of the four GNWT-operated self-isolation centers. Residents will be kept as safe as they are now. It's not a free-for-all at the border.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Minister. Final supplementary, Member for Hay River South.

**MR. ROCKY SIMPSON:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. That is good to hear. It does, however, bring up another question. In the past, I have raised concerns over the number of staff that we have to enforce the rules that we have in place. I would expect that we will need more boots on the ground to ensure that everyone who enters the NWT adheres to their approved self-isolation plan with these new rules. Can the Minister assure this House and my constituents that we have enough staff at the border working at Protect NWT to do the job properly and keep residents of the NWT as safe as possible from the threat of COVID-19? If we do not, will she commit to adding more staff? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**HON. DIANE THOM:** It's a concern for me, as well, as Minister. I can tell you that we are actively looking to replace some of the border staff. Some of the border staff are having to go back to their home departments and do their regular job as we loosen restrictions in phase 2, especially if the summer is here. We are actively looking at hiring and training sufficient staff to man the borders for Protect Northwest Territories using a combination of redeployment of existing GNWT employees, summer, term, casual employees. It is a high priority for myself and the office of the Chief Public

Health Officer, and we will do what it takes to make sure that we have adequate staffing levels to keep the Northwest Territories safe as we can. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Minister. Oral Questions. Member for Yellowknife Centre.

QUESTION 306-19(2):  
CHANGES TO PUBLIC HEALTH ORDERS AND  
THE BORDER

**MS. GREEN:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My questions are for the Premier. Throughout the pandemic, the Regular Members have struggled to receive timely, complete, accurate, and fulsome information about different aspects of the government's reaction to the pandemic.

Once again, we have done our major learning from the news sources: first CBC, and then Cabin Radio. What we now know is that the public health order is going to be changed. I am unclear, first of all, why this wasn't announced in an orderly way, meaning a news release with advance notice to the Regular MLAs and a news release that is released to the public. What we have now is a really confusing mishmash. What was the thinking behind the way this news was released? Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Member for Yellowknife Centre. Honourable Premier.

**HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I first want to state that the Chief Public Health Officer has the autonomy in order to make orders, and it is really important that, in the act, it says that people can't interfere with her orders. We have to be very careful, as politicians, that we are not imposing on her and making her feel pressured within that. We have been meeting with her as regularly as possible and talking to her about our concerns.

Mr. Speaker, our Chief Public Health Officer is not a politician. She is trying her best to protect the safety of people. She has made commitments, and I think that sometimes, when she is on the media, she kind of gets caught off. I get caught off. I have been in this House for four and a half years, and I still get caught off-guard. I can't blame her for that. The idea was that it was supposed to go to standing committee on Thursday. I think that we are still scheduled to present to standing committee on Thursday, and then it would come out, but she did get hit off-guard by the media, and so she did say that new orders would be coming out. She hasn't defined what they would look like yet, and so I am hoping that that will be shared with the Regular Members on Thursday when we meet with them.

I do apologize if communications aren't as we wanted it to be. Again, we are all still learning within this process. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MS. GREEN:** Thank you to the Premier for that response. I am not talking about the CPHO or challenging her autonomy. The remarks were remarks that you made on CBC and then were quoted by Cabin Radio. It's nothing to do with the CPHO.

I am still not clear why this has all been advanced in a way that has created a lot of confusion. For example, what the Health Minister just indicated is not what was in the remarks from yesterday. It indicates that there are still going to be restrictions, that, although there will not be any limit on mobility rights, you still have to fit within these specific classifications in order to come here. What can the Premier do, Mr. Speaker, in order to clarify the situation before Thursday?

**HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE:** Thursday is coming up pretty fast, but if the Member wanted to meet with me after session, I am more than willing to meet. You can give me a call any time. Again, I apologize if it was my comments on CBC. This issue with the border and mobility rights is something that we have been discussing in Cabinet for the last little while. It is an issue. We didn't really come to any firm conclusion. We were just talking about up right until, actually, this morning, we were still talking about this issue.

The Chief Public Health Officer did come out and say that there was going to be a change. When I do media, Mr. Speaker, I would really love if the media just gave me all their questions in advance, and I could be preparing all the answers, but that isn't my reality. Often, they will say that they are going to ask me questions, and then the questions come. For example, today, I did a media this morning, and they asked me four questions that were just totally irrelevant to each other. That is how media works. I do apologize if sometimes I don't give the notice that I should. I will try to get better in the future.

**MS. GREEN:** Thank you to the Premier for that answer. It is my understanding that this isn't a CPHO order at all. This is something that was decided by Cabinet and that, in fact, the borders are not fully open. They are only open to certain types of travel. The Health Minister just said that leisure travel is prohibited, so that means that people who were planning to come here as tourists are no longer going to be allowed to come here. This is the source of the confusion when it comes out in dribs and drabs through the media.

**HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE:** Again, we are trying to work closer with our Chief Public Health Officer. Oftentimes, orders will come out, and we

are still trying to figure out what that means for us, as well. The border closing wasn't something that was actually designed by Cabinet. That was something that we were looking at the order and deciding, because we have a challenge about the mobility aspect.

If you look at the Public Health Act, under section 11.1(b), it says the Chief Public Health Officer, and excuse me if I paraphrase, may make any order that they consider necessary to protect public health. If, in the opinion, on reasonable grounds, that the order is necessary to decrease or eliminate the health hazard -- sorry, I was reading the wrong part. In 33.1, during the state of public health emergency, the Chief Public Health Officer may, (d), make orders and provide direction restricting travel to or from any area within the NWT.

The order was made by the Chief Public Health Officer. Cabinet was trying to talk about what that order meant. Again, on the legal advice, not recommendation advice that we had gotten, we were discussing what that meant about making orders within the NWT. Those were the discussions that the Cabinet table; it wasn't the orders of the Chief Public Health Officer.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Honourable Premier. Final supplementary, Member for Yellowknife Centre.

**MS. GREEN:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thank you to the Premier for that answer. Mr. Speaker, I would like to challenge the Premier to have a news conference tomorrow with the Chief Public Health Officer to explain all of this to the people of the Northwest Territories. Thursday is, in fact, still two business days away, and I really feel that we need this clarity now about who can and can't come, who is paying for the self-isolation, when this is going to take effect, and so on. I would appreciate the Premier making that commitment. Thank you.

**HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE:** I think that all of us in this House would like clarification on the orders and how they stand. I can't commit to having a press release on it tomorrow. The reason is because there are many Ministers. It's myself, my schedule; the Minister of Health will be there, her schedule; and the Chief Public Health Officer. We did make arrangements already. Our press release will be on Friday. It is already scheduled. At that time, we will be answering any questions and clarifying the new orders as they come forward, and I suspect that we will get questions on the border and hopefully clarify that, as well. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, honourable Premier. Oral questions. Member for Frame Lake.

QUESTION 307-19(2):  
REDUCED WATER MONITORING IN ALBERTA  
DURING PANDEMIC

**MR. O'REILLY:** Merci, monsieur le President. My questions are for the Minister of Environment and Natural Resources. There have been public reports that the Alberta provincial government and the Alberta energy regulator have unilaterally decided to reduce water monitoring as a result of the pandemic. The quality and quantity of waters flowing into the NWT from Alberta are supposed to be protected by a Transboundary Water Agreement. Can the Minister confirm whether he has received any notice of reductions in water monitoring from Alberta under the Transboundary Water Agreement? Mahsi, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Member for Frame Lake. Minister of Environment and Natural Resources.

**HON. SHANE THOMPSON:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The GNWT was notified of a temporary suspension on March 30<sup>th</sup> by the Alberta government and the federal government. As well, at the end of April, the Alberta government had reached out to us. On June 1<sup>st</sup>, the bilateral management committee had a meeting and representatives of Alberta provided an update. We have also received correspondence from the Alberta government on monitoring as of June 3<sup>rd</sup>. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. O'REILLY:** I want to thank the Minister for that information. We were actually given notice almost two months ago, more than two months ago. Can the Minister explain what kind of reductions in water monitoring have taken place in Alberta and what their impacts are on the Northwest Territories?

**HON. SHANE THOMPSON:** Both Environment and Climate Change Canada and Alberta Environment and Parks temporarily suspended long-term quality monitoring across the province as a result of public health and safety concerns related to COVID-19. The suspension includes long-term monitoring on the Slave, Athabasca, and Peace Rivers. It also includes sites on the Athabasca River and its tributaries, which are part of the Oil Sands Monitoring Program. All compliance monitoring is still occurring.

On June 3<sup>rd</sup>, Alberta Environment and Parks indicated that it has been requiring PPE and developing a protocol to resume routine water quality monitoring in June. Currently, Environment and Climate Change Canada has not indicated when federal government water quality will resume.

**MR. O'REILLY:** I want to thank the Minister for that. I don't think that was actually good news for us,

being downstream of Alberta. Can the Minister, though, tell us what action he has taken to protect NWT waters and residents from the reduced water monitoring in Alberta?

**HON. SHANE THOMPSON:** In response to concerns about flooding in Fort McMurray in late April, ENR began collecting water samples from the Slave River twice per week from the town of Fort Smith water treatment facility on May 1, 2020. ENR plans to continue this monitoring until mid-June 2020. These water quality samples are being analyzed for nutrients, salts, metal, hydrocarbons, and bacteria. This monitoring has not identified any concerns with water quality in the Slave River to date. ENR staff have completed a prior risk assessment to ensure that annual transboundary water quality samples for the Slave and Hay Rivers can occur this summer safely to reduce the risk of spread of COVID-19. ENR will reach out to the communities regarding proposed monitoring and research activities in their area when COVID-19-related risks can be addressed.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Minister. Oral questions. Final supplementary, Member for Frame Lake.

**MR. O'REILLY:** Merci, Monsieur le President. I want to thank the Minister for that. It's great that we've increased our monitoring while Alberta continues to reduce theirs, and that there is some kind of risk assessments that our staff have done. It would be great to see that. Can the Minister, though, tell us whether he has taken some serious action, like invoking the dispute resolution provisions in the Transboundary Water Agreement with Alberta, and, if he hasn't invoked the dispute resolution process, why hasn't he done that? Mahsi, Mr. Speaker.

**HON. SHANE THOMPSON:** The GNWT has not, I repeat has not, invoked the dispute resolution provisions of the agreement. Instead, NWT interests on prioritizing transboundary monitoring has been communicated at technical ADM, DM, and ministerial levels directly and through the Bilateral Management Committee. The agreement provides for either government to implement urgent activities that are necessary to protect public health or public safety without delay. The agreement requires that data and information be shared and consultation commences as soon as possible. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Minister. Oral questions. Member for Kam Lake.

QUESTION 308-19(2):  
BALANCING HEALTH PROTECTION AND  
ECONOMIC RECOVERY

**MS. CLEVELAND:** Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. My questions today are for the Honourable Premier. The Chief Public Health Officer's sole concern when issuing orders is public safety. At the start of the pandemic, her experience in exercising her powers was invaluable. However, as the pandemic wears on, government must balance the interests of the immediate public safety with the longer-term interests of continued education and economic recovery. What I would like to know is: how will the GNWT balance these issues with the CPHO's powers as this pandemic wears on? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Member for Kam Lake. Honourable Premier.

**HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I was trying to remember the name of the framework that we just provided to standing committee less than a month ago, I believe, although my time is running into each other. We identified early on, when the COVID-19 pandemic hit us, that we were facing not only a public health crisis, but people were saying an economic crisis, and I saw a social crisis coming, as well. So we had businesses that were closing. We had people who needed places to live. We had addiction issues, mental health issues, serious issues going on, and so right away we said, "What are we going to do about it?" So we presented to committee and we said we were going to do a framework. We're going to have a team of MLAs with Ministers feeding into it from special committees, feeding into it from the business sector, the social sector, and the Indigenous governments, so that we can actually have all of the opinions from all of the sectors and come out with a plan that addresses all the social and the economic and the health needs of residents of the territories. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MS. CLEVELAND:** I'm wondering if the Premier can speak to the process that Cabinet follows in order to kind of negotiate and discuss the orders that are coming out from the Chief Public Health Officer's office.

**HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE:** We've asked to meet with the Chief Public Health Officer, but we're really conscious that we can't have any political influence on her. The act stipulates that it is her responsibility once the Minister assigns her that title. How we work is that, often, the orders come out. Before they come out, hopefully, she will meet with us, and then we try to figure out what we need to do to implement those orders. She is in charge of making the orders herself. She is in charge of the enforcement herself, but there are issues that need to be addressed, such as the borders. That isn't her concern; that's the government's concern. The isolation centres, how we're going to house people, the services we're going to provide to people, the

community services, all of those things are the GNWT. So, once an order comes out, or there is a hint of an order, like we know that there might be one coming out at the end of this week, we sit behind closed doors and we talk about how we're going to implement those, and what it's going to take on our side and what resources we need to pull up to be able to enact those orders.

**MS. CLEVELAND:** A lot of Northerners like to travel south during the summer. It's what we do. Sometimes, it's to visit family. Sometimes, people just need to get away for a little bit. I'm wondering if it's the intent of this government to encourage as many NWT residents as possible to stay in the NWT for the summer in order to reduce people's exposure to COVID-19 in southern Canada and, if so, what the GNWT is doing to encourage NWT residents to stay home.

**HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE:** Actually, at the Cabinet table, we never actually said, "Do we want people to stay or not?" That wasn't the question, but the reality is, with the Ministers and myself included, it makes sense for us to limit our travel outside the Northwest Territories this summer. The numbers of COVID-19 infections in the South are still rising. We haven't flattened that curve, yet, so I think, at this point, my personal opinion is that it would make sense for as many people to travel in the North as possible. What we're doing about it is we have Spectacular NWT; we're talking about it now. Our Minister of tourism is actively meeting with the tourists' associations, talking about what we can do.

We have beautiful, beautiful sceneries in the Northwest Territories, and one of the privileges of being elected in this House -- well, before COVID-19; I apologize to all the Ministers now -- we did get to travel, and it really emphasized to myself personally that every region, every community, is different and every one is beautiful in its own way. So we need to advertise that. We need to promote that as much as possible so that we can keep people here. The North has a lot to offer, and I don't think a lot of Northerners who are from here have been to all of the communities, so I would, right now, like to say that all Northerners should travel north and see the beautiful land that we have in the Northwest Territories this summer, and every summer.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Honourable Premier. Final supplementary, Member for Kam Lake.

**MS. CLEVELAND:** Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker, and I absolutely agree with the Premier that the North is beautiful and has a lot to offer. I also wonder how many Southerners might feel the same way, especially considering we don't have any active cases of COVID-19. Now that we've

discussed that people can come into our borders, it sounds like what we will be expected to do is to advise people to self-isolate within our four self-isolation zones.

If somebody comes to the Northwest Territories and wants to go visit Jackie in Tuktoyaktuk, they need to self-isolate in Yellowknife first, before they can do that. They have already arranged to go stay with Jackie and his family in Tuktoyaktuk, so who pays for the hotel when they stay in Yellowknife and self-isolate in Yellowknife? Thank you.

**HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Right now, we're in phase 1 of the Emerging Wisely, and we have kind of limited the amount of travel. Phase 2 is going to be coming out this Friday. The Chief Public Health Officer will be announcing those orders. Hopefully tomorrow and Thursday I'll be getting more information on them, as well. Again, I'm very cautious about what I ask her for. I do not want her to think that I am imposing my will on her. It's a very delicate line. We will be talking about those issues as we talk to her. At this point, we have been paying for the isolation units. As we open up phase 2, those are conversations we still need to have. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Honourable Premier. Oral questions. Member for Inuvik Twin Lakes.

QUESTION 309-19(2):  
ABILITY TO USE PARKS WITHOUT ONLINE  
RESERVATIONS

**MS. SEMMLER:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. With the parks being announced to be open this weekend, can we ensure that residents can still go to the campground in my community and around my community without having to use the online system of securing the site? I don't think I've ever recalled anyone, ever, using the site outside of, especially at Gwich'in campground, kilometre 240, and Caribou Creek, which is at kilometre 221. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Member for Inuvik Twin Lakes. Minister of Industry, Tourism and Investment.

**HON. KATRINA NOKLEBY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I have just recently been aware that not everybody in the territory likes to use the online system. It was just recently brought to my attention that, perhaps in Inuvik and around that region, people aren't using the system. I've raised this already with the department now, and we will look into how do we accommodate those that don't want to use the online system. I will say, no, your park will not be closed this weekend just because the online system may not be utilized properly. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MS. SEMMLER:** Thank you to the Minister. We're going to have some happy campers this weekend. Since we've been going on this discussion, we're learning that tourists may come in and they may be staying in our isolation centres. We don't know who is paying for it. Can the Minister commit to waiving all fees associated with the use of our campgrounds for our NWT residents as part of our opening our parks for the season since we are encouraged to have vacations?

**HON. KATRINA NOKLEBY:** That sort of decision would actually have to come to the financial management board as, surprisingly, we do collect a significant amount of fees from the parks. I do want to state that it's my understanding that the fees are not super high, perhaps about \$15 for a tent platform. I believe the highest price is \$32 for Fred Hennie at a powered site, but I can commit to getting the exact numbers on those. What we have done is we are doing a "buy five nights, get your sixth night free coupon." When you register on the online system -- which I'm assuming I'm going to have to adapt to Inuvik. However, we are promoting and giving an extra night free for the next time that people would book on the system. I have asked the department to look into how can we accommodate lower income residents in order to enjoy the parks. Perhaps, we could work with NGOs to identify families who would like to go camping. I commit to coming back to the Member. While I can't waive the fees at this moment and just say yes, I was looking at options so that we can help those who maybe can't afford to use our parks to better access them.

**MS. SEMMLER:** Just to the Minister's comments, the five nights, most of the people in my region, in my community, who go out camping, go out camping Friday night, Saturday night, and come home Sunday because a majority of them are out on the weekend to camp. That system will not benefit, and we don't have a very long camping season, as I mentioned. With the number of campers that we have in our region, would the Minister commit to waiving the fees in the Inuvik region, or the supplies, the wood, whatever that they can actually give to the campers since they want to stay and they want to camp?

**HON. KATRINA NOKLEBY:** If I waive the fees for only the Member's region, I will have the other Members coming to me to ask for the same thing. I already have another Member who is actively pursuing the waiving of fees, as well, so I can't show preference. I will take that away and have a conversation with the department. I did just want to clarify that the gatehouse at the Inuvik parks will be manned this weekend, and they will take cash.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Minister. Oral questions. Final supplementary, Member for Inuvik Twin Lakes.

**MS. SEMMLER:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I know that we seem to have media and everything who jump the gun, but I'd really like the department to get on top of it in my community and get some advertising out locally. There are local people who do a lot of local advertising, just so that they are aware that they need to bring the money and that they can go camping. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**HON. KATRINA NOKLEBY:** I commit to the Member to doing an Inuvik or Beaufort Delta specific release with information regarding the differences with the online system. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Minister. Oral questions. Member for Yellowknife North.

QUESTION 310-19(2):  
INCREASED USE OF ALTERNATIVE MEASURES

**MR. JOHNSON:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My questions are for the Minister of Justice. I believe there is much work to be done in reforming our criminal justice system. One of the places that is easy to start is the increasing use of alternative measures; that is, not necessarily going through the court system and sentencing people to jail sentences but using healing circles and all sorts of other alternative measures. My question for the Minister of Justice is: during this life of this Assembly, will we increase the use of alternative measures?

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Member for Yellowknife North. Minister of Justice.

**HON. CAROLINE WAWZONEK:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Nationally, departments of justice, provinces, and territories have all agreed that they would increase the use of alternative measures by 5 percent, or restorative justice by 5 percent, and we're no different from that. Mr. Speaker, I'd like to certainly aim higher than that; 5 percent isn't necessarily very much. Certainly, we are going to be looking, as we always do, as to how we can better continue to engage community justice committees, what we can do to make better use of those committees, and to encourage the use of alternative measures. Diversion numbers have not gone up in the last few years, Mr. Speaker. I'm quite conscious of that, and that does need to change. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. JOHNSON:** I am happy to hear that we are committed to the 5 percent target, and I hope we can blow right past that number. I believe there are a number of improvements that can be made here. Firstly, NWT prosecutions can start to use alternative measures more. I believe officers should be encouraged to use alternative measures before they ever get to the Crown's office, and I believe we

should work with our PPSC, the Public Prosecution Service of Canada, to use alternative measures more broadly. Ultimately, we won't get that increase in alternative measures without increased funding and support to our community justice committees, so my question for the Minister of Justice: will we be increasing the funding to our community justice committees?

**HON. CAROLINE WAWZONEK:** I don't get to unilaterally increase the funding to the community justice committees as much as I might perhaps like to. I go through the same budgetary processes that everybody else does and notwithstanding my other role. However, Mr. Speaker, there is the business planning process coming up. While that doesn't necessarily mean that we all get to put in any and all new initiatives, it certainly is an opportunity to look at where we can, where we need to change the way we are structured, and how we can maybe seek to see some improvements. There are also some opportunities, I hope, for federal engagement and for federal support. I do know we do have allies in the federal government who also are very conscious of the need to increase alternative measures, increase the use of community justice programs, and it is certainly my hope that we'll be working with those partners to see those increases.

**MR. JOHNSON:** I look forward to continuing those conversations regarding business planning. I believe that the Minister could put forward quite a compelling case that every dollar we spend in alternative measures actually saves us money because it is simply extremely costly to bring people to trial and to hold them in prisons. If we can avoid doing that, it ultimately saves us money, and I believe there are numerous studies showing that.

Mr. Speaker, our MP, Michael McLeod, has been quite a vocal advocate for increasing First Nations policing funding. In this current budget, we passed \$47 million to fund the RCMP and only \$400,000 for First Nations programs. Will the Minister of Justice commit to increasing that First Nations funding amount?

**HON. CAROLINE WAWZONEK:** I had the opportunity to speak with our MP just recently. He certainly is a proponent of the First Nations Policing Program, as is the Department of Justice and as the Department of Justice has been for some 10 years. The First Nations Policing Program is a cost-shared program. It is a cost-share that gives us a much better opportunity for return. That is why we don't have to put as much in as compared to the territorial policing agreement, which is a 70-30 agreement, so it's a much higher cost to the GNWT. I would more than happily split the costs with the federal government along the lines of the FNPP. However, that is something that will require the federal government to be onside with. We've been

engaged in that discussion with them for many years and to why they should be looking at us and changing the way that we are funded and having more opportunities to use that program. As I say, at this point, it is an advocacy role that I will simply have to continue to take. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Minister. Final supplementary, Member for Yellowknife North.

**MR. JOHNSON:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I recognize there is much advocacy work to be done, but I believe we won't make any progress absent this Assembly championing this issue. I'd like to speak briefly about a Yukon First Nation, Kwanlin Dun's, policing program where their own members are the front line of policing services. I believe this has been a success story. Indigenous governments around the world are taking notice. I really believe that we could work with the federal government and in this current political climate championing similar programming in the Northwest Territories. My question for the Minister of Justice is: will she work to develop a similar program, where we have true First Nations policing in the Northwest Territories?

**HON. CAROLINE WAWZONEK:** Yes, I'm also quite familiar with the Kwanlin Dun program. I can certainly commit to saying that I intend to look into the terms of reference through which it was created, or MOUs or whatever systems or processes they used to establish their program. I am aware that it is a program that is in part funded by the Kwanlin Dun First Nation. Certainly, it would never be my intention to impose a program like this on any Indigenous government or community, but I would be more than happy to work with any Indigenous government to try to work towards this sort of a goal and to then go to our federal government partners and see what we can do for funding. Those are a lot of ideas and a lot of steps that would need to happen to move it forward. I can assure the Member that we're at least at the stage of thinking about it, as I've described. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Minister. Oral questions, Member for Nunakput.

#### QUESTION 311-19(2):

#### OPENING OF BORDERS TO ALL RESIDENTS

**MR. JACOBSON:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Today, I just want to follow up on the Member for Yellowknife Centre's questions in regard to the 14-day isolation time for workers coming into the territory. We opened it up today for all Canadians to come into our territory with a 14-day isolation. I need clarification in regard to that because it's contradicting Dr. Kandola's healthcare plan for the territory. Can I have just clarification on that? Are all

Canadian citizens allowed to come to the territory for the 14-day plan? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Member for Nunakput. Honourable Premier.

**HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I can't talk for Dr. Kandola. She's not here to speak for herself. I can talk about my understanding of phase 1 when we came in, so the end of the Act. Again, we went back to the Public Health Act. Section 33(1), says that, during a state of public health emergency, the CPHO may make orders and provide direction restricting travel to or from any area within the NWT. That was the point that we were discussing right through. My understanding then is that, when someone comes to the border, we can't tell you that you can't come to the border, that you have a charter right that says freedom of mobility. Once you step across the border you are now in the NWT. At that point, then, our Chief Public Health Officer has the authority to say whether you're allowed to travel in the Northwest Territories, to go further or not. That is what she's been relying on. Phase 1 has been only allowing essential workers into the Northwest Territories. They have to have either 36 hours, or they have to self-isolate; they have to have plans. Phase 2 will be coming open, I believe, on this Monday. We will be presenting to standing committee on Thursday. I don't want to presuppose what she will say, but I do think it's a valid question that should be asked to the Chief Public Health Officer.

**MR. JACOBSON:** To the Premier, in regard to that, it was at her interview today. It's contradicting. I'm getting calls and stuff from back home in regard to the border. Are they allowed to come into the territory in regard to a 14-day self-isolation plan for all Canadians to come in? I just need a yes or a no.

**HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE:** I have to give you both. Yes, they are allowed to travel across Canada. The charter right gives the mobility right to travel into any jurisdiction. No, once they hit the border and are across our border in the NWT, at that point our CPHO, our Chief Public Health Officer, has the authority to restrict travel as she sees fit. Yes, they can come across the border. When they put one step in our border, it's our jurisdiction.

**MR. JACOBSON:** Once they put that first step into the Northwest Territories, who is going to pay that hotel bill in regard to the 14-day isolation plan? Is it us? Are taxpayers in the Northwest Territories going to pay, or is it going to be the person who is coming in out of province. Who pays?

**HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE:** At this point, essential workers are the only ones that the Chief

Public Health Officer is allowing to travel within the Northwest Territories. My understanding is that, when she opens up the phase 2, according to what I've heard from the Minister today, it still won't be leisurely travel; it will be more essential workers. There is a family reunification clause in there, I think, that she was looking at, as well. At this point, it is still just essential workers. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Honourable Premier. Oral questions. Member for Tu Nedhe-Wiilideh.

#### QUESTION 312-19(2): ABILITY TO VISIT PATIENTS IN HOSPITALS

**MR. NORN:** Marsi cho, Mr. Speaker. I know, a lot of the House here, a lot of calls that we get are for hospitals, health and social services, medical travel. I have a couple questions for the Minister of Health and Social Services. With talks that we're going to the next phase here now, I know that we have a lot of medical travel requests and we have a lot of hospital visits. My first question for the Minister is: is there going to be talk of any policy changes in terms of visits, number of visitors you're allowed? One of the main questions I'm asking is for hospital visits for patients. Marsi cho.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Member for Tu Nedhe-Wiilideh. Minister of Health and Social Services.

**HON. DIANE THOM:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. At the beginning of the containment stage, we had very restricted visitors into any of our health centres or our hospitals, mostly for the safety of our patients and especially our long-term care residents. Now that we are in phase 1, there have been some changes. Right now, anybody going in has screening at the door. If you have flu-like symptoms, we monitor you coming in. As well, long-term care visitations are still cancelled. Visitation to acute care is limited to one per visit. I think the Member will be quite happy once I send him an email response when we're done session.

**MR. NORN:** Marsi cho. I'm looking forward to that email. I would like to share that with everybody. Are there any other commitments that we can hear from the Minister in terms of when we move into the next phase in terms of hospital policies? What kind of things can we expect to hear, something high-level, just something that we know what to expect going forward?

**HON. DIANE THOM:** Thursday morning at 7:30, we have a meeting with AOC, with our Chief Public Health Officer, and our deputy enforcement, so we'll be meeting to talk about phase 2 and what that means. There is an opportunity for us to have questions so we can just confirm some of the restrictions that are lifted. The last thing that we

need is for us to misrepresent what the Chief Public Health Officer's orders are. She can give us clarification, but I can find out, as well, right away for the Member. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Minister. Oral questions. Member for Yellowknife Centre.

QUESTION 313-19(2):  
PROVIDING GNWT STAFF WHO LEAVE THE  
TERRITORIES WITH TWO WEEKS SPECIAL  
LEAVE

**MS. GREEN:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. After listening to the Premier talk about the beauty of the NWT, which is indisputable, and how everyone should come here and see it for themselves, I learned that the GNWT will be offering two weeks of special leave to staff if they leave the territory. Can the Minister of Finance confirm that that is, in fact, the case? Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Member for Yellowknife Centre. Minister of Finance.

**HON. CAROLINE WAWZONEK:** Mr. Speaker, I know that we have been working on a number of initiatives in order to support staff who might be leaving the territory, and I am not going to misstate exactly what those provisions are. I will get that answer for the Member. I am half-expecting it to show up in my inbox as I am standing here. I do know that there has been a lot of discussion about it, but at the moment, Mr. Speaker, I am not going to misstate exactly who is getting what leave, and when, and for what purpose. We want to support the employees, but we also want to be fair and ensure that everybody is being treated equally. I simply need to get back to the Member on it. I'm sorry, Mr. Speaker. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MS. GREEN:** I am, of course, disappointed that the Minister is not able to provide the details at this point. I wonder if the Minister is also developing a communications plan to share with the private sector, most of whom are not going to be able to offer this kind of a benefit and who may not receive this news very well. Do you have a communications plan to explain how this is going to work and why it is necessary?

**HON. CAROLINE WAWZONEK:** Any major policy changes would certainly be accompanied by a communications plan, and it has been our practice, of course, to share it with Members first before handing it out to the media. At this point, I don't see why we would do anything differently.

**MS. GREEN:** Thank you to the Minister for that answer. I realize that the Minister is not going to give us the details of this plan today, but maybe she

can answer why this special leave is being considered.

**HON. CAROLINE WAWZONEK:** There have been a lot of conversations happening at the Department of Finance around how to support workers who are either on leave or having to return, depending on the nature of the travel, if they have to take 14 days. I am certainly not suggesting that this is a definite program that is, in fact, in play, only that we have had to consider what we are going to do if staff are suddenly told, "No, you can't take leave," or "If you take leave, you still have to self-isolate," without getting some sense of when such a change would take place. Certainly, up to this point, a lot of generous leave provisions have been utilized when this crisis broke, when people weren't expecting to be suddenly having to self-isolate, who may have already had travel plans or were returning, and who were being accommodated so that they could self-isolate afterwards.

To the extent that there have been those discussions, it has been out of the fact that, at this point, a lot of employees have been granted various forms of leave in order to accommodate their return. We need to be fair. We need to be cognizant that we have been under this pandemic and emergency for some months. At this point, that has evolved, and we can't keep pretending that there is always the same level of crisis. We need to adapt, and we need to be ready to move on back to more normal stages of work.

Those are the kinds of discussions that we are having: how do we keep employees safe; how do we treat them fairly; how do we ensure that they can travel if they have to travel, if there is an essential reason for them to do so; and then ensure that they can come back, go back to work, and be treated fairly against somebody else who might have had to travel enough to come back and go back to work. I am quite cognizant that the private sector won't necessarily be able to be as generous with some of those provisions as a large employer such as the GNWT.

Those are all some of the considerations that have been swirling around at the division of human resources, and Mr. Speaker, I, certainly, as I have said, will commit to getting a very much clearer picture back to the Member as to exactly what the plan is.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Minister. Final supplementary, Member for Yellowknife Centre.

**MS. GREEN:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The Minister is right. The private sector is not able to be as generous. Our business has been open throughout the pandemic, and people who want to take holidays have to self-isolate for two weeks on their

own time. That is not paid time by the employer. That's the reality of small business, the backbone of the economy.

What I am interested in hearing, finally, is when the GNWT staff are going to go back to work. I realize that it is a phased approach, but when is it going to start, and what is it going to look like as a general idea? Thank you.

**HON. CAROLINE WAWZONEK:** The return to work site work plan was put out by the human resources division about, I want to say, a week ago, perhaps two weeks ago. It was circulated in the House. I believe it is actually posted on the website. I will double-check that the link is available and will certainly circulate that again. It is a phased approach. It is a phased approach that looks at ensuring those who are already back at work can continue to be at work, that the increase in the number of people who are able to return to work in a more formal capacity, and that, as the Emerging Wisely plan unfolds, that the GNWT is, in turn, responding to the Emerging Wisely plan and maximizing what workers can be on site, utilizing a fairly careful approach in terms of making sure that programs and services are being delivered, and then also making sure that employees are kept safe.

There is a very detailed phased approach. As I say, I believe it is available online. Workers are already back at work; programs and services are already being delivered; and we are going to continue to increase the number in ways that we can provide those programs and services over time. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Minister. Colleagues, our time for oral questions has expired. Item 10, written questions. Item 11, returns to written questions. Item 12, replies to Commissioner's address. Item 13, petitions. Item 14, tabling of documents. Minister of Finance.

### Tabling of Documents

TABLED DOCUMENT 130-19(2):  
SUPPLEMENTARY ESTIMATES  
(INFRASTRUCTURE EXPENDITURES), NO. 2,  
2020-2021

TABLED DOCUMENT 131-19(2):  
FOLLOW-UP LETTER FOR ORAL QUESTIONS  
232-19(2): MENTAL HEALTH SUPPORT FOR  
STAFFING AT SOUTH MACKENZIE  
CORRECTIONAL CENTRE

**HON. CAROLINE WAWZONEK:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I wish to table the following documents: "Supplementary Estimates (Infrastructure

Expenditures), No. 2, 2020-2021;" and "Follow-up Letter for Oral Question 232-19(2), Mental Health Support for Staffing at South Mackenzie Correctional Centre." Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Minister. Tabling of documents. Minister of Environment and Natural Resources.

TABLED DOCUMENT 132-19(2):  
FOLLOW-UP LETTER FOR ORAL QUESTION  
249-19(2): TERRITORIAL FIRE CENTRE

TABLED DOCUMENT 133-19(2):  
FOLLOW-UP LETTER FOR ORAL QUESTION  
271-19(2): IMPACT ON CAMPING OUTSIDE OF  
CAMPGROUNDS

TABLED DOCUMENT 134-19(2):  
FOLLOW-UP LETTER FOR ORAL QUESTION  
272-19(2): TRANSFER OF LAND WITHIN  
MUNICIPAL BOUNDARIES

**HON. SHANE THOMPSON:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I wish to table the following three documents: "Follow-up Letter for Oral Question 249-19(2), Territorial Fire Centre;" "Follow-up Letter for Oral Question 271-19(2), Impact on Camping Outside of Campgrounds;" and "Follow-up Letter for Oral Question 272-19(2), Transfer of Land Within Municipal Boundaries." Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Minister. Tabling of documents. Member for Kam Lake.

TABLED DOCUMENT 135-19(2):  
WHITE PRIVILEGE: UNPACKING THE INVISIBLE  
KNAPSACK

**MS. CLEVELAND:** Mr. Speaker, I wish to table a document titled "White Privilege: Unpacking the Invisible Knapsack," by Peggy McIntosh. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Member for Kam Lake. Tabling of documents. Member for Frame Lake.

TABLED DOCUMENT 136-19(2):  
LETTER FROM YELLOWKNIFE DAY CARE  
ASSOCIATION DATED JUNE 9, 2020  
REGARDING SUPPORT FOR CHILDCARE  
DURING AND AFTER THE PANDEMIC

**MR. O'REILLY:** Merci, Monsieur le President. I wish to table a letter from the Yellowknife Daycare Association and Children First Society dated June 9, 2020, to the Minister of Education, Culture and Employment, regarding support for childcare during and after the pandemic. Mahsi, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Member for Frame Lake. Tabling of documents. Item 15, notices of motion. Member for Yellowknife North.

### Notices of Motion

MOTION 10-19(2):  
EXTENDED ADJOURNMENT OF THE HOUSE TO  
OCTOBER 15, 2020

**MR. JOHNSON:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I give notice that, on Friday, June 12, 2020, I will move the following motion: I move, seconded by the honourable Member for Hay River North, that, notwithstanding rule 4, when this House adjourns on Friday, June 12, 2020, it shall be adjourned until Thursday, October 15, 2020; and further, that any time prior to October 15, 2020, 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 or at a time later than the scheduled resumption of the House, the Speaker may give notice and thereupon the House shall meet at the time stated in such notice and shall transact its business as if it had been duly adjourned to that time. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you. Colleagues. We will take a five-minute break.

---SHORT RECESS

**MR. SPEAKER:** [Microphone turned off].

MOTION 11-19(2):  
CREATION OF A NORTHWEST TERRITORIES  
ELDERS' STRATEGY

**MS. GREEN:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I give notice that, on Thursday, June 11, 2020, I will move the following motion: Now therefore I move, seconded by the Member for Thebacha, that the Government of the Northwest Territories develop a strategy by engaging Northwest Territories elders that provides a whole-of-government approach to enhance and coordinate programs and services to elders going forward; and further, that the government respond to this motion within 120 days. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Member for Yellowknife Centre. Notices of motion. Item 16, motions. Member for Kam Lake.

### Motions

MOTION 9-19(2):  
REAPPOINTMENT OF HUMAN RIGHTS  
COMMISSION MEMBERS, CARRIED

**MS. CLEVELAND:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. WHEREAS Section 16.(2) of the Human Rights Act provides that the Northwest Territories Human Rights Commission is composed of such members, between three and five in number, as may be appointed by the Commissioner on the recommendation of the Legislative Assembly;

AND WHEREAS there will be three vacancies on the Northwest Territories Human Rights Commission as of June 8, 2020;

NOW THEREFORE I MOVE, seconded by the honourable Member for Inuvik Boot Lake that the Legislative Assembly recommend the reappointment of the following individuals to the Northwest Territories Human Rights Commission:

- Ms. Marion Berls of the Town of Fort Smith, for a term of four years; and
- Mr. Charles Dent of the City of Yellowknife, for a term of four years;

AND FURTHER, that the Speaker be authorized to communicate the effective date of these appointments to the Commissioner. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Member for Kam Lake. To the motion.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Question.

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

---Carried

Motions. Item 17, notices of motion for the first reading of bills. Item 18, first reading of bills. Minister of Finance.

### First Reading of Bills

BILL 7:  
APPROPRIATION ACT (OPERATIONS  
EXPENDITURES), 2020-2021

**HON. CAROLINE WAWZONEK:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I move, seconded by the honourable Member for Inuvik Boot Lake, that Bill 7, Appropriation Act (Operations Expenditures), 2020-2021, be read for the first time. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you. 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? Any abstentions? The motion is carried.

---Carried

Appropriation Act (Operations Expenditures), 2020-2021, has had its first reading. Item 19, second reading of bills. Minister of Finance.

## Second Reading of Bills

### BILL 7: APPROPRIATION ACT (OPERATIONS EXPENDITURES), 2020-2021

**HON. CAROLINE WAWZONEK:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I move, seconded by the honourable Member for Inuvik Boot Lake, that Bill 7, Appropriation Act (Operations Expenditures), 2020-2021, be read for the second time. This bill authorizes the Government of the Northwest Territories to make appropriations for operations expenditures for the 2020-2021 fiscal year. It also sets out limits on amounts that may be borrowed by the Commissioner on behalf of the government, includes information in respect of all existing borrowing and all projected borrowing for the fiscal year, and authorizes the making of disbursements to pay the principle of amounts borrowed. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Question.

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

---Carried

Appropriation Act (Operations Expenditures), 2020-2021, has had its second reading. Item 20, consideration of Committee of the Whole of bills and other matters: Tabled Document 130-19(2), Supplementary Estimates (Infrastructure Expenditures), No. 2, 2020-2021. By the authority given to me as Speaker by Motion 1-19(2), I hereby authorize the House to sit beyond the daily hour of adjournment to consider the business before the House, with the Member for Inuvik Twin Lakes in the chair.

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

**CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler):** I call Committee of the Whole to order. What is the wish of committee? Mr. Norn.

**MR. NORN:** Marsi cho, Madam Chair. Committee wishes to consider Tabled Document 130-19(2), Supplementary Estimates, No. 2.

**CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler):** Does committee agree?

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler):** Thank you, committee. We are going to just take a short recess, 10 minutes.

---SHORT RECESS

**CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler):** I call committee back to order. Committee, we have agreed to consider Tabled Document 130-19(2), Supplementary Estimates (Infrastructure Expenditures), No. 2, 2020-2021. Does the Minister of Finance have any opening remarks?

**HON. CAROLINE WAWZONEK:** Yes, Madam Chair. I am here to present Supplementary Estimates (Infrastructure Expenditures), No. 2, 2020-2021. This supplementary estimates document proposes a total increase of \$162.3 million, comprised of the following items:

- \$166.3 million for infrastructure expenditures funding for projects that were not completed in 2019-2020. This amount is fully offset by lapses and appropriations in 2019-2020.
- Negative \$4.4 million for adjustments to the timing of expenditures related to five infrastructure projects under the federal Investing in Canada infrastructure plan agreement. This decrease is fully offset by increases in future year project expenditures.
- \$448,000 for an enclosed cab snow blower for the Mike Zubko Airport in Inuvik. This amount is fully funded by the federal Airport Capital Assistance Program.

That concludes my opening remarks, Madam Chair. I would be happy to answer any questions that the Members might have.

**CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler):** Thank you, Minister. Do you wish to bring witnesses into the House?

**HON. CAROLINE WAWZONEK:** Yes, please.

**CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler):** Thank you. Sergeant-at-Arms, please escort the witnesses into the Chamber. Minister, would you please introduce your witnesses?

**HON. CAROLINE WAWZONEK:** Thank you, Madam Chair. On the right is Jamie Koe. He's the Assistant Deputy Minister of Finance. On the left is

Terence Courtoreille. He is the director of Management Board Secretariat.

**CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler):** Thank you, Minister. I will open the floor to general comments, and then we will go in by detail afterwards. Member for Frame Lake.

**MR. O'REILLY:** Thanks, Madam Chair. The size of this supplementary estimate is a bit surprising. I think it is \$166 million. We passed the capital budget in the previous Assembly, if I remember this correctly. I think it was in the neighbourhood of about \$240 million. Can I just get an explanation as to whether this is the largest supplementary appropriation we have made and some explanation as to the size of this? Thanks, Madam Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (MS. SEMMLER):** Thank you, Member. Minister.

**HON. CAROLINE WAWZONEK:** Madam Chair, I don't know if it's the largest ever. I'm not sure if either of our witnesses might. I'm getting a nod, so I'm going to assume, then, that it is, Madam Chair. Then they asked for a general explanation or if we'd like to summarize some of the major components thereof? I'm not sure what direction the Member would like to go with that.

**CHAIRPERSON (MS. SEMMLER):** Thank you, Minister. Member, did you want to clarify?

**MR. O'REILLY:** Thanks, Madam Chair. I don't mind a general explanation at a high level. I'm also cognizant that I've got eight and a half minutes left on the clock, so I don't want an explanation that's going to gobble up two minutes of time. Thanks, Madam Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (MS. SEMMLER):** Thank you, Member. Minister.

**HON. CAROLINE WAWZONEK:** Madam Chair, the largest number of the projects that are impacted here are the Investing in Canada infrastructure projects. Those are the ones that make up the largest chunk of this particular supplementary appropriation request. Thank you, Madam Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (MS. SEMMLER):** Thank you, Minister. Member.

**MR. O'REILLY:** Okay, thanks for that explanation. Can I get a sense of how much of this supplementary appropriation is the result of carry-overs from the previous year? Thanks, Madam Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (MS. SEMMLER):** Thank you, Member. Minister.

**HON. CAROLINE WAWZONEK:** Thank you, Madam Chair. I don't have a percentage here.

Sorry, Madam Chair, I don't have the math right in front of me. I have two different numbers. Perhaps I'll ask if one of the two witnesses has the total number so that I'm not sitting and doing the math while the Member is waiting.

**CHAIRPERSON (MS. SEMMLER):** Mr. Koe.

**MR. KOE:** Thank you, Madam Chair. Maybe I misunderstood the question. Is the Member asking how much of the carry-over was carried over in the previous year, as well? Thank you.

**CHAIRPERSON (MS. SEMMLER):** Member, can you just clarify your question?

**MR. O'REILLY:** Thanks, Madam Chair. Can I get, as a percentage of this supplementary appropriation, how much of it is carried over from the previous financial year? Thanks, Madam Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (MS. SEMMLER):** Thank you, Member. Mr. Koe.

**MR. KOE:** Thank you, Madam Chair. Compared to the last main estimates approved in 2019-2020, this carry-over consists of about just over 40 percent, 40.2 percent. Thank you.

**CHAIRPERSON (MS. SEMMLER):** Thank you. Member.

**MR. O'REILLY:** Thanks, Madam Chair. Well, that's great because it accords with the table I'm looking at. Can I get some sense of the trend of the carry-overs over time? Thanks, Madam Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (MS. SEMMLER):** Thank you, Member. Minister.

**HON. CAROLINE WAWZONEK:** Madam chair, certainly, a percentage of the total carry-overs from subsequent years certainly, this is the largest percentage over the course of several other years. The average hovers at just over 12 percent. Thank you, Madam Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (MS. SEMMLER):** Thank you, Minister. Member.

**MR. O'REILLY:** Okay, thanks, Madam Chair. That's the issue here. In the past, it was as small as 12 percent, but now it's up to 40. I guess I'd like to understand why we're having this much carry-over in infrastructure spending from one year to the next. Thanks, Madam Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (MS. SEMMLER):** Thank you, Member. Minister.

**HON. CAROLINE WAWZONEK:** Thank you, Madam Chair. Certainly, the 42.5 is a much higher number than what I would like to see, as well. I'm cognizant of that. I don't disagree with the Member

in that regard. As far as this particular year, quite a number, as I'd mentioned at the outset, of this is relating to the Invest in Canada infrastructure plan, which was a significant project funding program put forward by the federal government, of which we were able to benefit quite a bit from, but it meant that we simply weren't able to carry through and will complete all of those projects. Some of the individual projects have their own individual explanations for why that might have been. For example, the wind project up in Inuvik required further study even afterwards. Then there is also a diesel plant which is now moving forward, but it just took a bit more time to get moving forward on that particular plan because of planning requirements. Each one of these has its own reason. I can certainly go through each one, Madam Chair, but the overall is that there was a large influx of money and that it simply does take a lot of planning and a lot of capacity to get through that. Thank you, Madam Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (MS. SEMMLER):** Thank you, Minister. Member.

**MR. O'REILLY:** Thanks, Madam Chair. The reason why I'm raising this is I was in the last Assembly. We saw this trend of increasing amounts of carry-overs from one year to the next. I took the previous Finance Minister to task over this and suggested that we needed to have some way of tracking what the reason was over time as to why we can't get the money out the door, why we can't do the spending. This is increasingly critical during this pandemic, that we find ways to get money out the door to help stimulate our economy. As the largest driver in our economy, we have to get the money out the door. I need to understand whether this is cashflow problems with the federal government? Is it that we don't have enough capacity to get procurement done in a timely fashion? Is it issues around the contractor capacity is maxed out? What is the problem? Is there a systematic way of tracking what the issue is in terms of getting this money out the door? Thanks, Madam Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (MS. SEMMLER):** Thank you, Member. Minister.

**HON. CAROLINE WAWZONEK:** Thank you, Madam Chair. Again, there is not one single reason, but there are a number of reasons. I would certainly say I would like to have a better way of tracking. I would like to ensure we can track exactly those reasons and see what trends there are. Without knowing exactly how we would do that, I would like to make a sort of tentative commitment that we'll be doing that kind of tracking. Again, in this particular case, it was as bad as it was largely because of these particular projects. Quite a large number of large projects all came available for funding all at the same time, which did maximize

GNWT capacity in terms of procurement, in terms of project management. It also maximized just local industry capacity and the ability to actually find the contractors in communities to deliver on those projects. Those are two explanations, both at the procurement stage and at the delivery stage. That said, as far as more specifics, Madam Chair, it would be my intention to be back here next year with a much more detailed analysis of those specifics. Thank you, Madam Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (MS. SEMMLER):** Thank you, Minister. Member.

**MR. O'REILLY:** Thanks, Madam Chair. I lived through a previous commitment by the last Finance Minister to start tracking this, and clearly the work hasn't been done. I don't know what the problem is, but we need to have a systematic way of tracking why there is so much carry-over. Look, this government, this Cabinet has identified mega-projects, large infrastructure projects, as the way forward for our economy. I don't personally agree with that, but, if we can't get the money out the door -- because 40 percent carry-over from one year to the next, we need to know what the problem is, what the obstacles are, and start fixing it. I don't want a weak commitment. I want a strong commitment from the Minister that she is going to fix this problem. Thanks, Madam Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (MS. SEMMLER):** Thank you, Member. Minister.

**HON. CAROLINE WAWZONEK:** Thank you, Madam Chair. Obviously, the priorities of the Assembly are the priorities of the Assembly and not only those of Cabinet. This is not the first time that I've had the chance to hear what previous Finance Ministers may or may not have done. I have no difficulty in saying that I am who I am, and I intend to follow through on promises that I make. Madam Chair, I have already gone through the process of asking the department why I see certain words over and over again, giving me general explanations. If there is an explanation, then we should be following through on it and fixing the problem. In some cases, there will not be an explanation other than we had an opportunity to take a lot of money from the federal government and we did take that opportunity. I think we'll be able to do a better analysis. Can I promise that we will solve every one of the bottlenecks in the next 12 months, given that we're going to be operating under a COVID challenge this summer in some capacity or another? Certainly not. I can certainly come back here in the future, when there are further carry-overs, because there will be further carry-overs, and be able to give a better analysis, project-by-project, as to why that is and where the bottlenecks are. Thank you, Madam Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler):** Thank you, Minister. Are there any further general comments to the supplementary appropriations? Seeing no further general comments, we will move to the supplementary estimates by department. Committee has agreed to begin the review with the Department of Education, Culture and Employment. I will now open the floor to general comments on the Department of Education, Culture and Employment, operations expenditures. I think that is on page 6. Member for Yellowknife Centre.

**MS. GREEN:** Thank you, Madam Chair. Further to my colleague's point about the delay in getting infrastructure projects out, I see here a reference to the JH Sissons School planning study, which I would like to confirm, first of all, is complete. Thank you.

**CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler):** Thank you, Member. Minister.

**HON. CAROLINE WAWZONEK:** Madam Chair, I am not sure if the Minister of Education, Culture and Employment would know, in fact, if the planning is complete. I believe it is, Madam Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler):** Thank you, Minister. Minister of Education, Culture and Employment, would you be able to answer that?

**HON. R.J. SIMPSON:** Sorry, could the Member please repeat the question?

**CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler):** Thank you, Member, can you repeat your question?

**MS. GREEN:** Sure. Is the planning study for JH Sissons School complete?

**CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler):** Thank you, Minister.

**HON. R.J. SIMPSON:** Thank you, Madam Chair. Right now, what's going on with the school is that all of the materials in the school have been removed in preparation for demolition. There is a contract in place for abatement and demolition, and there is a tender out for construction at this time. Thank you.

**CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler):** Thank you, Minister. Member for Yellowknife Centre.

**MS. GREEN:** Thanks for that, Minister, but that wasn't my question. My question is whether the planning study for the school is finished, and if so, why does it appear in this supp? Thanks.

**CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler):** Minister of Finance.

**HON. CAROLINE WAWZONEK:** Thank you, Madam Chair. When something is incomplete in the

previous year, then it has to get carried over into this year in order to then be continued on with. Especially the Sissons school project, which is multi-year project, the funding that would be approved in one year still needs to get reapproved into subsequent years.

Again, I don't know exactly what stage the project is at, and if the Member wants a more specific answer, I can certainly turn this back to the Minister of education, but the overall school project is a multi-year project. For that reason, the funding will have to get reappropriated and reapproved, since the project itself is not complete at this point in total, but I don't know the specific stage of where it is at at this moment. Thank you, Madam Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler):** Thank you Minister. Member.

**MS. GREEN:** Thanks. I did notice that the construction contract is now on offer, and it was my understanding that the construction was supposed to start this fall. Is that a reasonable time to vet and award the contract and have the construction start, by this fall? Thank you.

**CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler):** Thank you, Member. Minister.

**HON. CAROLINE WAWZONEK:** Thank you, Madam Chair. My understanding is that that is still the plan.

**CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler):** Thank you, Minister. Member.

**MS. GREEN:** I wonder if this contract is, in fact, coming out later than was anticipated and there is some slippage in the timing on this project. Can the Minister speak to that, please?

**CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler):** Thank you, Member. Minister.

**HON. CAROLINE WAWZONEK:** Thank you, Madam Chair. Again, I am a bit conscious that the detailed specifics should be directed to the Minister of Education, Culture and Employment, but I think it is safe to say, really, something that is being experienced and seen across all of the infrastructure projects and a lot of the infrastructure projects that are coming through Finance right now are experiencing some delays as a result of COVID-19, whether it's because of procurement slowdowns, whether it's because of slowdowns on the private sector side, in terms of the ability to have uptake. That is not to say that projects can't get back on track and that they will, in fact, be delayed, only that there likely have been some delays in the last couple of months. Madam Chair, the Minister of Education, Culture and Employment

would like to add something. Thank you, Madam Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler):** Thank you, Minister. Minister of ECE.

**HON. R.J. SIMPSON:** Thank you. The project is on schedule. There is no delay. The carry-over is the difference between the cash flow forecast produced in 2017 and the actual expenditures incurred during 2019-2020. When you start a project, you estimate what the costs are going to be, and sometimes you don't get it 100 percent right. The project is currently at the end of the design development phase. The 100 percent construction documents were finalized at the beginning of May 2020, at which time the design consultant started the construction tender package. The draft package is completed, and the tender is out right now. Thank you.

**CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler):** Thank you, Minister. Member.

**MS. GREEN:** Thank you. If I understand the Minister's answer correctly, the planning study was \$1.486 million over budget? Is that what you're saying? Thanks.

**CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler):** Thank you, Member. Minister.

**HON. CAROLINE WAWZONEK:** Sorry, Madam Chair. No, that certainly wasn't my understanding of what the Minister of Education, Culture and Employment was saying; just that the total project estimation does require an estimation and that process is not perfect. I'm not sure if the Minister has anything to add.

**CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler):** Thank you, Minister. Minister of ECE, did you have anything else to add?

**HON. R.J. SIMPSON:** Sure. This is a carry-over. This is money that was already appropriated and is being carried forward. We're not looking for money that was never appropriated. It's not overbudgeted; it is what was already appropriated, but the cash flow didn't flow during the timeline that was anticipated.

**CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler):** Thank you, Minister. Member.

**MS. GREEN:** Thank you, Madam Chair. I wonder if this is an appropriate time to raise the emails that we have all received about the possibility of continuing classes at Sissons school for the next year so that there is more classroom space available for physical distancing. I see all the Ministers looking at one another, so that is for whoever would like to answer it.

**CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler):** Thank you, Member. Minister of ECE.

**HON. R.J. SIMPSON:** Thank you, Madam Chair. I don't even know how long ago it was now; the days have all melded together. The Chief Public Health Officer, when she issued Emerging Wisely, she also issued a backgrounder document pertaining specifically to schools and the measures that needed to be taken in schools. Since that time, the department has been working with the education bodies to come up with plans on how they are going to implement those recommendations in schools to ensure that staff and students and the public remain safe in the upcoming school year.

There are 49 schools, which means there needs to be 49 plans on how to implement it. What is happening now is that there have been a couple of plans that have been done from a large school and from a small school. We are waiting for the Chief Public Health Officer to look at those. Then we can take that feedback and do the other 47 plans. That's where the planning is right now.

In that planning, YK1 has not indicated that they need that space at Sissons, and at a board meeting today, they voted unanimously to continue with the demolition of JH Sissons, because they feel that they can accommodate their students safely, given their existing resources.

I will note that, in Yellowknife, there is some disparity between the utilization rates of the schools. The Yellowknife Catholic schools have high utilization rates in the 90 percent, over 100 percent in, at least, one school, whereas the YK1 schools have a much lower utilization rate. There is more space in those schools, so it's not such an issue for them. Thank you.

**CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler):** Thank you, Minister. Member.

**MS. GREEN:** Thanks for that response. The ultimate authority on when the school is going to be demolished is YK1; is that correct? Thank you.

**CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler):** Thank you, Member. Minister.

**HON. CAROLINE WAWZONEK:** Thank you, Madam Chair. It is a YK1 asset, as I understand, but obviously, they are in fairly close contact with the Minister of ECE. I don't think it's quite so simple of an answer as that. Thank you, Madam Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler):** Thank you, Minister. Member.

**MS. GREEN:** YK1 owns the school; they can tear it down when they want to. That's what I'm hearing? That's it? Thank you.

**CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler):** Thank you, Member. Minister.

**HON. CAROLINE WAWZONEK:** Madam Chair, my answer would simply be no, but I think, for a better explanation, I will turn it over to my colleagues. Minister of ECE.

**CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler):** Thank you, Minister. Minister of ECE.

**HON. R.J. SIMPSON:** Thank you. Now that we've gotten into the world of decentralized delivery of education, the Minister of education isn't almighty in terms of education and really has limited powers compared to, I think, what the public thinks. What we do do is we collaborate with education authorities, and there's very close collaboration, and we have great relationships. I think, in other jurisdictions, they would be envious of how we relate to the education bodies. If we need to tear down a school and build a new one, it will be a GNWT asset once it's rebuilt, and we will provide that. Even though it's a YK1 asset now, we will be building a GNWT asset. Right? It is a collaborative effort. The planning for the delivery of education in the next school year is on YK1. We really have to work closely with them when we make these decisions. They don't have the ultimate authority. I would say we have the ultimate authority. It's a relationship. Thank you, Madam Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler):** Thank you, Minister. Are there any general comments to page 6, ECE, operations expenditures? Seeing none, if there are no further comments, does committee agree to proceed to the detail contained in the tabled document?

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler):** We'll begin on page 6. 2020-2021 Supplementary Estimates No. 2, (Infrastructure Expenditures), Department of Education, Culture and Employment, operations expenditures, early childhood and school services, not previously authorized, \$3,060,000. Does committee agree?

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler):** Thank you. I will turn to page 7. Sorry. Total department authorized, \$3,060,000. Does committee agree?

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler):** Can you now turn to page 7. I will open the floor to general comments on the Department of Infrastructure, operations expenditures. If there are no comments, does committee agree to proceed to the details in the tabled document?

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler):** 2020-2021 Supplementary Estimates (Infrastructure Expenditures), No. 2, Department of Infrastructure, operating expenditures, asset management, not previously authorized, \$367,000. Does committee agree?

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler):** Department of Infrastructure, operations expenditures, programs and services, not previously authorized, \$31,564,000. Does committee agree?

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler):** Sorry. Member for Frame Lake.

**MR. O'REILLY:** Thanks, Madam Chair. Can someone tell me what the status of the Inuvik wind project is? Thanks, Madam Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler):** Thank you, Member. Minister.

**HON. CAROLINE WAWZONEK:** Thank you, Madam Chair. Just recently, the GNWT did respond to a third information request from the Gwich'in Land and Water Review Board. With that process still actively underway, that's the stage of things, but it is hoped, as I understand, that permits are going to be issued, and that that process is reaching a point of completion such that it could still be en route to getting started or actually completed by the fall of 2021. Thank you, Madam Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler):** Thank you, Minister. Member.

**MR. O'REILLY:** Thanks, Madam Chair. Can I just get a little bit of clarity around who actually owns the land that this project is supposed to be built on? What's the arrangement? Thanks, Madam Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler):** Thank you, Member. Minister.

**HON. CAROLINE WAWZONEK:** Thank you, Madam Chair. I am not sure if perhaps the Minister of Infrastructure has that detail. I don't have it in front of me. Perhaps, if I could turn to him, please, Madam Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler):** You are pointing to the Minister of Lands. Minister of Lands.

**HON. SHANE THOMPSON:** Thank you, Madam Chair. It's the Government of the Northwest Territories. It's a reserve, and we're working with Indigenous governments on that piece of land right now. It's a reindeer reserve, and we're working with

Indigenous governments on that project. Thank you, Madam Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler):** Thank you, Minister. Member.

**MR. O'REILLY:** Thanks, Madam Chair. I don't need this now, but can I get a commitment out of the Minister of Lands to give us a briefing note about the status of the project and the land tenure for it, and whether this is going through an environmental assessment, that kind of thing? There's a lot of finger pointing going on on the other side. I don't really care which Minister provides it as long as we get an update, a briefing note on it. That will be helpful. Thanks, Madam Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler):** Thank you, Member. Minister of Lands.

**HON. SHANE THOMPSON:** Thank you, Madam Chair. Yes. I will be working with the Minister of Infrastructure on this, and we'll provide a briefing note to committee, SCEDE, on it. Thank you.

**CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler):** Thank you, Minister. Are there any further questions on page 7? Member for Tu Nedhe-Wiilideh.

**MR. NORN:** Marsi cho, Madam Chair. Just taking a quick look at that line item, Northwest Territories Power Corporation hydro upgrades, it says, various, \$4.9 million. Can I get the Minister responsible just to give us a quick breakdown on which of these various projects are they referring to in this line item? Marsi cho.

**CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler):** Thank you, Member. Minister.

**HON. CAROLINE WAWZONEK:** Thank you, Madam Chair. There are two projects here. There's the Taltson Hydroelectric upgrade as well as the Snare Ports upgrade. I'm not sure if the Member wants further detail than that. I'll certainly turn it back over to the Minister responsible for the Power Corporation.

**CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler):** Thank you, Minister. Member for Tu Nedhe-Wiilideh.

**MR. NORN:** Marsi cho, Madam Chair. Yes. For my riding, I'd like to have a little breakdown for the Taltson, just to see how that is being allocated. Marsi cho.

**CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler):** Thank you, Member. Minister responsible for the NWT Power Corporation.

**HON. SHANE THOMPSON:** Thank you, Madam Chair. Yes, we will get that complete breakdown for the Member.

**CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler):** Thank you, Minister. Are there any further questions on page 7? Seeing none, does committee agree to proceed to the detail contained in the tabled document?

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler):** Department of Infrastructure, operations expenditures, programs and services, not previously authorized, \$31,564,000. Does committee agree?

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler):** Total department, not previously authorized, \$31,931,000. Does committee agree?

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler):** Thank you. Please turn to page 8. I will now open the floor to general comments on the Department of Education, Culture and Employment, capital investment expenditures. Are there any questions or comments? Member for Kam Lake.

**MS. CLEVELAND:** Thank you very much, Madam Chair. Would this be the appropriate place to ask specifically about things contained under the early childhood and schools services section?

**CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler):** Yes. Member.

**MS. CLEVELAND:** Thank you very much, Madam Chair. I'm just wondering if one of the Ministers can identify: under here, we have a boiler replacement, and it was brought to my attention in 2019 that there was a boiler replacement that was paid for directly by the school, so I'm just wondering when does the GNWT cover the cost, and when is the school board expected to cover the cost? Thank you.

**CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler):** Thank you, Member. Minister of Education, Culture and Employment.

**HON. R.J. SIMPSON:** Thank you, Madam Chair. In Yellowknife, sometimes there are some schools that are owned by the education authority, and there are some schools that are owned by ECE. ECE covers the cost when it's an ECE asset, and the authority covers the cost when it's an authority asset. However, there are times when ECE might have, I won't say money lying around, but does have some funds that they could put towards these to assist the education bodies, and so, when that's the case, then we do our best to help them so that they can use their surplus on education. So I guess the answer is it depends. Thank you, Madam Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler):** Thank you, Minister. Member for Kam Lake.

**MS. CLEVELAND:** Thank you very much, Madam Chair. I agree with the Minister that any surplus should be spent to the best of a school board's ability on education. It must be difficult for school boards to plan when it's on a case-by-case basis. I guess: how does ECE do its best to ensure that that money is being distributed equitably throughout schools in the Northwest Territories that may not be a GNWT asset? Thank you.

**CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler):** Thank you, Member. Minister of ECE.

**HON. R.J. SIMPSON:** Thank you. There's a lot of work done. There is constant collaboration and communication between ECE and the education authorities, and ECE does their best to know the state of all the different schools and what might be coming down the pike, and Infrastructure plays a big role, as well. You know, we rely on their expertise, so it really is a collaborative effort, trying to figure out what is an emergency, what needs to be done, where can we help, what are the surpluses like in each education authority, there are a lot of different factors, but it's not like there's a ton of money that's just floating around that we can throw at these different projects, and we have favourites. It really is a case-by-case basis, and it depends. Thank you, Madam Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler):** Thank you, Minister. Member for Kam Lake.

**MS. CLEVELAND:** Thank you very much, Madam Chair. My next question is in regard to the Colville Lake School replacement. I'm wondering if the Minister could potentially give us some more information on that one, because I see that it's definitely not an entire school replacement, so I'm just kind of curious as to the details of what is being replaced. We've all heard about the school in Colville Lake, how they don't have running water, and it's 2020 and I think that every school, especially in COVID times, needs to have running water, and so I'm just wondering what replacements are happening in Colville Lake School. Thank you.

**CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler):** Thank you, Member. Minister.

**HON. CAROLINE WAWZONEK:** Madam Chair, I think this is part of a planning stage, but I can turn it back. The Minister of ECE is nodding at me that this is at a planning stage, so there is still an intention, ultimately, to move this project forward, but for now, this is the geotechnical work that is being done in the background. Thank you, Madam Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler):** Thank you, Minister. Member.

**MS. CLEVELAND:** Thank you very much, Madam Chair. Is there an expected deadline for this school to be complete and open? Thank you.

**CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler):** Thank you, Member. Minister.

**HON. CAROLINE WAWZONEK:** Madam Chair, I don't know. I don't have a target date in front of me. I'm not sure if the Minister of ECE has that available.

**CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler):** Minister of ECE.

**HON. R.J. SIMPSON:** Thank you. No, there is no target date, and that's because we've been approached by the community to try and partner on the school and perhaps do things a little bit differently and, given the mandate of this Assembly that we want to do this differently, we're exploring that option. So it's not a straight-ahead GNWT build. We're trying to work with the Indigenous government and find a way forward. There's not much more I can say at this point, because that's really where we are, is really in the early stages, but this school is a priority. I heard about it during the entire last Assembly, and things haven't gotten any better, so this is a priority for myself and my department. Thank you.

**CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler):** Thank you, Minister. Member.

**MS. CLEVELAND:** Thank you very much, Madam Chair. No, I'm very happy to hear that from the Minister. I'm also wondering, in regard to the Mangilaluk School renovation and addition in Tuktoyaktuk, what the timeline is on that school being complete. Thank you.

**CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler):** Thank you, Member. Minister.

**HON. CAROLINE WAWZONEK:** Thank you, Madam Chair. This is another one where, as I understand it, there is some early-stage work that still has yet to be completed and, although the project is proceeding, again, I don't have a target date in front of me. I'll turn it to the Minister of ECE, if he has one available to him at this stage. Thank you, Madam Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler):** Thank you, Minister. Minister of ECE.

**HON. R.J. SIMPSON:** Thank you. This school, we put it out for tender. All the bids came in quite a bit over-budget, so we tried to work with one of the proponents. There is still some distance there, so we are looking at next steps. We want to get this done, as well, so I don't have a target date right now. It is dependent upon some decisions that will be made in the coming weeks, hopefully. There are

other entities involved. I'm sorry I'm being so vague about this, but really, that's where we are right now. Again, this is another school that is a priority for us. Thank you.

**CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler):** Thank you, Minister. Member.

**MS. CLEVELAND:** Thank you very much, Madam Chair. I guess just a general comment. I would love for us to get to the end of this Assembly and to be able to confidently say that every school in the Northwest Territories has running water, and I guess I look forward to the Minister's follow-up from his vague commitments. Thank you.

**CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler):** Thank you, Member. Minister of Finance.

**HON. CAROLINE WAWZONEK:** I took that as a comment, Madam Chair. Thank you.

**CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler):** Any further questions? Member for Nunakput.

**MR. JACOBSON:** Thank you, Madam Chair. Just in regard to bringing it up, I'd like to thank my colleague from Yellowknife, here, who brought up Mangilaluk School. The target date, working with COVID-19, our communities are suffering with no employment, nothing going on. I really think this is a shovel-ready project, and I think this should be brought to FMB to get the extraordinary funds that are needed to work with the proponent to get this contract started this year. From what I've been told, the gap for funds, they're a little bit stretched, but with everything that's been going on with shovel-ready projects, the federal government stepping in to help assist us in regard to these projects, when does the Minister think that a target date? This school has been in the books since 2007, because I was the one who brought it up in this House. You have 35-plus staff who use one bathroom. That's unsanitary. It's almost like having a honey bucket. So I think they have to really work with the proponent. I want a target date, and I really am pushing that we need this project to go. Thank you, Madam Chair, and a target date from the Minister. Thank you.

**CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler):** Thank you, Member for Nunakput. Minister of Finance.

**HON. CAROLINE WAWZONEK:** Thank you, Madam Chair. Certainly, I don't know that the federal government generally funds any sorts of school projects for us, which doesn't necessarily mean that the other comments are any less important or prescient regarding the needs of this school or the fact that it's been around and on the project plans for quite a long time. Certainly, at the very least, Madam Chair, before we're back in session, we will have a better plan. I don't know

where we'll be at in terms of the project, but I can at least, at that point, report back, or the Minister of ECE will be able to report back and provide an update as to where this project is at. Thank you, Madam Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler):** Thank you, Minister. Member for Nunakput.

**MR. JACOBSON:** Thank you, Madam Chair. I just want to remind the Ministers, the next sitting date after we're done here is October 15<sup>th</sup>, and nothing is going to be happening in our ridings, because that's going to be freeze-up, and stuff like that. You can't do all the ground work that's needed to do the extension on that school. So, it being a shovel-ready project, why can't we go ahead with that project in regard to getting it started with the monies that we do have, the \$12 million? Where does that come into play in regard to getting the foundation ready so we could be working this winter, potentially? Thank you, Madam Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler):** Thank you, Member for Nunakput. Minister of Finance.

**HON. CAROLINE WAWZONEK:** Thank you, Madam Chair. The Minister of Infrastructure feels a somewhat greater degree of confidence than I do that there are some relaxings in terms of the kinds of funding that might be available. So, again, at this point, not knowing myself what the shortfall is, not knowing the reasons for it, not knowing what stage we're at, I simply can't right now, at this point, say when it will necessarily come toward to FMB. In addition to which, obviously, it's not the Department of Finance who would be bringing it forward. It would be one of my colleagues. At the very least, I would commit to work with them to see where this is at, to see if we can at least provide some understanding and clarity for the Member as to where this project is at and whether or not it is going to be able to proceed this summer. Certainly, we should be able to get that answer.

**CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler):** Thank you, Minister. Member.

**MR. JACOBSON:** Thank you, Madam Chair. That being said, I am asking the Minister of ECE: when is he going to bring it to FMB for approval, for the monies needed to finish for the tender, for the company that they are working with? When? Thank you.

**CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler):** Thank you, Member for Nunakput. Minister of ECE.

**HON. R.J. SIMPSON:** Thank you. We are looking for additional funds. If we don't get those funds, we still have a school to build. We have to retender it, or I have to go to FMB to get some money. Those are decisions that I am going to make as soon as

we find out if we can get some extra funds. Hopefully, that is within the coming weeks, but I can't say for sure. Thank you, Madam Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler):** Thank you, Minister. Member for Nunakput.

**MR. JACOBSON:** Thank you, Madam Chair. That being said, if we are going to bring this to FMB, I want a clear answer. When are we going to bring it forward to FMB for the funds, and then, two, has the company that has the contract been notified in regard to what's happening, in regard to this project on a go-forward? Again, I want to remind the Minister, and I want to remind all of my Cabinet colleagues over on this side of the House, that it is okay to drop everything and give everything to Yellowknife, and I don't mean to say that. I don't use that term lightly. Everything has been given. They are getting all the money. It's just, like, a drop in the bucket. When it comes to something like this, it's probably going to cost an extra \$4 million. Where is it? People in my community, in my riding, need that school done. You have \$12 million right here. I know there's a shortfall. I know the bid number. I want to make sure that the Minister could bring it forward to FMB for an answer. Thank you.

**CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler):** Thank you, Member. Minister.

**HON. CAROLINE WAWZONEK:** Madam Chair, FMB will sit on an emergency basis if it needs to, as it has been throughout the last several months as we have been dealing with COVID-19. That won't change in the next couple of months. As the Minister of ECE has already noted, there needs to be determination within the department whether or not they need to come back to FMB for money or whether they can find other sources of funding. I am confident in relying on what the Minister of ECE has said, that as soon as they have made that decision, if they need to come to FMB, we don't need a lot of turnaround. There won't be any internal delays in terms of bringing it forward if that's the direction that it needs to go.

Again, Madam Chair, I have at least committed that I am conscious that it's June. If we're going to have a project happen this summer, we need to give those answers soon, very soon, and I have committed to at least that much. I will be able to say one way or the other whether this will proceed this summer or not. The Minister of ECE will work out where they are going to get their funding, and then they will be able to provide that answer as to whether it is happening this summer or not. Thank you, Madam Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler):** Thank you, Minister. Member for Nunakput.

**MR. JACOBSON:** Thank you, Madam Chair. I just want to bring it again. I really encourage my ECE Minister to bring this forward to FMB to try to find the extra funds that are needed. I am not going to use COVID-19. We can't use it for an excuse. I know that we are busy with it; we have all been busy. We need work in our communities, bottom line. That's going to create 40 to 50 jobs, take people off income support. It has a rippling effect right across the whole board, in regard to people able to pay their bills. If they could make sure that they bring it to FMB and give it a good, honest shot, I would appreciate that. People in my riding in Tuktoyaktuk need that school to be fixed. It's an older school, like I said, unsanitary for my teachers. I really encourage my Minister to bring it forward to FMB. The sooner, the better. Thank you, Madam Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler):** Thank you, Member for Nunakput. I will take that as a comment. Did you have any further questions for the Minister?

**MR. JACOBSON:** Yes. Get my school. Thank you.

**CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler):** Again, another comment. Are there any further comments on page 8? If there are no further comments, does committee agree to move to the detail contained in the tabled document?

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler):** 2020-2021 Supplementary Estimates No. 2 (Infrastructure Expenditures), Department of Education, Culture and Employment, capital investment expenditure, culture, heritage and languages, not previously authorized, \$574,000. Does committee agree?

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler):** Early childhood and school services, not previously authorized, \$13,941,000. Does committee agree?

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler):** Labour development and advanced education, not previously authorized, \$86,000. Does committee agree?

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler):** Total department, not previously authorized, \$14,601,000. Does committee agree?

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler):** Thank you, committee. Please turn to page 9. I will now open

the floor to general comments on the Department of Environment and Natural Resources, capital investment expenditures. Are there any questions or comments to this page? There are no comments. Does committee agree to proceed to the detail contained in the tabled document?

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler):** 2020-2021 Supplementary Estimates No. 2 (Infrastructure Expenditures), Department of Environment and Natural Resources, capital investment expenditures, environmental protection and waste management, not previously authorized, \$210,000. Does committee agree?

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler):** Forest management, not previously authorized, \$1,389,000. Does committee agree?

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler):** Wildlife and fish, not previously authorized, \$944,000. Does committee agree?

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler):** Total department, not previously authorized, \$2,543,000. Does committee agree?

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler):** Thank you. Please turn to page 10. Committee, I will now open the floor to general comments on the Department of Finance, capital investment expenditures. Are there any questions or comments? Member for Yellowknife North.

**MR. JOHNSON:** Thank you, Madam Chair. I see \$2.4 million for Secure Image Management System upgrade. Can the Minister explain to me what that is? Thank you, Madam Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler):** Thank you, Member. Minister of Finance.

**HON. CAROLINE WAWZONEK:** Thank you, Madam Chair. This is through the ISSS division. This is a project that will replace the system that is currently being used in the Department of Infrastructure to manage different drivers' licences, and it is intended to incorporate facial recognition technology into that licensing process. Thank you, Madam Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler):** Thank you, Minister. Member for Yellowknife North.

**MR. JOHNSON:** Thank you, Madam Chair. I also see the \$1.1 million for the Enterprise licensing and permitting. My understanding is that that budget line is to bring most, if not all, of our licensing and permits online into one system. Can I just, perhaps, have a bit of a distinction between SIMS and Enterprise? Is one for the DMV and one for other licensing? Thank you, Madam Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler):** Thank you, Member. Minister of Finance.

**HON. CAROLINE WAWZONEK:** Thank you, Madam Chair. Generally, I think the Member is accurately stating it. Just by way of a bit of a further example, the secure image management is quite specific to the DMV because it involves, as I said, facial recognition and the printing of actual licences that have people's photos on it. The Enterprise licensing and permitting system is intended to be the e-service delivery in order to access licensing and permitting across departments. It is really meant to be a direction in terms of getting us onto a single unified platform for all of the GNWT's general permitting and licensing, the difference simply being that that's a platform whereas the other one, as I understand it, is the technology required to do the facial recognition. Thank you, Madam Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler):** Thank you, Minister. Are there any further questions on page 10? If there are no further comments, does committee agree to move to the detail contained in the tabled -- Member for Frame Lake.

**MR. O'REILLY:** Thanks, Madam Chair. There is \$1 million in here for the Inuvik to Tuktoyaktuk fibre link. Is any of that money available, or is it going to be used for a distribution system within Tuktoyaktuk? Or is the line going to run into Tuktoyaktuk and then it's going to sit there and nobody can access it? Thanks, Madam Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler):** Thank you, Member. Minister of Finance.

**HON. CAROLINE WAWZONEK:** Thank you, Madam Chair. Much like all of the other opportunities that are being provided through the fibre optics projects, if this does proceed, and I don't know that it's at a stage of being confirmed as a procedure, it would run as a point of access and then it would be up to partnering with the Internet service providers to support the last mile. Thank you, Madam Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler):** Thank you, Minister. Member for Frame Lake.

**MR. O'REILLY:** Thanks, Madam Chair. Look, what do I know? Is there an Internet service provider in Tuktoyaktuk right now, and are they going to hook up to the fibre link? I just don't want this to end up

being another community where the fibre link goes by, or to it, and there is no way for people to access it. What is going on with this project? Thanks, Madam Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler):** Thank you, Member for Frame Lake. Minister of Finance.

**HON. CAROLINE WAWZONEK:** Thank you, Madam Chair. I actually had the opportunity to speak with Northwestel just today. There are quite a number of projects that I think they are looking to advance. There are projects that they are looking to advance on their own, and some that they are looking to partner with various levels of government on, so, while I can't sit here right now and promise that all of Tuktoyaktuk housing and facilities will be linked to high-speed fibre in the immediate future, I can certainly say that this project will get a long way in terms of figuring out exactly what is required. It would certainly get that fibre as far as Tuktoyaktuk, which would certainly be a good starting point, and then we will be continuing to develop a plan, as I've already committed to doing in the House, to describe and to discuss the role of the GNWT in terms of making sure that there are those last connections, as much as we can support that. Thank you, Madam Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler):** Thank you, Minister. Member for Frame Lake. Are there any further questions on this page? If there are no further comments, does committee agree to proceed to the detail contained in the tabled document?

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler):** 2020-2021 Supplementary Estimates No. 2 (Infrastructure Expenditures), Department of Finance, capital investment expenditures, information systems shared services, not previously authorized, \$6,874,000. Does committee agree?

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler):** Total department, not previously authorized, \$6,874,000. Does committee agree?

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler):** Thank you, committee. We will now move on to page 11. I will now open the floor to general comments on the Department of Health and Social Services capital investment expenditures. Questions? If there are no comments, does committee agree -- oh, sorry. Member for Yellowknife Centre.

**MS. GREEN:** Thank you, Madam Chair. As is the case with the Mangilaluk School, the laundry and

kitchen facilities upgrade for AVENS has been on this list for as long as I've been here. Can the Minister tell us what the delay is in doing this upgrade and when this upgrade will actually happen? Thank you.

**CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler):** Thank you, Member. Minister of Finance.

**HON. CAROLINE WAWZONEK:** Thank you, Madam Chair. The Minister of Health and Social Services can provide more detail.

**CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler):** Thank you, Minister of Finance. Minister of Health and Social Services.

**HON. DIANE THOM:** Thank you, Madam Chair. The project was put on hold by AVENS, as they were pursuing other facility development options on the new AVENS campus that would incorporate all the planned kitchen and laundry facilities, as well.

**CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler):** Thank you, Minister of Health and Social Services. Member for Yellowknife Centre.

**MS. GREEN:** Thank you. So this project continues to be on hold, and there is no end date for it to be spent. Is that correct? Thank you.

**CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler):** Thank you, Member. Minister of Health and Social Services.

**HON. DIANE THOM:** Thank you, Madam Chair. The AVENS has indicated that they are expecting to have a decision on the project by early this summer. So we are waiting to hear about a decision from them, but the plan is to sit back down, and we sat back down a couple of months ago, and we went through their overall plan, including the Minister of Housing and Finance. So that is still on the table. Thank you, Madam Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler):** Thank you, Minister of Health and Social Services. Member for Yellowknife Centre.

**MS. GREEN:** Thank you for that response. This question is for the Minister of Finance. Is there a limit to the number of years that funds can be carried over before they are added back into the general pot and the projects have to be defined and justified starting over again? I'm just wondering about that. Thank you.

**CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler):** Thank you, Member. Minister of Finance.

**HON. CAROLINE WAWZONEK:** Thank you, Madam Chair. There is no specific limit in terms of years. Carry-overs have to meet the requirements of the Financial Administration Act and the Financial Administration Manual, which requires

that either the project is under way in some fashion -- I'm actually drawing a blank as to the criteria, but there has to be some action being taken. Money doesn't just get to sit around when there is not something to show for it. So, in that sense, although it can continue to carry over, it wouldn't be carrying over in the absence of some steps being taken or some movements being made. Again, either the project is under way, or there are contracts already in place to get it under way. One of those two things needs to be happening in order for it to automatically be eligible for a carry-over. Thank you, Madam Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler):** Thank you, Minister of Finance. Are there further questions under this? Member for Kam Lake.

**MS. CLEVELAND:** Thank you very much, Madam Chair. I just wanted to ask, first off, about the Stanton Legacy Building renovations and what the deadline is on that.

**CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler):** Thank you, Member for Kam Lake. Minister of Finance.

**HON. CAROLINE WAWZONEK:** Thank you, Madam Chair. I'll turn to the Minister of Health and Social Services.

**CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler):** Thank you, Minister of Finance. Minister of Health and Social Services.

**HON. DIANE THOM:** Thank you, Madam Chair. The design is near completion and it is expected to be tendered this fall. It is a multi-year contract, so the progress is -- sorry, which one is she asking about? The Stanton Legacy? There are two. There is the base building or the building modification.

**CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler):** I'll just clarify. Member for Kam Lake, can you just clarify which one?

**MS. CLEVELAND:** Thank you very much, Madam Chair. I'm wondering when the building will be completely renovated, done, and ready for us to start using as a long-term care facility. Thank you.

**CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler):** Thank you, Member for Kam Lake. Minister of Health and Social Services.

**HON. DIANE THOM:** Thank you, Madam Chair. The design and process is still under tender and, as this is a multi-year project, we are still waiting to work out some of the details on the design. Thank you.

**CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler):** Thank you, Minister of Health and Social Services. Member for Kam Lake.

**MS. CLEVELAND:** Thank you very much, Madam Chair. I'm also wondering the same for the long-term care facilities in both Inuvik and Hay River. Thank you.

**CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler):** Thank you. Minister of Health and Social Services.

**HON. DIANE THOM:** Thank you, Madam Chair. The design is still under way for the 48-bed long-term care facilities in Inuvik and Hay River. However, as a result of continuing rising constructions costs and permafrost challenging soil conditions in Inuvik, the original cost estimates for the projects are currently under review. You know, we've looked at the designs for the facilities, and, due to COVID, there are potential changes to how we plan the facilities going forward, for example, the size of the facility and the types of common areas. Thank you, Madam Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler):** Thank you, Minister of Health and Social Services. Member for Kam Lake.

**MS. CLEVELAND:** Thank you very much, Madam Chair. I am going to move on to the community counselling information system. I am wondering if the Minister could explain to us what that is and how that's different than the electronic patient system that our primary clinics and health centres currently use. Thank you.

**CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler):** Thank you, Member for Kam Lake. Minister of Health and Social Services.

**HON. DIANE THOM:** Thank you, Madam Chair. The community counselling information system is funding for the implementation of a computerized system for the management of mental health and addiction clients. Can I get clarification on what we're comparing it to? Thank you.

**CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler):** Thank you, Minister of Health and Social Services. Member for Kam Lake.

**MS. CLEVELAND:** Thank you very much, Madam Chair. I am just wondering why we need a separate system for mental health and why we can't just use the electronic systems that we currently use for people of the Northwest Territories when they go to seek advice or medical assistance from their physicians. Thank you.

**CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler):** Thank you, Member for Kam Lake. Minister of Health and Social Services.

**HON. DIANE THOM:** Thank you, Madam Chair. At this time, I don't know. We can definitely find out and get back. Thank you.

**CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler):** Thank you, Minister of Health and Social Services. Member for Kam Lake.

**MS. CLEVELAND:** Thank you very much, Madam Chair. I appreciate that. My last question is in regards to the organ and tissue donation registry. What I am wondering is, if the NWT decided to go for an opt-out rather than an opt-in version of organ and tissue donation down the road, how that would change the budget allocated to that type of a registry. Would it drive it up? Would it remain the same? Is it a base cost? Thank you.

**CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler):** Thank you, Member for Kam Lake. Minister of Finance.

**HON. CAROLINE WAWZONEK:** Sorry for being presumptive, Madam Chair. Thank you. This is one project that certainly has had some delays in terms of the finalization of the agreement because of challenges in terms of people being available over the last few months. As far as if there is a complete change in the project and there would certainly be a change in the contracts that are already being developed, which would no doubt lead to changes in the budget. At this point, the projected cost is actually below budget, based on the model that they are using. Madam Chair, at this point, I know that is not entirely the answer the Member is looking for. I think perhaps what we could do between the Minister of Health and Social Services and myself is to certainly provide some more detail, if it would be of assistance to the Member, outlining the nature of the project as it is right now and then look at that going forward. Again, right now, there is a certain design in place, and that is what is being developed in terms of project contracting. Thank you, Madam Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler):** Thank you, Minister of Finance. Member for Hay River South.

**MR. ROCKY SIMPSON:** Thank you, Madam Chair, just a question with respect to the two long-care facilities there. I just see that the Hay River one is \$5.6 million and the Inuvik is \$1.4 million roughly. What is the difference there?

**CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler):** Thank you, Member for Hay River South. Minister of Finance.

**HON. CAROLINE WAWZONEK:** Madam Chair, thank you. That is a level of specificity that I don't have here. I do know contracts are currently in place for both projects. It shouldn't be difficult to delineate a breakdown for the Member. I can commit to getting that information to him.

**CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler):** Thank you, Minister of Finance. Member for Hay River South.

**MR. ROCKY SIMPSON:** Thank you, Madam Chair. When you say contracts are in place, have the contracts been let for those already, then? Thank you, Madam Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler):** Thank you, Member. Minister of Finance.

**HON. CAROLINE WAWZONEK:** Thank you, Madam Chair. I understand that the projects are at different stages, and these are carry-overs, Madam Chair. I am forgetting that, as well. The carry-over amounts are different in terms of the projects. When you're comparing the carry-overs, you are not necessarily comparing the total value of the project, one to the other; you are comparing only the amount of carry-over, one project to the next. At this point, there are different cash-flow pressures on each project, and that in the one case, the one is simply, I suspect, further ahead than the other. As such, there is less of a carry-over. Again, I can certainly provide a more detailed breakdown of that cash flow if that's what the Member is interested in.

**CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler):** Thank you, Minister. Member for Hay River South.

**MR. ROCKY SIMPSON:** Thank you, Madam Chair. No. That is fine. I think I have an understanding of what the issue is there. I would like to know when we can expect the design to be completed because I don't think it's completed yet and when we could expect ground-breaking on that facility, 48 beds for Hay River.

**CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler):** Thank you, Member for Hay River South. Minister of Finance.

**HON. CAROLINE WAWZONEK:** Thank you, Madam Chair. I think the Minister of Health and Social Services might have some more breakdown in terms of timing. Perhaps I will ask her, Madam Chair, please.

**CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler):** Thank you, Minister of Finance. Minister of Health and Social Services.

**HON. DIANE THOM:** Thank you, Madam Chair. The 2020-2021 capital plan is currently under development. Any change to previous amounts will require a form of FMB in Cabinet. There are still some discussions around this scope and the project. We have been in discussions of possibly looking at the number of bed facilities. There is still some discussion around that and the impacts, whether it's increased costs. Thank you, Madam Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler):** Thank you, Minister of Health and Social Services. Member for Hay River South.

**MR. ROCKY SIMPSON:** Thank you, Madam Chair. Can the Minister tell me if the geotech has been done in the area where this new building is going to go? Thank you, Madam Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler):** Thank you, Member for Hay River South. Minister of Finance.

**HON. CAROLINE WAWZONEK:** Thank you, Madam Chair. I think I am getting the answer is "no" right now. Thank you.

**CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler):** Thank you, Minister of Finance. Member for Hay River South.

**MR. ROCKY SIMPSON:** Thank you, Madam Chair. The other thing is: with COVID-19, I am just wondering what the added cost or are we anticipating added costs because of that for these projects because of design changes or special design to take into account what is happening today? Thank you, Madam Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler):** Thank you, Member. Minister of Finance.

**HON. CAROLINE WAWZONEK:** Thank you, Madam Chair. It's too early to say necessarily. As far as design changes, there is no information here that suggests that is inevitable or imminent. I suppose the short answer is: not anticipated, Madam Chair. Again, the capital plan for 2021-2022 is underway, so if there do need to be significant changes, there would be an opportunity to see those at that time. Thank you, Madam Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler):** Thank you, Minister. Member for Hay River South.

**MR. ROCKY SIMPSON:** Thank you, Madam Chair. Geez. I thought I ran out of time there. I just wanted to talk about the sterilizer room. Is that for the new facility or is that to do with the old H.H. Williams Memorial Hospital? Thank you, Madam Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler):** Thank you, Member. Minister of Finance.

**HON. CAROLINE WAWZONEK:** Madam Chair, I am confident that the Minister of Health and Social Services has the answer.

**CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler):** Thank you, Minister of Finance. Minister of Health and Social Services.

**HON. DIANE THOM:** Thank you, Madam Chair. The sterilizer room upgrade is for the Hay River Health Center. The funding for the insulation and condensing unit in the sterilizer room, to handle the additional heat load, they are adding air conditioning to the room. There has been a delay in the work to get it completed. Thank you.

**CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler):** Thank you, Minister of Health and Social Services. Member for Hay River South.

**MR. ROCKY SIMPSON:** Thank you, Madam Chair. The next one is the heating system for Woodland Manor. Is that for the existing part of the manor, or is that for the new, 10-bed, extended-care facility? Thank you, Madam Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler):** Thank you, Member. Minister of Health and Social Services.

**HON. DIANE THOM:** Thank you, Madam Chair. The heating system, the furnace for the Woodland Manor long-term care facility was failing and no longer could be repaired and required replacement. It's anticipated it will be completed in the prior year. It is for the Woodland Manor long-term care.

**CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler):** Thank you, Minister of Health and Social Services. Member for Hay River South.

**MR. ROCKY SIMPSON:** Thank you, Madam Chair. No more questions.

**CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler):** Thank you. Member for Nunakput.

**MR. JACOBSON:** Thank you, Madam Chair. In regards to long-term care in Inuvik in regards to the 48 beds with the carry-over, the \$1.446 million, where is that in this project and how is it going to affect my elders in my riding? Thank you, Madam Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (MS. SEMMLER):** Thank you, Member. Minister of Finance.

**HON. CAROLINE WAWZONEK:** Thank you, Madam Chair. I don't know the exact stage of the project. I can find out the stage of the project, and that would hopefully provide the Member with a bit more certainty as to the timing of the project and how that would benefit, hopefully, his members.

**CHAIRPERSON (MS. SEMMLER):** Thank you, Minister of Finance. Member for Nunakput.

**MR. JACOBSON:** Thank you, Madam Chair. It's not going to benefit my riding. Where is the geotech work in regard to this? These long-term beds, you've got 25 beds in Inuvik right now. You're going to get another 48. That's 78 beds. That's probably 200 jobs that's going to create in Inuvik for this project. Now, what are you going to do with the elders in my riding in regard to bringing them in? I brought this up at the start. It's like you're going to be plucking elders out of the community again, when we know the cost of travel between our communities is over, probably, \$2,000 from Sachs Harbour, Ulukhaktok, and Paulatuk, when we

should be trying to put a smaller building in the community. Forty-eight beds, that's kind of a big thing. I'm sorry to bring it up like that, Madam Chair. For myself, how I look at it, it's residential school all over again, taking people out of their homes. Families want to take care of our loved ones, our elders. Being an Inuvialuit, you should know that in regard to that. I don't approve of these 48 beds. I need five beds, six beds, in Ulukhaktok. I need the same thing in Paulatuk to take care of our own. Again, it's all the bigger centres that, the blink of an eye, they're going to be ready to spend their money. For us, it's a have-not riding right now. It's not right. I really want to think before, if they didn't start their geotech, maybe they should downsize just a little bit, here, throw 30 beds or 20 beds you don't need, and have 45, not 78. I'm appalled the way that things are going, that this government, the way they are seeing how they're treating our elders. Like I said, we want to take care of our own. Inuvialuit, we take care of our own. I really think this should be rethought instead of just throwing another 48 beds because you could throw 48 beds that was done by the last government. Thank you, Madam Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (MS. SEMMLER):** Thank you, Member for Nunakput. Minister of Finance.

**HON. CAROLINE WAWZONEK:** Thank you, Madam Chair. This project is part of a capital plan that was approved not by any Member here in this Assembly but by the prior Assembly. Certainly, when the next capital plan comes forward, then that certainly will be an opportunity to question why. If there is not a project at that point in one of the smaller communities, that would be an opportunity to press any Member of Cabinet with what those plans might be going forward. At this point, what we are doing is carrying over money on a project that is already underway, that was already approved. I'm not sure that we'll be in a position to create a new project right now, on the fly, in this context. All the departments, of course, are starting to think about their next round of capital planning. In hearing the passion that the Member brings to this, that is certainly being heard both here and, I'm sure, back in the departments, as well, as they are listening to this. Thank you, Madam Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (MS. SEMMLER):** Thank you, Minister of Finance. Member for Nunakput.

**MR. JACOBSON:** Thank you, Madam Chair. This seems to be funny for my colleagues across the table here. I'm concerned in regard to the way things happen here, fairness. Like I said before, and I did a Member's statement on this, we're tired of having our members, our elders, taken out of our communities and then the only time they're home is when you're bringing them home to bury them. That's what this is. For myself, I'm passionate about

it. Like I said, you don't need another 48 beds. Take 30 beds and give six to my communities; give six to Paulatuk; give six to Sachs or to Ulukhaktok. We need this. I'm really taken aback in regard to how things go. They said this is a changed government; let's change it, pretty simple. They never even started the geotech, so it's easy to change. Make it smaller. They're talking about no problem making it bigger because of COVID-19, bigger common areas, bigger bathrooms, bigger this, bigger that. Other projects in our small communities are the ones that are lacking in regard to providing services to all 33 communities, not just the main centres. Thank you, Madam Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (MS. SEMMLER):** Thank you, Member for Nunakput. Did you have any further comments?

**HON. CAROLINE WAWZONEK:** Madam Chair, almost every Minister here is scrambling right now because almost everyone wants to add something. I'm hearing that there are a number of projects that are underway to support moving elders out of Yellowknife and back to their regions, that there are aging-in-place retrofits being looked at for the smaller centres across the Northwest Territories. I'm being reminded, also, that the committee will be seeing, hopefully, a draft of the 2021-2022 Capital Plan by July. Once they see that capital plan, there will be an opportunity for Members from across the Northwest Territories to determine whether or not the plan at that point reflects the projects that they think are reflective of the priorities of the Assembly and they can certainly, at that point, as well, have the questions in place to every department about what steps they are taking to ensure that elders are in fact aging-in-place, simply calling in action on what was said earlier in the House. There may well be a motion on this very issue or a version or a related matter later in this week. In terms of the review of the supplementary estimates and the infrastructure carry-overs, Madam Chair, I'm not sure that this is an opportunity for me to do very much right now, other than to say that this project was approved by the last Assembly and there is some unspent money that they're asking to carry over. Unless there is a motion to change that, which I don't think that is what I am hearing from the Member, I think he is suggesting to us that we need to do things differently going forward. As I said, there was quite a scramble here of everyone saying the things that they are already doing to do things differently going forward, including the fact that this draft plan for the capital expenditures is coming forward to committee probably next month. I think it's very apparent to us that we should be expecting to be answering questions on what in that Capital Plan will be there to support elders in the smaller communities. I'll leave it at that. Thanks, Madam Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (MS. SEMMLER):** Thank you, Minister. I will move on to Member for Thebacha.

**MS. MARTSELOS:** I don't have any questions, Madam Chair, because it was answered.

**CHAIRPERSON (MS. SEMMLER):** Thank you, Member for Frame Lake.

**MR. O'REILLY:** Thanks, Madam Chair. On page 11, there is \$16 million for what looks, to me, like renovations to the Stanton legacy building. Let me start by saying we do need more long-term care beds in Yellowknife. How much has been spent on renovations to date? What is the total cost of renovations on the Stanton legacy building? Thanks, Madam Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (MS. SEMMLER):** Thank you, Member. Minister of Finance.

**HON. CAROLINE WAWZONEK:** Thank you, Madam Chair. Again, being an infrastructure supplementary that deals largely with carry-overs, I don't know that I have the total amount spent on renovations with me. I take that back. I might. If I could ask the director to answer the question or attempt to answer the question for me, please. Director of the Management Board Secretariat, please.

**CHAIRPERSON (MS. SEMMLER):** That's Mr. Courtoreille. How do you pronounce your last name, sorry? I need to get it correct.

**MR. COURTOREILLE:** Thank you, Madam Chair. It's Terrence Courtoreille. For those two projects referred to by the Member, one project has a total budget amount of \$14 million, just over \$14 million, and the second project is just under \$58 million.

**CHAIRPERSON (MS. SEMMLER):** Thank you, Member for Frame Lake.

**MR. O'REILLY:** Thanks, Madam Chair. I'm trying to understand why we're spending \$72 million for renovations on a building that we're not even going to own at the end of the day. This is part of a weird P3 arrangement that I could never really get to the bottom of in the last Assembly.

Can someone explain to me why we have to spend this much money on renovations when we're not going to own the building and we're going to have to lease the space afterwards? Is that what this arrangement is all about? Thanks, Madam Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler):** Thank you, Member for Frame Lake. Minister of Finance.

**HON. CAROLINE WAWZONEK:** Thank you, Madam Chair. I would be more than happy to offer that explanation, but to be quite frank, I do not have that contract or those arrangements in front of me

and was simply not anticipating to be defending the entire P3 arrangement around Stanton today. I will be more than happy to give that answer, but I think I can really just commit to getting that detail. I am not going to be in a position to answer that fulsomely today.

**CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler):** Thank you, Minister of Finance. Member for Frame Lake.

**MR. O'REILLY:** Sure. Thanks. I didn't anticipate getting into this level of detail in some of these things, as well. I take it, then, that the Minister is prepared to provide that information following this discussion. Thanks, Madam Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler):** Thank you, Member. Minister of Finance.

**HON. CAROLINE WAWZONEK:** Sorry, Madam Chair. The answer is yes, but there is a fairly large question there around getting into the justification for a project that, again, began in the 18<sup>th</sup> Assembly, and there is possibly a bigger conversation around why we would have a P3 project in general.

Yes, I will commit to getting some more detail about the nature of the project and the nature of the agreement, the pros and cons of the agreement, and the benefits thereof. If that is a satisfactory commitment to the Member, then that is where I am at. If I am missing something, I will be corrected, I'm sure.

**CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler):** Thank you, Minister. Member for Frame Lake.

**MR. O'REILLY:** Thanks, Madam Chair. I am happy to take that commitment from the Minister. I just want to correct one thing. This is actually something that was started in the 17<sup>th</sup> Assembly, or just before the election, maybe. I just want to know why we are spending \$72 million on renovations for a building that we are not going to own and then we have to lease back space out of it. It just doesn't sound right to me, but I'm happy to get the Minister's explanation following this meeting. Thanks, Madam Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler):** Thank you, Member for Frame Lake. Did you have any further questions? All right. I will go back to Member for Thebacha.

**MS. MARTSELOS:** Madam Chair, I just want clarification also, now, with this P3 with the \$72 million. We are not going to own it. Even with some of these modifications and renovations, and further on with the tenders, the government still puts the tenders out, or does the owner of the building have a say in who gets the tender? Could you give clarification on that, please? You are not very

specific in your answers even to other Members today. I would like being specific. When you're putting a building up or doing a renovation, even with the planning, usually you're very specific, even if you're going to be doing it in a negotiated contract. You have not been very specific exactly with your answers, and I want to make sure that you answer me specifically with what you are going to be doing.

**CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler):** Thank you, Member for Thebacha. Minister of Finance.

**HON. CAROLINE WAWZONEK:** Thank you, Madam Chair. There is an ongoing project to renovate the Stanton legacy building, and right now, there is a \$9,782,000 carry-over that is being requested, because that is an amount that was cash flow last year that wasn't used up in that period. The Department of Health and Social Services is asking to carry it forward to continue the project that is under way. Right now, that is what I have in front of me. I don't have all of the project specifics in front of me, because that would be part of the capital planning project that would have been approved, as I have said, under the 18<sup>th</sup> Assembly and planned, it sounds like, under the 17<sup>th</sup> Assembly.

Our own capital planning process will be in draft form before the Members next month, at which point there would be, I imagine, a very detailed breakdown of exactly where the projects are at, and what stage they're at, and what the current cash flow projections are going to be for the next year going forward. I am happy to have that conversation again at that point, in terms of looking at where we are at in these projects and determining if, in fact, we want to continue to have these projects on our capital plans.

For the moment, all that is being requested is to be able to continue the work that is under way, and that was previously approved. I have already made a commitment to another Member as far as determining and providing information on the pros and cons of this overall project. Again, I will be happy to get that and make that commitment. Thank you, Madam Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler):** Thank you, Minister of Finance. I just want to remind Members to keep their questions focused to the carry-overs and not the overall project of the P3. The Minister has already agreed to provide us information if we have more questions on the P3 process. We have that commitment already. Member for Thebacha.

**MS. MARTSELOS:** We won't ask questions on the P3, but the results of this P3 are tremendous. We are in a COVID-19 pandemic, and many of our communities don't even have procedures that were

actually offered in our health centres. Yet, we are putting \$72 million in the end, probably negotiated contract and not tender, not own the building, and I can't even get bloodwork analyzed at the Fort Smith health centre. That is disgusting. You know? When you do these things and don't do it in a proper way of transparency and accountability, it's disturbing. I don't have any further comments, and I don't have any questions, but it's something to think about. Thank you, Madam Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler):** Thank you, Member for Thebacha. Member for Tu Nedhe-Wiilideh.

**MR. NORN:** Mahsi. I'm just thinking, I have a quick question about the Stanton legacy building. They are split up into two different line items for just under \$9.8 million and another one for just under \$6.2 million. Why are they split up the way they are? It seems like they are both going towards the same building, but it's just south of \$16 million. We are just going to sign off, and I would like to know a little bit more about it. Why were the numbers split up into the two items? Marsi cho.

**CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler):** Thank you, Member. Minister of Finance.

**HON. CAROLINE WAWZONEK:** Thank you, Madam Chair. I am going to turn that one over to the assistant deputy Minister, Mr. Koe.

**CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler):** Mr. Koe.

**MR. KOE:** Thank you, Madam Chair. Yes, they are two separate projects, because one is around the base building and, obviously, getting the Stanton building upgraded so that it is a building that meets all the standards of a building of that nature for today. The other project is the renovations to get that building renovated for the long-term care facility and services that will be operated in there; so they are two separate projects. Thank you, Madam Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler):** Thank you, Mr. Koe. Member for Tu Nedhe-Wiilideh.

**MR. NORN:** Thank you, Madam Chair, and thank you for the response. Can you just expand on what base buildings are, just so I understand a little bit better? Thank you.

**CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler):** Thank you, Member. Mr. Koe.

**MR. KOE:** Thank you, Madam Chair. The base building modifications, and that's the word for it, were to get, you know, things like all of the materials that were in the building out, whether there was hazardous materials in there or not, but to get those out. The project was to get that building

to a suitable situation so that the workers can come in to do those renovations for the long-term care facilities and the other facilities that will be in there. Thank you, Madam Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler):** Thank you, Mr. Koe. Member for Tu Nedhe-Wiilideh.

**MR. NORN:** Thank you, Madam Chair. I am still trying to wrap my head around this a little better. Are there other buildings around? When I hear base buildings, I hear, like, some extra adjacent buildings are going to be on that lot that are going to be built. Is that what I'm hearing? Thank you.

**CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler):** Thank you, Member for Tu Nedhe-Wiilideh. Minister of Finance.

**HON. CAROLINE WAWZONEK:** Madam Chair, I think, and I feel like there is a crowd of people around me who will correct me if I'm wrong, but it's essentially that the base buildings, that's the preparatory work so that the renovations can then be done, in simple terms. No, I'm still wrong. I'm going to try. Madam Chair, if I could send it over to director, Terence Courtoreille, please.

**CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler):** Mr. Courtoreille.

**MR. COURTOREILLE:** My apologies, Madam Chair, but I missed the question, as I was writing down my notes.

**CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler):** I think, just trying to round up what you're saying, is there are two projects. There is a line item for the legacy building renovations, and then it's the building base building modifications. So there are two line items, and why are they broken out into two? What is the difference between a base building and the renovations? If somebody could clarify that, and are there two buildings? One building? Is it the whole Stanton Hospital? Does it include any other buildings? Thank you. Who wants to answer this? Mr. Koe.

**MR. KOE:** Thank you, Madam Chair. I know I'm not quite explaining myself well, here, but there is just the one building, the old Stanton building. The project had two separate projects, which was two stages, and one was to get that building up to I'm going to use the word "code," get that up to the base code. I see the Minister if Infrastructure is cringing at my comment, but it was to get that up to a base place where everything was signed off and everything was hazard-free so that a different project could begin to do the renovations. Thank you, Madam Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler):** Thank you, Mr. Koe. Does the Minister of Infrastructure want to add any details? Please.

**HON. KATRINA NOKLEBY:** Sure. Basically, from a contracting perspective, when they wanted to go in with the new consortium to do the renovations to make it usable, that had to be one contract; but, in order to get to that stage so that the building was at a spot where they could start doing the renovations, we had to remove HBMA, the hazardous building materials. So that had to be in its own contract, because it had nothing to do with this new company that was coming in to do the renovations. So, basically, we had to present the building in a certain state, so that first contract is to get rid of that, all the HBMA, get it so that it's in a state so that we can then hand it over for the second contract. Does that make sense now?

**CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler):** Thank you, Minister of Infrastructure. Did you have further questions, Member for Tu Nedhe-Wiilideh?

**MR. NORN:** Thank you, Madam Chair, and thank you for that response. The muddied waters are a little more clear, now. It's always good to get some clarification on this, because this is probably one of the larger allocations of this ask, so it's important that we kind of get that clarification. I have nothing further after that, though. Thank you.

**CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler):** Thank you, Member. Are there any further questions on page 11? Seeing no further questions, does committee agree to move into the detail contained in the tabled document?

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler):** All right. So 2020-2021 Supplementary Estimates No. 2 (Infrastructure Expenditures), Department of Health and Social Services, capital investment expenditures, administrative and support services, not previously authorized, \$4,881,000. Does committee agree?

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler):** Activity two, health and social programs, not previously authorized, \$34,439,000. Does committee agree?

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler):** Total department, not previously authorized, \$39,320,000. Does committee agree?

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler):** Can you please turn to pages 12 and 13. I will now open the floor to general comments on the Department of Industry, Tourism and Investment, capital investment

expenditures. Comments? Questions? Member for Yellowknife North.

**MR. JOHNSON:** Thank you, Madam Chair. I'm looking at the fish processing plant in Hay River, and \$9 million. I know this went out for tender and then it came significantly over budget and we're carrying it on and there are some plans to adjust. I guess my first question is: how much of this is federal money? Thank you, Madam Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler):** Thank you, Member. Minister of Finance.

**HON. CAROLINE WAWZONEK:** Thank you, Madam Chair. If I could turn that to Mr. Koe, please.

**CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler):** Thank you, Minister. Mr. Koe.

**MR. KOE:** Thank you, Madam Chair. It's a project funded under the Investing in Canada plan, so it is 75-percent funded under that by the federal government. Thank you.

**CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler):** Thank you, Mr. Koe. Member for Yellowknife North.

**MR. JOHNSON:** Thank you, Madam Chair. I'm always happy to hear when things are 75-percent funded. This is one of the line items I have a bit of an issue with in that I'm always hesitant to approve something when we don't exactly know what it's going to be. I know there is some work to go out and adjust and see if we can get this back on budget, but I've spoken to a number of fishers, both on this side of the lake and in Hay River, who say this isn't exactly what they're looking for. I also know, with the passing of Stacy Linington, we have lost a significant amount of our previous fishing capacity and, you know, some of the great work that went into the revitalization strategy may not be met by this. So I'm looking for a sense of, if we approve this fish processing plant in Hay River, \$9 million and it's funded by the feds, how much flexibility do we have to actually change what this project looks like? Thank you, Madam Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler):** Thank you, Member for Yellowknife North. Minister of Finance.

**HON. CAROLINE WAWZONEK:** Madam Chair, I suppose the simple answer to that is that it depends at what stage of the project we're at. My understanding, and I'm eyeing up the Minister of Industry, Tourism and Investment, is that I think we're still at a fairly early stage. She's nodding at me, yes, so that all accords with my understanding, as well. Therefore, as such, if we're at an early stage, Madam Chair, then we're at a stage where those plans can still be modified and managed while still not losing the opportunity to make use of this federal investment. Thank you, Madam Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler):** Thank you, Minister. Member for Yellowknife North.

**MR. JOHNSON:** Thank you, Madam Chair. My other understanding of this project is that I recognize we need more fish processing capacity, but by putting it in Hay River you really severely limit a fisher's ability and you end up over-fishing a part of the lake because they simply have to travel to Hay River. Where the second part of this line item comes in, the \$500,000 for Great Slave Lake commercial fishery remote collection stations, and I recognize that this is largely an ITI issue and very specific, but can I get a sense of where we are expected to install remote collection stations? Thank you, Madam Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler):** Thank you, Member for Yellowknife North. Minister of Finance.

**HON. CAROLINE WAWZONEK:** Thank you, Madam Chair. I don't know that we are at that point of planning. Do you have an answer? Oh, well, the answer, Madam Chair, is in Fort Resolution and in Yellowknife. So there you go, Madam Chair. Thank you.

**CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler):** Thank you, Minister. Member for Yellowknife North.

**MR. JOHNSON:** Thank you, Madam Chair. I guess what I would ideally like to see, and I know there are competing interests, here, and different fishers have different things, is that perhaps this \$9-million fish processing plant is not just in Hay River and the various remote collection stations are stationed around the lake, and perhaps we're breaking up this \$9 million into smaller projects that actually make sure that the lake is evenly fished. I don't know if, in passing this specific line item, whether that's possible, and I would like to get a sense from the Minister of, going forward on this project, whether it's still possible that the millions of dollars for fishing actually get broken up and looks different than one plant. Thank you, Madam Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler):** Thank you, Member for Yellowknife North. Minister of Finance.

**HON. CAROLINE WAWZONEK:** Thank you, Madam Chair. If I could turn it over to the Minister of ITI, please.

**CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler):** Thank you, Minister of Finance. Minister of ITI.

**HON. KATRINA NOKLEBY:** Thank you, Madam Chair. The plant plays into the larger fish strategy revitalization for Great Slave. We have been working in conjunction with a lot of the fishers, the Tu Cho Fishers Cooperative, other external parties. We are working with Memorial University on reducing the plant size so that we can meet the \$9

million, which I'm sure you're all familiar with. The goal here is to build a fish plant in Hay River. That was what came out of the strategy that was tabled in the House in March of 2017, and that was part of the strategy. I hear from numerous fishers who do want the fish plant, including other Members in the House, as well, so the plan right now is for the \$9 million to be used for the plant. My understanding would be that we would need to use it in that manner. However if there is the option for flexibility and we decide it's not the way to go, then we would look to explore whether we could use the money elsewhere. I will commit to the Member that we will note his concerns, and I will take them back to the department, and we will incorporate them as we go forward in our planning. Thank you, Madam Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler):** Thank you, Minister of ITI. Member for Yellowknife North.

**MR. JOHNSON:** Thank you, Madam Chair. I guess I am in a bit of a hard spot, then. I don't want to vote against this \$9 million for the plant in Hay River, but I am very concerned that we actually haven't developed the fishing capacity around the lake to actually meet the demands of the plant that we are planning to build. I think we probably need a few more dollars put into remote collection stations and probably more money put into the infrastructure of individual fishers. I have talked to every single fisher, and they are just struggling to make a profit, let alone fish enough to use this plant that we are planning to build. I am hesitant to build a \$9 million plant without providing the underlying infrastructure to make sure that people can actually give it enough fish. I guess I will just leave that as a comment for now. Thank you, Madam Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler):** Thank you, Member for Yellowknife North. Are there any further comments to this section? Member for Hay River South.

**MR. ROCKY SIMPSON:** Thank you, Madam Chair. Yes, that \$9.1 million is staying in Hay River. Thank you. No, actually, at the end of the day, what I look at is doing the right thing, and I think that we have to revisit this and see what is the right thing and what is really required, because things do change a bit. I guess, in saying that, I would like to know where we actually are with respect to the design aspect of this. Are we just kind of started? Are we just talking to somebody, or are we kind of partway through it? Thank you, Madam Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler):** Thank you, Member for Hay River South. Minister of ITI.

**HON. KATRINA NOKLEBY:** We had a plan, and then, as we went out for the tender, all of the proposals came back too high, so we are just actually tweaking the plan. We have gone back to

Memorial University, who has provided us with the technical expertise behind the plant design, to say that this is our budget and what are the areas where we can minimize or downsize things so that we can fit our budget, but also to look at different uses for the by-products of the fish and not only selling the fish. We're now also exploring where we can use stuff for fertilizers and things like that. My understanding is that we are close to having a second finalized plan ready to come out to Members. I don't have the exact date at this time, but it's closer to completion than to the start, for sure. Thank you, Madam Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler):** Thank you, Minister of ITI. Member for Hay River South.

**MR. ROCKY SIMPSON:** Thank you, Madam Chair. What, if any, involvement does FFMC have in the design? Thank you, Madam Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler):** Thank you, Member for Hay River South. Minister of ITI.

**HON. KATRINA NOKLEBY:** Thank you, Madam Chair. I don't have that. I could probably flip through a thousand pieces of paper right now to find that. I know we do consult, and we talk with them. There is some restructuring going on there, as well, so I will commit to actually both Members who are very interested in fishing. I will come back with a briefing on fishing for both of the Members and any other Members who are interested. Thank you, Madam Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler):** Thank you, Minister. Member for Hay River South.

**MR. ROCKY SIMPSON:** Thank you, Madam Chair. My understanding is that the original design was for something like an 8,000 or 10,000 square foot building, and now we are down to half of that. I am just wondering: I know that we ended up buying the equipment before we even had a design. What's happening with the equipment that is there if we designed for a building twice the size? Thank you, Madam Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler):** Minister of Finance.

**HON. CAROLINE WAWZONEK:** Thank you, Madam Chair. I think we can certainly commit to getting that information back to the Member. There's an obvious interest in it, but that does deviate a bit from the infrastructure carry-overs that we are looking at, Madam Chair, but we can certainly get the information, nonetheless.

**CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler):** Thank you, Minister. Member for Hay River South.

**MR. ROCKY SIMPSON:** Thank you, Madam Chair. One other issue that comes up with that is the location of the plant. Can the Minister tell me what the location is, and if there are any alternate locations? Thank you, Madam Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler):** Thank you, Member. Minister.

**HON. CAROLINE WAWZONEK:** Madam Chair, I am going to add that to the commitment of information that we are going to get for the Member who has this interest in fishing.

**CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler):** Thank you, Minister. Do you have any further questions on the supplementary estimates?

**MR. ROCKY SIMPSON:** Thank you, Madam Chair. The Minister of ITI mentioned the processing, as well, and I am just curious, I guess, as to the impact that the processing facility will have on the fish that come in. Is this government looking at processing as much as they can and not sending as much through FFMC? Thank you, Madam Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler):** Thank you, Member. Minister.

**HON. CAROLINE WAWZONEK:** Thank you, Madam Chair. I am happy to make sure that we give those commitments and provide that information, but I don't have that information on the infrastructure supp. I only have information regarding how much is being carried over from last year to either continue the work that is under way or to follow through on contracts that were previously signed. I am quite confident that the Minister of ITI is going to have to give a fairly detailed briefing about the stage of the fishing projects and these particular projects, likely in advance of the capital plans that are coming forward in July, since there will obviously be continuing work included on those plans. Thank you, Madam Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler):** Thank you, Minister. Any further questions?

**MR. ROCKY SIMPSON:** Yes, thank you, Madam Chair. Just one more question. I just want a commitment from, I guess, the Minister of ITI that we do get a detailed briefing on the plant and design and expenditures sooner than later. Thank you, Madam Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler):** Thank you, Member. Minister.

**HON. CAROLINE WAWZONEK:** Yes.

**CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler):** Thank you, Minister. Seeing the time, I am going to Mr. Norn.

**MR. NORN:** Mahsi cho. I move that the chair rise and report progress.

**CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler):** There is a motion on the floor to report progress. The motion is in order and non-debatable. All those in favour? All those opposed? The motion is carried.

---Carried

I will now rise and report progress.

**MR. SPEAKER:** May I have the report of the Committee of the Whole, please? Member for Inuvik Twin Lakes.

### Report of the Committee of the Whole

**MS. SEMMLER:** Mr. Speaker, your committee has been considering Table Document 130-19(2), Supplementary Estimates (Infrastructure Expenditures) No. 2, 2020-2021, and would like report progress. Mr. Speaker, I move that the report of the Committee of the Whole be concurred with. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you. Do we have a seconder? Member for Nunakput. All those in favour? All those opposed?

--- Carried

The motion is carried. Item 22, third reading of bills. Minister of Finance.

### Third Reading of Bills

#### BILL 7: APPROPRIATION ACT (OPERATIONS EXPENDITURES) 2020-2021

**HON. CAROLINE WAWZONEK:** Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the Honourable Member for Inuvik Boot Lake, that Bill 7, Appropriation Act (Operations Expenditures) 2020-2021 be read for the for the third time. Mr. Speaker, I would request a recorded vote. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Minister is requesting a recorded vote. To the motion. Question has been called. All those in favour, please rise.

#### RECORDED VOTE

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

for Yellowknife Centre, the Member for Frame Lake, the Member for Kam Lake, the Member for Deh Cho, the Member for Yellowknife North, the Member for Monfwi, the Member for Inuvik Twin Lakes.

**MR. SPAKER:** All those opposed, please rise. All those abstaining, please rise. The results of the recorded vote: 18 in favour, zero opposed, zero abstentions. The motion is carried.

---Carried

Item 23, 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, June 10, 2020, 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 Commissioner's Address
11. Petitions
12. Reports of Committees on the Review of Bills
13. Reports of Standing and Special Committees
14. Tabling of Documents
15. Notices of Motion
16. Motions
17. Notices of Motion for First Reading of Bills
18. First Reading of Bills
19. Second Reading of Bills
20. Consideration in Committee of the Whole of Bills and Other Matters
  - Tabled Document 130-19(2), Supplementary Estimates (Infrastructure Expenditures), No. 2, 2020-2021

21. Report of Committee of the Whole

22. Third Reading of Bills

23. Orders of the Day

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Clerk. This House stands adjourned until Wednesday, June 10, 2020, at 1:30 p.m.

---ADJOURNMENT

The House adjourned at 6:58 p.m.