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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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(Tu Nedhe-Wiilideh)

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(Frame Lake)

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(Inuvik Twin Lakes)

**Mr. Rocky Simpson**  
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**Hon. R.J. Simpson**  
(Hay River North)  
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*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****Friday, June 12, 2020****Members Present**

Hon. Frederick Blake Jr, Mr. Bonnetrouge, Hon. Paulie Chinna, Ms. Cleveland, Hon. Caroline Cochrane, Ms. Green, 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 10:03 a.m.

**Prayer**

**MR. NORN:** Oh, God, I ask for your guidance today to give us clarity to help the people we serve to the very best of our ability. I ask that you help us maintain our resolve, no matter what obstacles we may face. I also ask you to keep our wits sharp and that we always keep our loved ones in mind while we do our work, with every keystroke, pen stroke, with every word. Amen.

**SPEAKER (Hon. Frederick Blake Jr):** Good morning, Members. As you know, today is day last. Have a good day today. Item 2, Ministers' statements. Minister of Industry, Tourism and Investment.

**Ministers' Statements**

**MINISTER'S STATEMENT 59-19(2):  
COVID-19 AND THE NWT ECONOMY**

**HON. KATRINA NOKLEBY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The COVID-19 global pandemic has impacted every aspect of life in our territory. The Government of the Northwest Territories has responded to the pandemic in a variety of ways. In addition to the measures taken to protect the health and safety of our residents and communities, our government has acted to mitigate the economic impacts of this crisis on our economy and to invest in the economic well-being of Northwest Territories industry and businesses.

Mr. Speaker, we knew that, for our economy to recover, we would need our mines and supporting industries to be operating, small businesses to be open, and our people to be working. That being said, our first priority was to address the health and safety of entrepreneurs, business owners, and their employees. Following that, we acted to ensure that Northwest Territories communities and residents would continue to receive critical supplies. With so many remote and dispersed communities, we are acutely aware of the importance of the supply chain, perhaps more so that our southern counterparts.

Since these initial first steps, Mr. Speaker, the Departments of Infrastructure and Industry, Tourism and Investment have rolled out a sequence of measured and organized steps, in tandem with the federal government, to ensure that funding reliefs are available. Some of these reliefs include waiving fees impacting truckers and air carriers to provide nearly \$2.5 million in economic relief. We have also continued to advocate regularly to the federal government on behalf of northern airlines facing unprecedented operating challenges due to the pandemic. Capital loans have also been made available through the Business Development and Investment Corporation to businesses that needed immediate liquidity.

Mr. Speaker, since March 20<sup>th</sup>, the GNWT has committed over \$20 million in offsets and supports for NWT businesses. Collectively, our territory, its governments, business chambers, and stakeholder organizations have been able to deliver the message in Ottawa that we need specific and regionally appropriate support programs for our businesses.

As a supplement to Canada's national business relief plans, CanNor's Northern Business Relief Fund significantly expanded relief options for NWT and Indigenous businesses. On May 8<sup>th</sup>, the Minister of Finance announced \$8.7 million for Northwest Territories airlines; the first of two phases of federal funding to help maintain the critical links that they provide. On May 12<sup>th</sup>, with support from the federal government, the GNWT then announced a \$6.2-million plan to top up wages for workers making less than \$18 per hour.

Through all of this Mr. Speaker, we have also worked with our mines and resource companies to ensure their safe and continued operation. We have taken steps to protect mineral tenure in the Northwest Territories by suspending payment and work requirements until the end of June, and will be extending this relief for an additional 90 days.

We will need our resource sector to anchor our recovery. Mining and exploration are the biggest source of private-sector jobs and income for our residents, and, as we get back to business, will be a major buyer of products and services from NWT companies. The Mining Incentive Program has

been adapted to support Northwest Territories prospectors and company-led mineral exploration projects, and to ensure that their projects this summer will be in line with orders and conditions of the Chief Public Health Officer.

Mr. Speaker, much has been said about the need for economic stimulus and recovery, but it is only thanks to our investments in relief efforts that we are able now to look forward. As we do, an important component of economic stimulus and recovery will be investment in GNWT infrastructure projects. Not only will these projects inject money into the economy, they will provide business and employment opportunities for our residents.

In 2020/2021 the GNWT is planning to invest over \$500 million in infrastructure throughout the Northwest Territories. This will allow us to deliver a total of 152 capital projects in 28 Northwest Territories communities, including schools, long-term care and healthcare facilities, and major transportation projects. Many of these projects are multi-year projects that will begin or continue this year. This investment continues to leverage significant federal infrastructure dollars.

Mr. Speaker, the GNWT will continue to advocate and work with the federal government on infrastructure initiatives that lead to jobs, economic growth, and prosperity both in the NWT and Canada. Meanwhile, as Northwest Territories businesses begin to resume operations across the North, we have reintroduced our Support for Entrepreneurs and Economic Development Policy Program for the 2020-2021 fiscal year. It represents \$4 million of potential investment into projects in which community employment is emphasized, and where the bulk of the funding will be spent in our communities.

Similarly, we will inject almost \$4.4 million into parks infrastructure, tourism product development, and community infrastructure projects this summer, supporting local suppliers, contractors, and employees as we improve our tourism product for the future.

As we begin to emerge wisely from public health measures, Mr. Speaker, economic recovery will begin within our territory and will depend greatly on what we can do for each other. The importance of the "BuyNorth" or "ShopNWT" message has never been as true as it is today.

Our recovery will also have to be in step with the needs and capacity of our business community. The new Business Advisory Council will be the voice of NWT business in my office. It will ensure that the experience, talent, and resources of the Northwest Territories' private sector are considered in our decision-making, and, as we look ahead, I

believe the collective world-wide effort that will be put into economic recovery will bring new opportunities.

If we can position ourselves to learn from the wave of innovation that I believe we will see, we can reimagine our own economy for the future; one that continues to promote our wealth of natural resources, but also encourages a more diversified and resilient economy that builds upon our natural strengths. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**MINISTER'S STATEMENT 60-19(2):  
PARTNER AND STAFF APPRECIATION FOR  
COVID EFFORTS**

**HON. PAULIE CHINNA:** Mr. Speaker, increasing the number of affordable homes and reducing core housing need is a priority of this government. The difficult times that we are emerging from highlight that safe and secure housing is one of our highest needs. The delivery of housing services became more challenging, given our need to stay healthy in preparation of COVID-19 through physical distancing.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the individuals and organizations involved in ensuring that safe housing and affordable shelters are available to our residents. Many of these people work behind the scenes, delivering critical services for housing solutions and emergency repairs.

I am proud and grateful for the work being done by the Northwest Territories Housing Corporation staff and all of our community partners, such as local housing organizations and emergency shelter providers that help us to provide housing and homeless supports. These important front-line workers support approximately 2,800 units under Northwest Territories Housing Corporation programming and five overnight shelters.

Indigenous government partners worked diligently with the Northwest Territories Housing Corporation. When faced with the uncertainty of how COVID-19 would impact their communities, the Deline Got'ine Government and the Lutsel K'e Dene First Nation had no hesitation in offering to take on the administration of some public housing units for the purposes of self-isolation. While, ultimately, these units were not required to address COVID-19, these communities and their leaders demonstrated to their people that they were prepared to do what it takes to keep their residents safe.

I want also to thank the private industry for their contributions during this time. Many landlords faced

their own economic pressures. In the community of Hay River, I want to thank the owners of the North Country Inn, which was utilized to support some residents experiencing homelessness. Large industry also wanted to help out. In Norman Wells, Imperial Oil Limited offered the use of some of its staff housing units should it be required.

I want to recognize the work of staff at the Northwest Territories Housing Corporation who successfully continued to deliver essential services such as emergency repair programming, rent support, and the Homelessness Assistance Fund.

Mr. Speaker, I also want to thank our partners in delivering housing in the communities. I also want to express my gratitude for their commitment to housing our residents of the Northwest Territories and their professionalism during this time. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

MINISTER'S STATEMENT 61-19(2):  
PLANNING FOR THE JUNIOR KINDERGARTEN  
TO GRADE 12 2020-2021 SCHOOL YEAR

**HON. R.J. SIMPSON:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As the end of the 2019-2020 school year approaches, planning for how to safely reopen schools in the fall is well under way. The Department of Education, Culture and Employment is working diligently with its education partners to create a supportive and effective learning environment for students in the 2020-2021 school year, and beyond.

As we emerge wisely into more relaxed public health restrictions, I want to be clear: the upcoming school year will not be a return to normal. I understand that all of us want desperately to get back into our routines and have this crisis end. That cannot happen this fall, and the number one priority of my office and the Department of Education, Culture and Employment has to remain the health and safety of our students and education staff. Schools will be taking strong action to meet the recommendations of the Chief Public Health Officer, while providing junior kindergarten to grade 12 education programs and services starting this fall, and we continue to need the support of all our residents to make this happen.

Mr. Speaker, ECE and education bodies responsible for delivering education are working on a coordinated, system-wide approach for the coming school year, that is based on the detailed criteria provided by the Office of the Chief Public Health Officer on how to safely reopen schools. This approach is focused on achieving the following priorities:

- maintaining the health and safety of students, staff, and communities;
- starting the school year on time;
- maximizing in-person learning, as much as possible;
- seeking equity across regions;
- maintaining financial supports to schools and the programs they offer; and
- supporting continuity of learning.

While details on specific health and safety measures will vary from school to school, Mr. Speaker, there are some general measures that will be enacted in schools across the NWT to help maintain physical distance. These include:

- limits on class size;
- enhanced cleaning and disinfecting practices;
- strict hand-washing routines;
- designated entrances and exits;
- staggered breaks, drop-offs, and dismissals;
- use of personal protective equipment by staff and students when physical distance cannot be maintained;
- spacing of desks and other furniture;
- restricting and managing flow in hallways and common areas through floor markings and/or physical barriers;
- encouraging activities to take place outdoors, when possible;
- restrictions on assemblies, choir and music classes, drama, team sports, and other gatherings where physical distancing is not possible; and
- limited access to schools for parents, guardians, and visitors.

Education will be delivered based on factors such as school size and layout, grade level, the number of students and staff, access to technology, and the unique needs of each student. Individual schools will be making adjustments to student transportation, food programs, and scheduling in order to accommodate public health recommendations.

In our smaller schools, it is likely that students will be safely accommodated within the existing space and will not need to rely as much on distance

learning. However, larger schools with more staff and students will have a harder time delivering the full extent of education programming within the school space. In these situations, schools may access space outside of the school, provide a blended learning approach that will prioritize in-person learning, or continue to support at-home distance learning if necessary.

Mr. Speaker, this is a dynamic situation, and plans for the coming school year may need to change as new information or public health and workplace safety requirements are identified. Public bodies are taking a flexible approach to their planning, to account for a potential second wave of COVID-19 in the fall of 2020, to ensure schools are able to open and remain open. The Government of the Northwest Territories is committed to providing regular updates to the public as plans move forward for the upcoming school year.

Each school will need to have its reopening plan assessed and approved by the Office of the Chief Public Health Officer and the Workers' Safety and Compensation Commission. All schools are working to have their detailed plans submitted before the end of the current school year, and details of these will be made available to students, parents, guardians, and staff once those plans are reviewed and approved. In addition, ECE will be publishing a territorial plan on reopening schools for the 2020-2021 school year later this month.

Mr. Speaker, the health and safety of residents and communities of the NWT is our primary concern. As we near the end of this school year, ECE remains committed to providing support to education leaders, students, parents, guardians, and teachers as we truly work together to meet public health and safety requirements while supporting the critical learning and well-being of all NWT students. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Minister. Ministers' statements. Minister of Justice.

MINISTER'S STATEMENT 62-19(2):  
2020-2021 MINISTERIAL POLICING PRIORITIES

**HON. CAROLINE WAWZONEK:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In the Northwest Territories, we entrust the RCMP with the responsibility to support every citizen's rights to safety and security, and we also entrust them with the right to take away a citizen's liberty in response to unlawful activity. That is a tremendous power and responsibility. We are fortunate to have the service of a professional and experienced national police force and an RCMP division dedicated to community policing. However, it remains critically important that we ensure our policing services reflect the unique context of our territory and the diversity of our people, and respect

the trust that we are all placing in them every day. The ultimate goal we are all working towards together should be safe communities where our citizens can thrive.

The Minister's Policing Priorities for 2020-2021 have been under development since April, and they were already in their final form when the ongoing challenges of systemic racism within law enforcement took centre stage around the globe.

As we are all acutely aware, the world has changed drastically over the past few months. While it may initially have been a global pandemic that illustrated the need for out-of-the-box thinking as it pertains to our justice and policing systems, it has been society's recent awakening to the reality of racial injustice that has driven this home. It has become apparent that innovation and reform are necessary in these systems and that the status quo is no longer acceptable.

We considered not presenting these priorities today through this statement but decided we cannot shy away from the painful reality of racism and a potentially difficult conversation about policing. I will proceed to present the policing priorities today, and I look forward to engaging in more conversations with the RCMP and with the Members.

For 2020-2021, the four themes of policing priorities are: first, promote confidence in policing services; second, adapt to changing enforcement and community policing landscapes; third, continue to improve the RCMP's response to vulnerable population; and lastly, operational and fiscal innovation.

Regarding the first priority, the need to build confidence and trust in those whom we have trusted with our safety is foundational. Confidence will come from trust; trust requires a relationship and mutual respect. It is also something that must be constantly and consistently nurtured and protected.

To serve communities effectively, it is critical to acknowledge, reflect, and learn from a past that has not always been characterized by mutual respect and to use those lessons to improve understanding, empathy, and cultural safety in how policing is done today. Some progress in establishing trust has been the creation of the Commanding Officer's Aboriginal Advisory. In addition, the NWT has an Aboriginal Policing Services unit within G Division, and the division's commanding officer has directed that all new members to a community must complete a personal biography to be presented to the community. They are required to attend a cultural orientation specific to the community where they have been placed, which includes meeting with local Indigenous organizations and elders.

Such steps should be recognized, but that does not mean the work is done, and so promoting confidence in policing remains a priority.

Northwest Territories communities have made it very clear how much harm they witness in their communities, harm from alcohol misuse, drug trafficking, and bootlegging. Bootlegging and substance abuse have been identified on almost every community's community policing plan. In addition to further cracking down on illegal alcohol and drug trafficking, we've also identified the need for more effective enforcement of impaired driving legislation as a means to keeping our communities and streets safe.

The RCMP must continue to foster trust within communities to help residents feel more comfortable reporting illegal alcohol and drug trafficking and impaired driving, which will allow the RCMP to implement more effective crime prevention and enforcement strategies. Although we know that root causes underlying the misuse of alcohol lie in areas beyond the influence of police, their enforcement efforts are integral to the disruption of the illegal networks taking advantage of people who are living with mental health and addictions.

The Department of Justice and the RCMP are a first point of contact for the diversion of suitable matters to local restorative justice options such as the community justice committees. Restorative justice practices and principles have long been linked to more positive outcomes for both offenders and victims. By increasing the use of more restorative practices, the RCMP will play a vital role in identifying matters for youth and adult diversion early in the justice system process.

The second priority, adapting to a changing community landscape, is linked to the third, and this is to improve the RCMP's response to vulnerable populations.

The RCMP play a critical role acting as the first point of contact for many people experiencing family violence, by informing victims of their rights and connecting those victims to community supports. Recognizing that family violence rates remain consistently high in the Northwest Territories, it is essential that RCMP members and victim services workers continue to collaborate so that victims' rights are recognized and respected.

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

---Unanimous consent granted

**HON. CAROLINE WAWZONEK:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We also recognize the challenges that victims face in reporting sexual assault. We look to

the RCMP to continue working with stakeholders and partners, including the Department of Justice, to implement solutions that would ensure a thorough investigation of a complaint in each and every case. Implementing trauma-informed investigative tools remains a best practice of our police officers and, in turn, is an area of focus we've identified for the coming year. This lessens the impact of crime and trauma on victims and their families, while also aiding in healing and recovery. Proper training and accurate use of investigative tools go a long way to improving the quality of the response provided to survivors of violence.

Our last remaining priority, again, with connection to the third, is operational and fiscal innovation. Mr. Speaker, the world is experiencing an unprecedented challenge with the COVID-19 pandemic. Policing is a critical piece of our emergency planning. The RCMP should continue careful planning to support safe communities and the safety of their members throughout this evolving situation. They should continue to participate in emergency planning within their scope at the territorial and federal level and collaborate wherever possible with territorial departments and agencies to help keep Northwest Territories residents safe.

As we continue to work through the added challenges that we face as a result of this pandemic, as well as addressing racism within law enforcement, it is more incumbent than ever on the Government of the Northwest Territories and the RCMP to work collaboratively to leverage our efforts for the benefit of our communities. While this might require some ingenuity, I am confident that we have appropriate and rigorous checks and balances that will hold our organizations accountable to operate innovatively within the financial limits of our contract.

In closing, Mr. Speaker, I reiterate that annual Ministerial police priorities are part of a much wider conversation that includes acknowledging both a past and present that still needs much healing. It is about building trust and finding a way forward so that police services are partners in upholding and protecting the safety of all people. 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 CONGRATULATIONS TO HAY RIVER GRADUATES

**MR. ROCKY SIMPSON:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to congratulate each of those students who are graduating from Ecole Boreal, Diamond Jenness Secondary School, and Aurora College. I know that these graduates will not forget the year they graduated, nor will they forget the unique events of COVID-19 surrounding their graduation.

We all appreciate and acknowledge the commitment, sacrifice, and hard work that these students put in to achieve their status as graduates. These students started their educational journey as young children and have now finished as young adults. That chapter has now closed, and it is time to take that next step, whether it be to further their education, join the workforce, or travel. It is only the beginning of life's journey.

The only advice I would have for each student is: listen to others, show respect for others, and most importantly, follow your dreams.

Mr. Speaker, I, along with the Member for Hay River North, am proud to announce the 2020 grade 12 graduates from Ecole Boreal: Megan Buhler, Reegan Jung-kind, Justin Morais, and Victoria Tweedie-Pitre.

Mr. Speaker, I, along with the Member for Hay River North, am proud to now announce the 2020 Grade 12 graduates from Diamond Jenness Secondary School: Trey Beck, Brad Belanger, Shyla Boyce, Caleb Brockway, Jared Chocolate, Geronimoe Constant, Ceaira Flaherty-Mckay, Elisha Gill, Nicole Griffiths, Conner Hoffman, Alice Jensen, Hunter Lafferty, Tarek Leahy-Chicot, Layne Leonard, Dylan McWhinnie, Tenielle Patterson, Angus Smith, Bryce Smith, Julie Squires-Rowe, Zoey Walsh, and Danielle Havioyak-Kolaohok.

Mr. Speaker, I, along with the Member for Hay River North, am proud to announce the 2020 Hay River graduates from Aurora College: Fredelle Deneyoua, who received a Business Administration Diploma, and Dana Webster, who received a Bachelor of Science Degree in Nursing.

For the graduates to achieve the success each celebrates today, we must recognize the parents, caregivers, family, and those teachers who supported and encouraged them to succeed. One day, each graduate will look back and understand the importance of what they achieved and hopefully convey the importance to their children and others. Mr. Speaker, in closing, I congratulate all the 2020 Hay River graduates and wish them all the success for the future. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Member for Hay River South. Members' statements. Member for Tu Nedhe-Wiilideh.

#### MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON CONGRATULATIONS TO TU NEDHE-WIILIDEH HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATES

**MR. NORN:** Marsi cho, Mr. Speaker. Today I want to speak about our most important resource in the NWT. You might be thinking, yeah, we've got diamonds, which are valuable; we have gold, yes; and let's not forget the oil and gas industry; but that's not what I'm referring to today.

Mr. Speaker, the most importance resource I am speaking about is our youth. Our youth are our future. Without them, the work that we are doing right now will be for nothing. It has been said that it takes a village to raise a child, and I firmly believe that we must put as much support as possible from all of us to teach our children and give them as strong a foundation as possible to prepare for adult life. Let's face it, some of these students will be sitting here one day, in our chairs.

Unfortunately, due to COVID-19, high school graduates everywhere had to endure unique and unusual challenges in their final year of high school. However, and I am speaking to the students now, I know that this whole experience will make you stronger and wiser as you continue on your journey.

With that, Mr. Speaker, today, I would like to celebrate and honour all of the high school graduates in the constituency of Tu Nedhe-Wiilideh. I have reached out to the principals in each school, and their names include: Tamara Enzo-Dagg from Lutsel K'e Dene School; Kiana Lafferty from Lutsel K'e Dene School; Lillyan Lockart from Lutsel K'e Dene School; Greg Villeneuve from Deninu Kue; Aaron Flunkie-Mantla from K'alemi Dene School; Caylynn Crapeau, Dettah, St. Patrick's High School; Darian Erasmus, Ndilo, Sir John High School; and Ethan Black, also Sir John High School.

Lastly, Mr. Speaker, I would like to end on a quote from a really good book that I plan to give to the graduates. It's called "The ABCs of Adulthood," and here's an excerpt from this book: "Risk. 'Nothing ventured, nothing gained' has been around since Chaucer, but just because it's become a cliché doesn't mean it's not still as true today as it was in those times. In just about every realm in your life, love and work in particular, you must take risks. Yes, you might speak your love out loud and have it not reciprocated, or you might try to cure cancer and fail. You might go on 50 dates that suck, but kids, you cannot reach the summit of Mount Everest until you have stumbled over a whole mountainside of rocks and ice."

Mr. Speaker, I want to thank all the teachers, principals, and staff for helping these kids move along their journey, and I want to finish off by saying we're all very proud of you, and we wish

them all the very best in their future endeavours. Marsi cho, Mr. Speaker.

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

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON  
CONGRATULATIONS TO TLICHO HIGH SCHOOL  
AND POST-SECONDARY GRADUATES

**MR. LAFFERTY:** Masi, Mr. Speaker. [Translation] I would like to send out a huge congratulations to grads in the Tlicho region, some of them have graduated. There are quite a number of people who have graduated in my community. They will be on their way to post-secondary. Also, for post-secondary, there were quite a number of students who have graduated from post-secondary education. I am very thankful for that [translation ends].

Congratulations to my Tlicho high school graduates and, also, the post-secondary graduates class of 2020. We are very proud of their accomplishments, especially during the whole COVID pandemic crisis. You have set a lifelong goal and achieved your dream. Well done.

Mr. Speaker, I have three of my own kids graduating this year. I must say I am a very proud father standing before you.

To highlight some of their achievements, Mr. Speaker, my youngster daughter is Denae Madai Lafferty, graduating from St. Pat's High School in grade 12 and looking forward to continuing her educational dream of one day working with kids, possibly in a pediatric area.

Mr. Speaker, my second daughter, Sahara Sadeh Lafferty, completed her post-secondary diploma in the Outdoor Education Program in Pembroke, Ontario. She is preparing to further her education in a kinesiology degree this fall.

Mr. Speaker, last but not least, my oldest son, Jayde Edzo Lafferty, completed his red seal journeyman ticket as an electrician. As you can see, I am proud of my children and all NWT graduates for these amazing accomplishments, and I encourage them to continue on their educational and professional journeys, whatever that might be. Once again, congratulations to the class of 2020. God bless. Masi.

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

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON  
DEMPSTER HIGHWAY

**MS. SEMMLER:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The Dempster Highway plays an important role for Inuvik. In fact, it's the lifeline to the Beaufort-Delta. Over the years, we have seen many upgrades and improvements to the Dempster, and most of the hazardous sections have been corrected or widened. Mr. Speaker, you are aware that the widening of the highway usually consists of four kilometres per year and started at the NWT border and is working its way north to Inuvik. Mr. Speaker, residents in my community also use the Dempster Highway from Inuvik south to access fishing, camping, recreation sites south of Inuvik and around close proximity to my community. Mr. Speaker, the 50 kilometres south of Inuvik are used not only by Inuvik residents, but now residents coming in from Tuktoyaktuk. We have seen them come in and come camping, as well, and head out to places like the Gwich'in Territorial Park. On this section of road, we have had many accidents on certain corners of the Dempster Highway just outside of Inuvik. Mr. Speaker, at our current rate of widening the Dempster from just one end, Inuvik won't see some of the last remaining hazardous sections widen just outside Inuvik for at least 30 years. Mr. Speaker, Inuvik residents also deserve to have this section outside of Inuvik widened, as well, and not have to wait 30 years to reach us. Today, I will have questions for the Minister of Infrastructure regarding widening the road south of Inuvik. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON  
BATHURST CARIBOU EMERGENCY

**MR. O'REILLY:** Merci, Monsieur le President. I would like to provide an update on the state of the Bathurst caribou herd since we last sat in March. March 13, 2020, the Wek'eezhii Renewable Resources Board decided that the proposed 2020 wolf cull could proceed as a pilot project. The board will conduct a more rigorous review of the remaining four years of the proposed program beginning in August of this year. This revised proposal should also include "lesson learned" from the implementation of the 2020 management actions. The board said that "it is clear that communication in advance of the submission of wildlife management proposals needs to be improved. Future submissions of wildlife management proposals should not leave the board in a position where it must choose the best of two bad options. The board encourages early and frequent communication amongst our respective staffs with respect to both proposed wildlife management actions and process and timelines." Aerial shooting of wolves was to start in mid-April

and run through until mid-May. I will have questions for the Minister later today.

On April 3<sup>rd</sup>, the Minister of Environment and Natural Resources issued a joint news release with Indigenous leaders condemning the illegal harvest of 80 Bathurst caribou and wasted meat from 12 more animals. ENR officers seized meat and issued tickets to hunters that were caught. On May 6<sup>th</sup>, we were informed that ENR is postponing the Bathurst and Bluenose-East calving ground photo surveys planned for June 2020 until next year as a result of the pandemic. Mr. Speaker, it is wildlife that is also suffering. The frequency of these surveys was recently changed from every three to two years due to the precarious state of the herds. Wolf harvest incentives did not seem to work, illegal caribou harvesting appears to have increased, and one of our key tools to assess the health of the herds has been delayed for a year. All of this is sad and bad news for the Bathurst caribou herd at a time our government continues to push ahead with a road that will cause irreversible harm.

I will have questions later today for the Minister of Environment and Natural Resources about details on some of these developments and when we can expect to see a comprehensive and balanced approach to the Bathurst caribou emergency that includes habitat protection. Mahsi, Mr. Speaker.

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

#### MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON NORTHWEST TERRITORIES METIS NATION FINAL AGREEMENT NEGOTIATIONS

**MS. MARTSELOS:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In my reply to the Commissioner's opening address, I mentioned my support of the NWT Metis Nation's Land, Resource, and Self-Government Agreement, as they are my constituents. The parties of this agreement include the NWT Metis Nation, which represents the Fort Smith, Hay River, and Fort Resolution Metis Councils, along with the Government of Canada and the Government of the Northwest Territories. In 1996, these parties agreed to have negotiations take place in two phases. As of July 29, 2015, the NWT Metis Nation Agreement-in-Principle was signed, which officially began phase 2 of negotiations. Phase 2 will address self-government and the move towards a Final Agreement.

Mr. Speaker, as MLA for Thebacha, I consider it a priority of mine to support the NWT Metis Nation in advancing their Claim into the final stages of its implementation. As MLA, I will do my best work to work with the territorial government and help advocate for the NWT Metis Nation as they continue to negotiate. Moreover, there is one

aspect of these ongoing negotiations that I would like to comment on. Over the years, in talking with various Metis leaders, I've heard numerous times of people describing the territorial negotiating team as a very difficult team to work with, particularly after devolution came into effect on April 1, 2014. I'm told that the territorial negotiating team became much more adversarial rather than conciliatory than before Devolution. Also, the chief negotiator of the federal government is no better. It seems that both the federal and territorial chief negotiators always hide behind the excuse of having "no mandate," thus the inability to say "yes" or "no" for a decision on anything at the negotiating table. Because of this, negotiations are always stalled and nothing gets done. This has got to change.

Mr. Speaker, during the life of this 19<sup>th</sup> Assembly I would like to see this Land, Resource, and Self-Government Agreement make good headway with positive outcomes for the NWT Metis Nation. Mr. Speaker, I seek unanimous consent for my statement.

---Unanimous consent granted

**MS. MARTSELOS:** I urge our government, along with the federal government, to negotiate this agreement fairly and in good faith, as both of those parties carry a fiduciary responsibility to do so.

Also, Mr. Speaker, I would like to congratulate the class of Paul W. Kaeser High School graduates of 2020. Your graduation is going to go down as unique because of the pandemic. It will also make each and every one of you stronger. Your journey is just beginning. Thank you again to all of the educators who made this possible, the parents, and the larger community of Fort Smith.

Mr. Speaker, I would also like to thank my colleagues of the 19<sup>th</sup> Assembly, all the staff who work here for making my job easier, bearable, and enjoyable. I am grateful, and I wish they all have a great summer. I would also like to thank my constituents of Thebacha for their continued support, and I look forward to the caucus retreat in Fort Smith. I know that the all the peoples of Fort Smith, including the NWT Metis Nation, the Salt River First Nation, and the Town of Fort Smith will welcome our caucus retreat with open arms. I know my constituents will be great hosts. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

#### MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON GREENHOUSE GAS REDUCTIONS DUE TO COVID-19 PANDEMIC

**MS. GREEN:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. There has been an unexpected silver lining resulting from the pandemic lockdown, and that's a significant decrease in greenhouse gas emissions. Flying, commuting, power generation, and industrial production have all fallen dramatically. A study in the journal "Nature" estimates global emissions have decreased by 17 percent and, in Canada, by 20 per cent. That reduction puts Canada almost halfway to meeting its Paris Accord targets that will hold global warming at 1.5 degrees.

Mr. Speaker, experts warn this change is likely going to be short-lived. When work and travel resume, greenhouse gas emissions will go right back up again. In fact, they may climb even higher than they were pre-lockdown. That's been the pattern of other economic slowdowns. What if this time is different?

Mr. Speaker, we have an historic opportunity to restart our economy with the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions front and centre. The sudden transition from fossil fuels has shown us what is possible. Industry, government, and individuals must now investigate how to prolong and entrench these reductions. One place to start is to continue to replace diesel with renewable energy. GNWT has done some good work in this area already by installing biomass heat in public buildings. We have also invested in solar and wind power pilot projects and replaced old diesel generators with more efficient variable-speed models.

The next logical step is to invest in building retrofits. A report from Ecology North released in April last year makes the case for building a northern retrofit economy. The authors estimate an impressive 9-percent return on investments on retrofits over 10 years because of reduced utility costs. That means a reduction in the cost of living, a move every Northerner would welcome, but that's not all. Investment in a retrofit economy where people install better insulation and windows, for example, would create 123 jobs and add \$15 million to the GDP of the Northwest Territories over the next 10 years. These gains are modest, but the effects are far-reaching. Mr. Speaker, I seek unanimous consent to conclude my statement. Thank you.

---Unanimous consent granted

**MS. GREEN:** The authors of the paper suggest that we could begin this retrofit work right now, by scaling up programs offered by organizations like the Arctic Energy Alliance. What we need to kick-start the process is an investment in rebates that will encourage homeowners to make these upgrades sooner rather than later. If not now, then when? Thank you Mr. Speaker.

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

#### MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON CONGRATULATIONS TO THE CLASS OF 2020

**MS. CLEVELAND:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I've heard the class of 2020 referred to as the "Chosen Ones." We have all seen the cartoon that takes us month by month through 2020, including threats of World War III, murder hornets, and the very real and world-changing COVID-19. I'm not sure what it means to be a "Chosen One" in the wake of the craziness that has been 2020 so far, but I do know this: the graduates of 2020 have had to overcome some significant hurdles to complete their schooling during the upheaval of a pandemic.

Throughout history, there have always been events of significant change that have marked time, and most change events bring human suffering. We often hear people say, "When bad things happen, look for the good." There are always good people. While COVID-19 has brought with it human suffering around the world, we haven't had to look long or hard for the good. The good has been loud; the good has been visible, and the graduates of 2020 have been part of that good. They give me hope for a future where divisiveness and racism are replaced by civility and kindness and where we are united by our common humanity.

The graduates of 2020 will not let us down. They have shown us that they are able to face uncertainty and roll with the punches. They have shown determination to deal with what life has put in front of them and to keep going. They have arrived at this huge life milestone resilient and ready to take on tomorrow, and we are proud, Mr. Speaker. The graduates of 2020 are globally united as the "Pandemic Class." The whole world is watching and cheering them on as they step into their future resilient, driven, passionate, and also hopeful. As they step into their future, Mr. Speaker, the class of 2020 stands in a global battle against a worldwide pandemic, climate change, racism, and massive income disparities. They stand at a fork in the road that challenges unity and strength of character and which demands advocating for the greater good.

To each of our graduates, I want to encourage you to enter the world with an open mind and a caring heart; be compassionate; help find ways to serve others, not run away from them; help to unite, not divide; help to build, not tear down; help support, not demean. If you do you, you'll find your own path to fulfillment and happiness, and, in doing so, your example will inspire the rest. Lend your unique voice and talents to your community and find a path that allows you to be fulfilled while uplifting others at

the same time. It is hard to stand up against the flow of the masses and be brave through kindness, but it is possible. It feels good, and good breeds good, and, class of 2020, you are, oh, so good.

"Good" doesn't mean you have to do what people expect of you. "Good" means you have integrity. "Good" means you know your truth and your truth inspires those around you to share their own honest selves. So, as you begin to find your way in this world, know that you have the power and presence to drive change. You are the greater good, and you have within you the power to change this world for the better. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

#### MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON CONGRATULATIONS TO SAHTU REGION HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATES

**HON. PAULIE CHINNA:** Good morning, Mr. Speaker. Today, I would like to recognize the accomplishments of the graduation class of 2020 in the Sahtu region. With a total of five communities in the Sahtu region and 19 graduate students, it is a remarkable accomplishment in these unusual circumstances. Facing and adjusting to the change due to COVID-19, the students of the Sahtu region have displayed resilience and leadership in working toward their educational dreams and leading into the future to strive for higher accomplishments, leading to achieve their dreams. Your life, your journey, has begun. It is a celebration. Congratulations. I am proud of you.

The need for education in the Sahtu region: we have a lot of projects that we are working toward. We need the educational opportunities and dreams and training within our region. I would like to commend the class of 2020 to continue their educational dreams, to strive as the Sahtu region, to lead with resilience. Congratulations, class of 2020. Mahsi.

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

#### MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON MANAGED ALCOHOL PROGRAMS

**MR. JOHNSON:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. One of this Assembly's mandate items is to establish a managed alcohol program and a medical detox program by the spring of 2023. We expect that such programming will reduce hospitalizations due to alcohol by 30 percent. This is one of my favourite mandate items. I believe it shows a switch in mentality that this government is ready to put harm reduction at the core of our programs. There was

much debate about managed alcohol programs in the last Assembly, but there was little progress on it.

During COVID-19, we saw a number of our service providers take the initial steps to build managed alcohol programs. I think this was largely due to a recognition that people detoxing in the midst of a pandemic and putting a surge on our healthcare system was not necessary, and there was a way to reduce harm. Many of these programs were not managed alcohol programs per se, with the necessary medical supervision. They are a recognition that people going through an alcohol withdrawal is an extremely painful process.

Mr. Speaker, I believe we spend too much time in this Assembly debating how to provide alcohol and debating all of these issues around alcohol, and not enough time focusing on helping our constituents heal. Alcohol is not the cause of addiction; trauma is. We owe it in this Assembly to provide people with the means to heal, and that can look different for every single person. My dream is that, when a person is struggling with alcohol, they show up to their service provider and they are given an option for on-the-land treatment, for medical detox, for a managed alcohol program. If they want to go cold turkey down South, they are given that option. They are given a wide range of tools to use, because everyone's path to sobriety looks different, and we as government owe it to provide them with programming that is non-judgmental and tailored to their needs.

I will have questions for the Minister of Health and Social Services to see that we are on track to providing such programming and we can get this work done as soon as possible. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

#### MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON CONGRATULATIONS TO NAHENDEH HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATES

**HON. SHANE THOMPSON:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. COVID-19 has thrown us a curve in our celebrations of the class of 2020 graduation in Nahendeh. I have been informed that these graduation ceremonies have been postponed to allow the celebration plans to be approved by the Chief Public Health Officer. I look forward to being part of those celebrations later on in the year. However, the DEAs and school staff and community members have placed signage in the streets, set up a Web page, developed family photos, given out cooler packages, and a number

of other opportunities to celebrate with our successful graduates.

In Nahendeh, we celebrate various classes, starting with kindergarten, grade six, grade nine, and grade 12 across the region. I wish I had all of the successful graduates' names here today to celebrate with them, but unfortunately I can't get them. I do know we have five post-secondary graduates who will help the residents of the Northwest Territories in the future. We have five grade 12 graduates from the Echo Dene School in Fort Liard; 13 graduates from the Liidlii Kue Regional High School from across the region, from the smaller centres and Fort Simpson.

Like everyone here, I am so proud of these students. They achieved so much, and I am looking forward to seeing what they are going to achieve in the future. I would like to thank the parents, teachers, support staff, families, and friends for all their support and continued supports for our graduates. Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank them very much, and I look forward to their success in the future. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Member for Nahendeh. Members' statements. Item 4, returns to oral questions. Item 5, recognition of visitors in the gallery. Item 6, acknowledgements. Item 7, oral questions. Member for Yellowknife Centre.

### Oral Questions

#### QUESTION 333-19(2): BUSINESS ADVISORY COUNCIL

**MS. GREEN:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My first set of questions are for the Minister of Industry, Tourism and Investment. The Minister announced the creation of a Business Advisory Council almost three months ago, and, when questioned in the House on May the 27<sup>th</sup>, she said, "We definitely commit to having an open and transparent and collaborative government" with respect to telling us the details of the Business Advisory Council. With that in mind, it's my understanding that the council has met at least once. Can the Minister now tell us who is on the council? Thank you very much.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Member for Yellowknife Centre. Minister of Industry, Tourism and Investment.

**HON. KATRINA NOKLEBY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I believe that information has been provided to the Members. If it hasn't, I will follow up to ensure that it has. We were allowing the council to make their own press release as they are arm's length from my office. We'll ensure that gets corrected if it hasn't been done so before now. Thank you.

**MS. GREEN:** The public doesn't know anything about this council. They don't know who is on it. They don't know the terms of reference. They don't know that they've met or when they will meet again. In the spirit of transparent and collaborative government which you have committed yourself to, can you please make the public aware of the details of this Business Advisory Council today?

**HON. KATRINA NOKLEBY:** The Business Advisory Council released a press release earlier this week. If the Member hasn't seen it, I will forward it along. We do have a statement coming, and we will ensure that the list is included there. As mentioned, this is their council, not my council, to determine how they communicate to the public. That's what we're currently trying to figure out. The council has met once, or twice actually, now. They're very keen to get going, and we will be providing that information.

**MS. GREEN:** This news release is news to me. It's news to my colleagues on this side of the House. I haven't seen it reported in the media. We still are left with a situation where the government has created a council for which we have no public information. I don't know where this news release is. Is it possible for you to tell us now who is on the council, what their mandate is, and when they're going to meet again?

**HON. KATRINA NOKLEBY:** As mentioned, the Business Advisory Council put out their own press release. It did not come through my department. Therefore, I cannot say why the Member has not seen it, but I will commit to sharing that with you. I will right now list off the council. We have Paul Gruner, Det'on Cho Corporation. He is the co-chair. We have Jenni Bruce, president of the Northwest Territories chamber. She is a co-chair. We have Kyle Wright, Tim Syer, Pat Rower, Linda Martin, Sean Crowell, Denny Rodgers, Duc Trinh, James Thorbourne, Sara Brown, Gary Vivian, Darrel Beaulieu, Harold Grinde, Donna Lee DeMarcke, Trevor Wever, and Kevin Hodgins. I apologize if I've said anybody's name wrong. We will provide the rest of the information to you in a written format as it is probably just not the worth the time to go through it right now.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Minister. I know there's a lot of passion here, but please direct your question through me. Member for Yellowknife Centre.

**MS. GREEN:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My apologies. Thank you to the Minister for that information. The point is not that the information should be provided privately to me or to my colleagues but that this council that was put into being by the government should be made known to the public. This council wouldn't exist without the

government, so the government has a responsibility to tell the public what this council is about and who is on it. You have just mentioned some names and what their mandate is. I'm sure you appreciate that there's a lot of interest in this council. There is some potential to make creative recommendations like the ones that I mentioned in my statement about building a retrofit economy. Will the Minister commit to making the information public today? Thank you.

**HON. KATRINA NOKLEBY:** As mentioned, the press release from the Business Advisory Council does state their mandate and all of the members who are there. Again, I will forward that to the Members. The council has met for literally one week. While delayed, and I understand that has created frustrations for people, it is going. Part of that first week of discussions is to determine how the communications protocol will happen. As mentioned, it is not my council to dictate how they operate. My apologies again if the Member did not see the press release, but I cannot control what the media reports on. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

QUESTION 334-19(2):  
EDEHZZHIE NATIONAL WILDLIFE AREA

**MR. O'REILLY:** Merci, Monsieur le President. While we've been sitting here, I think one of the best news pieces I've had in the 19<sup>th</sup> Assembly arrived in my inbox. I want to commend the Premier for the leadership on this issue, and her Cabinet. We just got a news release about a permanent land withdrawal for the subsurface on the Edehzzhie Protected Area. Thank you, and thanks to the Premier and Cabinet. This is a very significant move in terms of reconciliation, so I sincerely want to thank my Cabinet colleagues and the Premier for the leadership on this issue.

My question, Mr. Speaker: can the Premier provide the House and the public with an update about the permanent land withdrawal order for Edehzzhie because it doesn't contain an end date anymore? Mahsi, Mr. Speaker.

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

**HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I want to start by thanking the honourable Member as well, the MLA, for recognizing the hard work that this Cabinet has done for this. We committed to trying to foster better relationships, and we are committed. We're working hard at that.

The reason it doesn't have an end date on it is because the Dehcho First Nations asked us for that. There were several requests from them and

Environment and Climate Change Canada to implement an interim land withdrawal to achieve permanent protection of the subsurface land associated with the Edehzzhie National Wildlife area. We understand that, renewing the withdrawal without an expiry date, the Dehcho First Nation will be in a better position to secure funding to support future management in this Edehzzhie Park. Again, it was something that was asked. It was something that we all agreed to. The next step in that is the land use planning. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. O'REILLY:** Thanks, very much to the Premier for that. According to the Government of Canada webpage, it says that Edehzzhie will be established as a national park area under the Canada Wildlife Act in 2020. That's this year. I think the permanent withdrawal is helpful, but what we really need is the transfer of the lands back to the federal government, or perhaps some other arrangement to prevent this from being undone in the future. Can the Premier tell us whether we're still on schedule for the establishment as Edehzzhie as a National Wildlife Area, and what role this government intends to play?

**HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE:** Environment and Climate Change Canada will begin the consultation process to establish it as a National Wildlife Area. However, due to COVID-19 and the amount of work that the federal government is doing, there might be a little delay with that, although we are trying to get this moved forward as fast as possible. They know it's important to all of us, so we've stressed that as we go forward. Hopefully, the GNWT's currently in discussions with the Dehcho First Nations, and is interested in playing a role in the management of the park as we go forward. Like I said, we're at the table. We're all working together. Canada is interested in moving this forward, the Dehcho First Nations and the GNWT. This is a very successful achievement that we've made so early in our government.

**MR. O'REILLY:** I want to thank the Premier again. I just would like to get a better understanding of why the establishment of Edehzzhie is contingent upon the Dehcho Land Use Plan.

**HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE:** What I can say is that, when I first became the Premier and the Minister of Executive and Indigenous Affairs, I flew in, back in those days when we could actually fly, and had a meeting with the Grand Chief and her council and talked about it. At that point, I had realized that this park was taken off the table as kind of a negotiating thing, was my understanding. I didn't feel that was fair, so they asked me to put it back on, and I agreed.

I feel that it's important, if we're going to build a relationship, Mr. Speaker, we need to be willing to

give something, and at that point, I said, "Yes, we will work with you," and then, in future talks, they've agreed to work with us on a land use plan. It's the start of a positive relationship. It is time for change. Everyone is saying that, and we are doing our best. We will have arguments; it is not going to be easy, but we are doing our best to work to settle all of the outstanding issues between the GNWT and the Indigenous governments.

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

**MR. O'REILLY:** Merci, Monsieur le President. I want to thank the Premier again. I think this is a very significant step forward. Part of my concern here is that the Dehcho Land Use Plan has been in development for 19, count them, 19 years, and at first, the obstacle was the federal government because they owned the land, and the GNWT was at the table, but now the obstacle is our government. We own the land, and our government is the obstacle. I have heard this from people involved in the process. The concern is too much land being protected and so on. You have to give the communities the right to decide what they are going to do with that land. Eventually, if they wanted it used for different purposes, that's their decision to make.

My question to the Premier is: can you tell us why this has taken 19 years to get the Dehcho Land Use Plan to the point it is, and will our government get out of the way and finally approve this plan so that we can move forward? Thanks, Mr. Speaker.

**HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE:** I can't say why it's taken 19 years. It wasn't my file before, I certainly haven't been in this House for 19 years, and I don't want to make assumptions. What I do know is that, when I assumed this portfolio, I was told by the Dehcho First Nations that there were issues with the relationship. We are trying to mend those relationships.

It would be easy for me, Mr. Speaker, to say, "I will stand back and let you do what you want." However, there is a public interest as well, and the Dehcho First Nations recognizes that. We are going into this as partners in this, and we will do our best to make sure that this is dealt with in the committed three years. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

QUESTION 335-19(2):  
DEMPSTER HIGHWAY UPGRADES

**MS. SEMMLER:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My questions are for the Minister of Infrastructure. Would the Minister commit to looking into whether it

is possible to adjust the Dempster Highway widening plans to include starting the widening on the Inuvik side? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you. Minister of Infrastructure.

**HON. KATRINA NOKLEBY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The Department of Infrastructure has recently been considering this approach based on conversations with community members. I recognize that the highway, due to its proximity to Inuvik and associated recreational areas, is one of the most heavily travelled areas of Highway No. 8. I have lots of conversations with my counterpart in the Yukon, who is also very keen to see the Dempster rehabilitated, and we have discussed that with the federal government. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MS. SEMMLER:** Would the Minister commit to widening the Dempster Highway from Inuvik this year?

**HON. KATRINA NOKLEBY:** Infrastructure has approved \$4.5 million in the 2020-2020 capital plan for Highway No. 8 reconstruction using federal funding under the Building Canada plan, bundle number 3, for ongoing Highway No. 8 widening and rehabilitation. Planned work for this year includes 3.3 kilometres of embankment widening, brushing, culvert and guardrail installation for kilometres 146.6 to 149.6. The Building Canada plan fund started in 2019-2020 and is a \$4.5 million per year for the next five years.

I will commit to having the department examine our plans for this summer and beyond to align the work with the needs of the region. I cannot commit that this will happen this construction season, as we will have to look into timing, planning, and permitting issues, but I would be pleased to update you on our review and share our plans moving forward.

I would also like to mention that the Department of Infrastructure, through a combination of its own forces and contracted services, operates and maintains close to 2,500 kilometres of all-weather road and constructs over 1,400 kilometres of winter roads annually. We do this through the use of a 20-year strategic plan that addresses our transportation needs to ensure the safety of all Northwest Territories residents. I would have to go in and look at that plan and whether there needs to be adjustments.

**MS. SEMMLER:** Well, since she won't commit to it this year, would she commit to separating and starting from both ends this year?

**HON. KATRINA NOKLEBY:** I will commit to having a look at this and trying to incorporate the Member's wishes.

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

**MS. SEMMLER:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Will the Minister commit that she will continue to fight for more money so that our highway can be done from Inuvik to Tsiigehtchic? We have the nurse who goes out there. Sometimes we have RCMP. We have medical buses that travel down that road. We need more money, and we need to have that road done before 30 years. Can the Minister commit that she is going to go out and look for more money to get working on this highway, starting on the Inuvik side? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**HON. KATRINA NOKLEBY:** I think anyone who knows me knows that I speak my mind, and I do so at my federal table. Yes, I commit to the Member that I will continue to advocate strongly for the Dempster fix-up and rehabilitation with the federal government. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

QUESTION 336-19(2):

TLICHO ALL-SEASON ACCESS ROAD PROJECT

**MR. LAFFERTY:** Masi, Mr. Speaker. [Translation] Mr. Speaker, about the new road to Whati, I would like to ask questions to the ITI Minister [translation ends].

I have additional questions for the Minister of Infrastructure. Some questions may be for more detailed information, which the Minister may not have at hand, but this is coming directly from my constituents. It's their words, Mr. Speaker. What is the current status on the Tlicho All-Season Road project? More specifically, to the northern, southern, and Tlicho hires. Last time I asked the Minister, southern hires were 50-percent-plus. Masi, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Member for Monfwi. Minister of Infrastructure.

**HON. KATRINA NOKLEBY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As of June 2, 2020, 77 people were employed with the project. Of the 77 workers employed, 24 were from the Tlicho region or the Northwest Territories, and 53 were from the South. There have been 6,573 hours of Tlicho citizen training resulting out of the project to date. The number of employees is anticipated to increase up to 120 by the end of June. We remain committed to ensuring that local and northern benefits on the project are maintained. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. LAFFERTY:** I am glad that the Minister is committed to monitoring the progress that is happening there. That's my next line of questions

here. We are fortunate to be living in the North. It's small enough that we run into our constituents, or people, who actually work at the TASR site, Tlicho All-Season Road. I was yet again, Mr. Speaker, informed by one of the current workers yesterday that southern hires keep increasing, and friends and relatives of Southerners get on heavy equipment faster than my own Tlicho people working there. Even those guys, my Tlicho workers, have been waiting for a number of weeks now.

Mr. Speaker, I have questions for the Minister: what is the number of recent southern hires, new hires, the positions that they were hired for, and also advancements at the TASR construction site for southern hires?

**HON. KATRINA NOKLEBY:** I will have to come back to the Member with those details.

**MR. LAFFERTY:** I'd like to thank the Minister for her follow-up on this, because, again, this is coming from my constituents, so there are more detailed questions being asked of me to the Minister. My Tlicho workers, who are approximately, as the Minister indicated, 24 out of 70, or according to the workers there it's around a hundred or coming to a hundred, so it's a small number that we have there, who have years of experience as heavy equipment operators through their diamond mines experience, but they are not given the same treatment as Southerners wishing to advance. Could I have the Minister's commitment to provide in detail, as she may not have that in hand, as indicated earlier, the number of Tlicho workers who cite any advancements since the start of construction in October 2019; in addition, southern workers who cite less advancement?

**HON. KATRINA NOKLEBY:** Yes, I will have to come back to the Member with those details. However, I do want to commit to the Member that I remain committed to ensuring that Northerners are getting meaningful work and training out of these projects and that we will ensure that, going forward, we are making sure that the training components are built in and that people are getting meaningful employment.

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

**MR. LAFFERTY:** Masi, Mr. Speaker. I understand that the Minister is new to the file. I'm glad she's going to follow through. That agreement was before she came on board, so I'm glad she is going to be monitoring this. The last question I have is: can I get a commitment from the Minister that she and/or her senior staff, departmental staff, visit the Tlicho All-season Road construction site and meet with the Tlicho workers to simply hear them out and

follow through with their concerns, Mr. Speaker? Masi.

**HON. KATRINA NOKLEBY:** Yes. Yesterday in the House I committed to coming to speak with the workers at the Edzo maintenance camp for the highway. At the same time, I will come to the TASR camp and speak with people there. Anytime, though, I do encourage the Member, if he does have constituents who have concerns, that they come to me directly and don't wait on those visits, which will likely be the last week of June. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

QUESTION 337-19(2):  
ADDRESSING HOMELESSNESS AND HOUSING  
IN HAY RIVER

**MR. ROCKY SIMPSON:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I have questions for the Minister of Housing. Yesterday, I brought up questions about the lack of housing in Hay River. Since then, I have been thinking about it and becoming increasingly frustrated and angry, and only wrote the questions while sitting here. I will start with: in Hay River, I'm going to start recommending to those residents who cannot find permanent housing to start looking at other communities, as the government just can't deliver the housing they require.

My first question to the Minister would be: I would ask the Minister, considering we have a significant housing shortage in Hay River, is her department willing to work with ECE to cover the cost of relocation and some temporary rent payment supports for those persons and families willing to relocate to Yellowknife or southern Canada? This appears to be the only option this government has to give our residents a chance at the housing they deserve. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Member for Hay River South. Minister responsible for the NWT Housing Corporation.

**HON. PAULIE CHINNA:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and thank you, Member, for your comment. The Northwest Territories Housing Corporation has, right now, as I mentioned yesterday, rolled out \$43 million in infrastructure projects and housing throughout the Northwest Territories. I understand the Member's frustration with the lack of housing or with homeless issues throughout his riding. It has become quite significant throughout the Northwest Territories that we do have a large number of homelessness issues throughout the Northwest Territories, but the Housing Corporation does have programs that accommodate these unique situations. We have a homelessness assistance

fund that is available to every resident throughout the Northwest Territories that provides assistance for first month's rent and the damage deposit for each client. We have made changes to our transitional rent supplementary program for the Northwest Territories.

As of right now, we are working with a vulnerable persons working group in Hay River and looking at strategies and options for Hay River, for this area. As we progress and go forward, I will keep the Member up to date on what we will be creating for his riding. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. ROCKY SIMPSON:** It's not only a housing deficit that we are facing in Hay River. It is access to land, as well. Can the Minister commit to working collaboratively with MACA, Lands, and the Town of Hay River to ensure that land for public housing will be made available, with a quick turnaround?

**HON. PAULIE CHINNA:** Yes, I am aware that we do have to work with our Indigenous groups. There is a consultation period that we have to fulfil when accessing land throughout the Northwest Territories. There are several in different jurisdictions and different approaches and different Indigenous groups that we would need to consult with. The department has been working in conjunction with the Department of Lands as we develop throughout the Northwest Territories. That is a relationship that has already existed, and yes, I will be working to continue that relationship, working with the Department of Lands for accessing properties, and also working with the Department of ECE to look at our homelessness fund and financial assistance that we have available to the residents of the Northwest Territories.

**MR. ROCKY SIMPSON:** Over the years, communities and government have been talking about smaller homes for people, so I will ask the Minister: will she commit her department to seriously look at the construction of smaller homes for those who are homeless or hard to house?

**HON. PAULIE CHINNA:** Yes, that is a conversation that we are actually having right now. We do have a program called the Community Initiative Fund that works directly with community residents, with the leadership, looking at unique projects such as this. Yes, I do commit to working with my department and I will follow up with the Member on the progress of it, and also with the outcome of the vulnerable persons working group in Hay River, as well.

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

**MR. ROCKY SIMPSON:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We have lots of conversations, and that is kind of

part of the problem. What we need is more action. To address the housing deficit in the NWT, it always comes down to money. What action has the Minister taken to address the issue of lack of funding to substantially address our housing shortage here in the NWT? Is the Minister applying any pressure on the federal government to access additional funds for housing? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**HON. PAULIE CHINNA:** Yes, the Housing Corporation is in constant communication with the Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation. I have established a working relationship with my federal counterpart. We do have access to the \$60-million co-investment fund for the Northwest Territories, and it's a partnership and an initiative that we are working through within our department. We are establishing staff right now to roll out this project, this funding, so it could be more easily accessible to the residents of the Northwest Territories. As we go forward, I still continue the conversation with the federal government and to lobby for money for the Northwest Territories. We live in a unique territory. We have unique challenges, here, and our construction season, I also display that it's short, so, going forward, I will commit to working with the federal government and accessing more money for the Northwest Territories. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

QUESTION 338-19(2):  
MANAGED ALCOHOL AND MEDICAL  
DETOXIFICATION PROGRAMS

**MR. JOHNSON:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As I mentioned earlier, I am very happy to see the mandate item: to establish and manage alcohol programs and a medical detox program. During the COVID-19 response, we saw a number of organic beginnings of a managed alcohol program that disabilities council provided a number of the people quarantining with daily alcohol in addition to Aspen Apartments, when people were isolating, were provided with alcohol. My question for the Minister of Health and Social Services: is there any intention to grow these programs into a proper medical managed alcohol program? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Member for Yellowknife North. Minister of Health and Social Services.

**HON. DIANE THOM:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The establishment of a managed alcohol program is a commitment of the mandate of this Assembly. Research into what a managed alcohol program could look like in the Northwest Territories is something our department has done a fair bit of

work at. The COVID-19 pandemic has pushed our department to move towards a managed alcohol program more quickly than anticipated in order to keep people safe and support the public health orders. Controlled access to alcohol is currently being provided as part of the COVID-19 response for homeless individuals. This is to help people stay isolated when necessary to reduce the chance of withdrawals. Alcohol is being provided, again, like the Member said, to Aspen, the former Arnica Inn, and the Inuvik warming and isolation centres. Yes, our department has done a fair bit of work. It is something that we could easily look at going forward. Thank you.

**MR. JOHNSON:** I am very happy to hear that. The other half of this mandate commitment is a medical detox centre. Right now, our emergency centre gets overwhelmed with people due to alcohol-related issues. The commitment in this government is to reduce those by 30 percent, a very admirable commitment. One of the issues right now is that we are sending people to emergency to deal with alcoholism, and there are not always beds for them to detox. They are not always treated as they should be. My question for the Minister of Health is: when can we expect to see the medical detox program establish?

**HON. DIANE THOM:** Going forward, using insights that we have gained from this COVID experience, we have been able to work with partners to make this type of harm-reduction program a permanent part of addiction services here in the Northwest Territories. However, it's a little too early to say what this would look like or commit to anything definite, definite timeline, but we can see the importance of these programs. Because of this, we will prioritize planning to ensure that this is available ongoing.

**MR. JOHNSON:** This was in the mandate as spring of 2023, which I thought was a little too long. I am always happy to hear that we are actually beating a mandate commitment. I want to commend the department and the Minister for all the work and the pressure that COVID has put on this. One of my issues is that the programming we are offering right now is linked to people isolating due to COVID, and I understand that. When a constituent comes to me and asks what kind of detox programs are available, what kind of addictions counselling is available, I want to know when I will be able to refer them to a managed alcohol program. My question to the Minister is: when can we expect programming to exist that I could actually refer a person to, not simply because of COVID-19?

**HON. DIANE THOM:** I just want to put this in perspective just to let people know that we are serious about this and this is a big issue. We referenced earlier about the CAPE report, and the

Northwest Territories is a little low in some of the indicators. I want to say that we've received some funding, and we hired a senior advisor. This person will be tasked in leading the coordination and addressing the problematic substance abuse here in the Northwest Territories. This is something that we received funding, we are hiring staff. This is not just a health responsibility. It's a whole government approach; it's homelessness; it's justice, just to name a few. It is a whole government approach. This is a good move in terms of dealing with this in the Northwest Territories.

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

**MR. JOHNSON:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My final question is that there is a number of programs going on right now. I don't think we are quite where we want to be. I understand that we are working towards that. Can I get a sense from the Minister of whether this programming is ultimately intended to be run by an NGO, a non-profit organization, or whether we are anticipating, as a government, to be running the managed alcohol programs? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**HON. DIANE THOM:** Right now, we are in the process of hiring staff. We have got a whole other government department, departments working together. Here in the Northwest Territories, we always reach out to partnerships. We work together. It's not just a GNWT problem. It's substance abuse and alcohol abuse. Here in the Northwest Territories, it's a whole-of-government approach. This is something we can look at. It is important, and we recognize that. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

QUESTION 339-19(2):  
EMERGING WISELY PLAN

**MS. GREEN:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My questions are for the Minister of Health and Social Services. Today, we anticipate that the territory will move into phase 2 of the Emerging Wisely Plan, and that will enable a greater degree of freedom for NWT residents and a greater range of economic activity to resume. My question is: in what circumstances would we have to return to phase 1 or even to lockdown? Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Member for Yellowknife Centre. Minister of Health and Social Services.

**HON. DIANE THOM:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As part of the public health risk assessment framework that is included in the Emerging Wisely Plan, the

Chief Public Health Officer has publicly stated what might take a community or the Northwest Territories back a phase or back into containment is the most restrictive phase right now. We fully expect a second wave to come anywhere from August to November this year.

The second wave in Canada could force the Northwest Territories to go back phases if travel restrictions are not strongly implemented. Resources for checkpoints, Protect Northwest Territories, compliance, and enforcement are all important to ensure that we have proper implementation. Depending on the severity of the second wave hitting Canada and perhaps the Northwest Territories, that our testing capability, we may need to revert back to relapsing phase 1 or containment properly to protect the public health and also the residents here in the Northwest Territories. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MS. GREEN:** Thank you to the Minister for that response. I am looking for more specific information. How many cases would force us to reverse phase 2 or phase 1? Is there any consideration about where those cases would be located to drive this decision?

**HON. DIANE THOM:** At this time, we are not sure. It all depends on our Chief Public Health Officer and some of the orders. We have talked about some of the measures that we are doing now. We need to make sure that our enforcement, our Protect Northwest Territories, some of the measures we have in place continue to be strong. It's important to recognize that our Chief Public Health Officer has the authority to make any changes to the orders.

**MS. GREEN:** Thanks again to the Minister. I am going to continue to ask this question because I think people need to understand whether it's a matter of having a case, 10 cases, 100 cases, and also whether it matters in the decision-making whether those cases are in Yellowknife or whether they are in one of the small communities. I think that people want some accountability about when the phases could be reversed, what would trigger that in the NWT rather than in the country as a whole.

**HON. DIANE THOM:** At three o'clock today, we are doing a media release, and we are talking about what phase 2 will look like. Our Chief Public Health Officer, our deputy minister for enforcement, our Premier, and myself will be talking about what opening up phase 2 will look like. I think here is an opportunity for questions for our Chief Public Health Officer to ask her at what point do we revert back and how many cases it would mean. Right now, Mr. Speaker, I just don't have that information.

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

**MS. GREEN:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thank you to the Minister for that. I find the answer a little troubling, because we don't have the opportunity to question the Chief Public Health Officer in public, but we are holding the Executive Council responsible for the management of the pandemic, and they are, of course, taking advice from the Chief Public Health Officer. Where does the accountability lie on the decision to move backwards through the Emerging Wisely Plan, and how is Executive Council involved in that decision-making? Thank you.

**HON. DIANE THOM:** I signed the order, which means our Chief Public Health Officer has the authority to take control of this pandemic. In terms of where we stand as a Cabinet, we get updates from our Chief Public Health Officer. She briefs us as Cabinet. That level of detail, Mr. Speaker, that was asked, I just don't have that with me. However, I can commit to getting back to the Member with the number of cases.

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

QUESTION 340-19(2):  
DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

**MS. CLEVELAND:** Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. In March, I asked the Minister of Justice who the lead department is within the GNWT for domestic violence. The NWT has the second highest rate of domestic violence in the entire country. At the time, the GNWT did not have a lead department for domestic violence, and I advised the House that I would come back around to the question by the end of the sitting. Unfortunately, our sitting was cut short, so here I am today. I would like to ask the Honourable Premier: which department is the lead department responsible for domestic violence for the Government of the Northwest Territories? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Domestic violence is not okay, and it affects many, many people in the Northwest Territories and throughout Canada. The Member is right; we have the second highest rates, and we do need to do something about it. There is no one answer to domestic violence, is the issue. We did talk about it at our Cabinet table. Things that we need to look at include our criminal justice response. It talks about treatment. We need to talk about housing for people. We need to talk about treatment for people who are the perpetrators and

people who are the victims. It goes across all departments.

As such, then, we decided, as a Cabinet table, that it would make sense that the lead department would be Executive and Indigenous Affairs; I would be the lead. However, in saying that, it is very important to know that we all have a responsibility. All of my Cabinet Members and all Members and all of society have an obligation to speak out and try to address the horrible things that are seen when we talk about domestic violence. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MS. CLEVELAND:** I appreciate that Cabinet sat down and had this conversation and came up with a response. Thank you to them for that. What I would like to know from the Honourable Premier is if she would commit to creating a meaningful domestic and inter-partner violence prevention awareness campaign during the life of this Assembly.

**HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE:** It would be irresponsible not to do a thorough public awareness campaign, Mr. Speaker. For too many years, when I grew up as a child, the theory was, you made your bed; you lie in it. Days were different back then, and many women experienced that and had to live with that, because they were shamed if they did not, if they did disclose and decided to leave their partners.

Those times are done, Mr. Speaker. It is time for all of us to have a voice and speak out against it. Absolutely, Mr. Speaker, I will commit to having an aggressive campaign to actually get it out there in the public and have people talking about it. If we do not talk about it, Mr. Speaker, we will not address it.

**MS. CLEVELAND:** I agree, and I appreciate the Premier's commitment to this. My third question for the Premier is: when someone disappears, the first hours are the most crucial. Mr. Speaker, there is rarely evidence that a crime has been committed; however, this is a prerequisite for police to be able to seek a court's permission for a search warrant or for personal records for somebody who has gone missing.

What I would like to know from the Premier today is: would the GNWT commit to bringing forward a missing persons legislation in the life of this Assembly? There is precedent set by other jurisdictions, by other provinces and territories, and this could serve as a model for the Northwest Territories. Would the Premier commit to bringing this forward for our Legislative Assembly?

**HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE:** I think that we are all committed to it, but for the specifics of that

answer, I would like to transfer it to the Minister of Justice.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Honourable Premier. Minister of Justice.

**HON. CAROLINE WAWZONEK:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. This issue dates all the way back to 2012. It was originally raised at the federal-provincial-territorial tables, and sadly, here we are in 2020 and, of course, the Northwest Territories does not yet have this legislation. Some provinces have moved ahead with their own, but it is not uniform across the country. We can't be left behind. Yes, Mr. Speaker, we are going to do the work that is needed to get ourselves ready, to do the investigative work, to put the proposal together. It is my hope that it would be ready to go this Assembly, but seeing as how I am, just today, turning my mind to it, I am not quite prepared to say a timeline to it, but I'll make sure we have a timeline possibly before I'm back in the Assembly, so we'll have a sense of whether that will be possible. At the very least, we are going to get it started. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**MS. CLEVELAND:** Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I appreciate the collaborative response from both the Premier and the Minister of Justice on that winner. Mr. Speaker, yesterday, we spoke in the House about if you fail to plan, you plan to fail. My last question for the Premier today in regard to domestic and inter-partner violence is: would the Premier commit to creating a GNWT action plan to address domestic violence and inter-partner violation throughout the life of this Assembly? Thank you.

**HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE:** Like I said, we brought it up at the Cabinet table. We have decided the lead. We have already put it on the Committee of Cabinet agenda. We will have a working group. We will be looking forward to that. At this point, I don't want to commit to an action plan. I want to make sure that we know what we're doing first.

I do believe that, if you don't plan, you plan to fail. However, Mr. Speaker, I also believe that sometimes the GNWT does way too many plans, and they sit on shelves and get dusty. I want to make sure that this work is a priority for this government. It's a priority for Indigenous women and girls throughout the Northwest Territories. Domestic violence has to be a priority for all people in the Northwest Territories. I won't commit to an action plan; I will commit to action. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

QUESTION 341-19(2):  
BATHURST CARIBOU HERD MANAGEMENT

**MR. O'REILLY:** Merci, Monsieur le President. My questions are for the Minister of Environment and Natural Resources on the Bathurst caribou emergency. Predator control can be a useful tool in recovery of the herd, but I would like to know from the Minister if he could tell us about the success of the wolf harvest incentive and the aerial shooting program, especially whether the targets were actually reached. Mahsi, Mr. Speaker.

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

**HON. SHANE THOMPSON:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. ENR and the Tlicho government submitted a proposal for a joint wolf management program to help support the recovery of the Bathurst and Bluenose East herds. The Wek'eezhii Renewable Resources Board supported a pilot project this winter, and field work wrapped up in mid-May. While we face a number of challenges related to COVID and bad weather, we were able to complete a range of actions to support caribou recovery.

Mr. Speaker, these actions include training and incentives for wolf harvesters as part of the traditional economy, putting out 11 satellite collars to monitor wolf movement, and the aerial removal of 41 wolves from the herd's winter range. Given its low numbers and the challenges we faced this year, we have focused most of our efforts on the Bathurst herd. Mr. Speaker, because location information is still coming in from wolf harvesters and analysis is still under way, final results for the pilot project will not be available until August. At that time, we will present that information. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. O'REILLY:** I want to thank the Minister for that. It was good to see the Minister working with Indigenous leaders to condemn the illegal killing of caribou and meat wastage in March of this year. Can the Minister tell us what enforcement actions resulted from this hunting and what preventative measures this government is taking?

**HON. SHANE THOMPSON:** This was a very disturbing result that we had seen this past winter. I am actually going to take a bit of time to read out the whole response here, because I think that it's very important that the public hears and understands what we are doing.

ENR actively monitored the Bathurst caribou management zone, or mobile zone, throughout the

winter 2019-2020 harvest season. The monitoring includes checkpoints at McKay Lake and Gordon Lake and regular ground and aerial patrols. Given an increase in harvesting on the winter road, ENR increased its presence and monitoring activities.

In late March, renewable resources officers determined that more than 80 caribou were illegally killed in the mobile zone, and wasted meat from 12 more caribou were found outside the zone. ENR officers conducted field investigations which resulted in eight ongoing investigations. Because they are active legal investigations, I cannot provide any further detail at this time on those eight cases.

In response to illegal harvesting, I worked with Tlicho Grand Chief George Mackenzie, Lutsel K'e Dene First Nations Chief Darryl Marlowe, and other Indigenous regional leaders to issue a joint statement. In this statement, we reinforced the need for responsible harvesting of caribou in this time of rapid herd decline. The government will continue to work closely with its co-management partners to implement a range of measures to support the Bathurst, including the implementation of the mobile zone.

Mr. Speaker, I have to thank the staff of ENR. They have worked really, really hard on the mobile zone, even in difficult times. I have to say that I was very disappointed to hear some of the stuff that they had to go through, but we are working with our co-management partners to address this.

**MR. O'REILLY:** I want to thank the Minister for that detailed response. I do commend his leadership in working with the Indigenous leaders on that issue.

As the Minister obviously knows, exploration and development in the range of the Bathurst caribou herd is probably at an all-time low, partly due to the pandemic. Now would seem to be a really good time to implement mobile caribou conservation measures that would provide temporary habitat protection. This work was called for in the Cabinet-approved Bathurst range plan. Can the Minister tell us about the status of the promised mobile caribou conservation measures and when we can expect to see them fully implemented?

**HON. SHANE THOMPSON:** The collaborative development of the Bathurst caribou range plan provides guidance on activities to support the range of the Bathurst caribou herd, including mobile protective measures. ENR has developed a draft framework for implementing the mobile caribou conservation measures on the range of the Bathurst herd. This framework will provide a pilot project that has been done this year to test the approach and procedures for implementing mobile measures. A possible industry partner has been identified to work with ENR to pilot the mobile

measures within the late summer and fall range of the Bathurst herd, and discussions are ongoing. We will provide that information to SCEDE once we hear more information.

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

**MR. O'REILLY:** Merci, Monsieur le President. I want to thank the Minister for that. I have been pushing him on that for some time, so I look forward to getting the information.

The scheduled calving ground survey for the Bathurst caribou herd is not going to proceed this summer as a result of the pandemic. Can the Minister tell us what the management implications are for the herd now that this key population assessment tool is not going to take place? Mahsi, Mr. Speaker.

**HON. SHANE THOMPSON:** Again, some of the challenges that we are dealing with COVID. ENR was unable to secure a research firm from Nunavut to proceed the planning calving grounds survey of the Bathurst and Bluenose East herds. The survey will be rescheduled for June 2021, which will be three years since the last survey, which is within our time frame that we do the survey. Other herd monitoring programs are able to continue, including composition surveys, monitoring radio-collared caribou, and other target research. Given the very low size of the Bathurst herd, ENR and its co-management partners are currently doing a wide range of actions to support herd recovery. Postponement of the calving ground survey will not delay or impact current management actions, including habitat and wolf management.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to inform the House that I have reached out to the Minister of ENR from Nunavut, and we have had some communications back and forth. We were talking about having a phone call or a face-to-face meeting some time later this summer so that we can discuss this important activity. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

QUESTION 342-19(2):  
COVID-19 TRAVEL RESTRICTIONS

**MR. O'REILLY:** Merci, Monsieur le President. There is still some confusion about what happens when people from outside arrive into the Northwest Territories. There was a CBC report yesterday on their website, and I just want to quote one sentence here. It says, "If they don't meet one of the essential services exemptions, they will be told they need to apply for an exemption and self-isolate for 14 days."

I have some questions for the Minister of health on this, and I have talked to her about this and raised some of these concerns. I would like to know, Mr. Speaker, if non-Canadian citizens arrive into the Northwest Territories, and they do not meet one of the current exemptions, will they be turned back? Mahsi, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Member for Frame Lake. Minister of Health and Social Services.

**HON. DIANE THOM:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. While we are talking about COVID, I need to take this opportunity to correct the record. Yesterday, in response to the honourable Member for Yellowknife North, I stated that roughly one third of the population suffered from chronic disease. I did not have the stats right in front of me, and I was working from memory; so that's my bad. In fact, Mr. Speaker, according to the Canadian Chronic Disease Surveillance System, more than 12,000 individuals, or about a quarter -- not a third, about a quarter -- of the population in the Northwest Territories are believed to have a chronic disease. Although not all chronic diseases are associated with increased risk of severe COVID-19 illness, that's the response to the Member's question yesterday. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Now I'll get back to the other Member's question. The Chief Public Health Officer's jurisdiction does not extend to public health officers being able to force people to turn back. Any person, whether you are a Canadian citizen or not, who presents at the border without approved documentation or without meeting any one of the exemptions under the travel restriction order will be told they can either wait at the border and submit a resident self-isolation plan for approval by contacting Protect Northwest Territories, return to their place of origin and submit a resident self-isolation plan for approval, or be charged \$1,725 if they decide to proceed to travel in the Northwest Territories. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Minister. I think that's what you call two birds with one stone there. Member for Frame Lake.

**MR. O'REILLY:** I would like to chat with the Minister afterwards. You have an opportunity to make a personal explanation to correct the record, but that's a procedural thing. This is still very confusing, Mr. Speaker. What happens when a Canadian citizen arrives into the NWT and they do not meet any of the current exemptions? Will they be turned back, or are they allowed to stay somewhere, even if it's at the border? Are they allowed to stay for 14 days and self-isolate and then apply for an exemption? How does this work?

**HON. DIANE THOM:** I will say it again. Any person, whether you are a Canadian citizen or not, who presents at the border without approved documentation or without meeting one of the exemptions under the travel restrictions order will be told that either they can wait at the border, do the paperwork, return back to their place of origin, or be charged the fine. I don't know how clear this can be.

**MR. O'REILLY:** I'm still a little confused here. Presumably, then, somebody coming in, even if they're a Canadian citizen, non-Canadian citizen, can camp out at the airport for 14 days, and then they've cleared self-isolation, and then they can travel anywhere in the Northwest Territories. Is that how this could work, Mr. Speaker? Thanks.

**HON. DIANE THOM:** No. If a person travels into the Northwest Territories, you have to self-isolate in one of our four centres.

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

**MR. O'REILLY:** Merci, Monsieur le President. I am still confused, and I think members of the public are still confused about this. If someone presents at the border and they don't have an exemption, they don't have a self-isolation plan, and if they head off somewhere, who is going to cover the costs associated with that? Mahsi, Mr. Speaker.

**HON. DIANE THOM:** A Canadian who does not meet any exemptions is prohibited from travelling within the Northwest Territories. If a person who does not meet our exemption arrives and is directed to self-isolate before returning to their point of origin, they will need to pay for their self-isolation. Currently, the GNWT only pays for Northwest Territories residents who need to self-isolate in a self-isolation centre. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Minister. Colleagues, our time for oral questions has expired. Item 8, written questions. Item 9, returns to written questions. Item 10, replies to Commissioner's Address. Item 11, petitions. Item 12, reports of committees on the review of bills. Item 13, reports of standing and special committees. Item 14, tabling of documents. Minister of Health and Social Services.

### Tabling of Documents

TABLED DOCUMENT 148-19(2):  
ACCREDITATION CANADA ACCREDITATION  
REPORT: TLICHO COMMUNITY SERVICES  
AGENCY

TABLED DOCUMENT 149-19(2):  
FOLLOW-UP LETTER FOR ORAL QUESTION

263-19(2): IMPACTS OF COVID-19 IN LONG-TERM CARE CENTRES

TABLED DOCUMENT 150-19(2):  
GOVERNMENT OF NORTHWEST TERRITORIES  
NWT HOME AND COMMUNITY CARE REVIEW,  
FINAL REPORT, SEPTEMBER 26, 2019

TABLED DOCUMENT 151-19(2):  
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND SOCIAL  
SERVICES RESPONSE TO HOME AND  
COMMUNITY CARE REVIEW, JUNE 11, 2020

**HON. DIANE THOM:** Mr. Speaker, I wish to table the following four documents: "Accreditation Canada Accreditation Report: Tlicho Community Services Agency;" "Follow-up Letter for Oral Question 263-19(2): Impacts of COVID-19 in Long-Term Care Facilities;" the "Home and Community Care Review;" and the GNWT's "Response to the Home and Community Care Review." Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Minister. Tabling of documents. Minister of Finance.

TABLED DOCUMENT 152-19(2):  
INTER-ACTIVITY TRANSFERS EXCEEDING  
\$250,000 (APRIL 1, 2019 TO MARCH 31, 2020)

**HON. CAROLINE WAWZONEK:** Mr. Speaker, I wish to table the following document: "Inter-Activity Transfers Exceeding \$250,000 (April 1, 2019 to March 31, 2020)." Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Minister. Tabling of documents. Minister responsible for the Workers' Safety and Compensation Commission.

TABLED DOCUMENT 153-19(2):  
WORKERS' ADVISOR OFFICE NORTHWEST  
TERRITORIES AND NUNAVUT ANNUAL  
REPORT 2019

**HON. KATRINA NOKLEBY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I wish to table the following document: "Workers' Advisor Office Northwest Territories and Nunavut 2019 Annual Report." Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

TABLED DOCUMENT 154-19(2):  
THE NORTHERN RETROFIT ECONOMY:  
AMBITIOUS, ACHIEVABLE BUILDING SECTOR  
GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS REDUCTIONS  
WITH NET POSITIVE RETURNS, IMPROVED  
QUALITY OF LIFE AND JOB CREATION, BY  
ECOLOGY NORTH

**MS. GREEN:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I wish to table the document "The Northern Retrofit Economy: Ambitious, Achievable Building Sector Greenhouse Gas Emissions Reductions with Net Positive Returns, Improved Quality of Life and Job Creation, by Ecology North." Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Member for Yellowknife Centre. Tabling of documents.

TABLED DOCUMENT 155-19(2):  
SUMMARY OF MEMBERS' ABSENCES FOR THE  
PERIOD FEBRUARY 5 TO MAY 25, 2020

**MR. SPEAKER:** Pursuant to Section 5 of the Indemnities, Allowances and Expense Regulations of the Legislative Assembly and Executive Council Act, I wish to table the "Summary of Members' Absences for the Period February 5 to May 25, 2020." Thank you.

Tabling of documents. Item 15, notices of motion. Item 16, motions. Member for Yellowknife North.

### Motions

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

**MR. JOHNSON:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. This has been one of the longest sessions, I think, in legislative history, a very long session, and I'm happy to move the motion to bring it to an end today.

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 at 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, Member for Yellowknife North. Can you please clarify the seconder of the motion? Thank you.

**MR. JOHNSON:** The Member for Hay River North, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** 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

Just for the Member, we haven't had a taste of six consecutive weeks of session, so please look forward to that. Item 17, notices of motion for first reading of bills. Item 18, first reading of bills. Item 19, second reading of bills. Item 20, consideration in Committee of the Whole of bills and other matters. Item 21, report of Committee of the Whole. Item 22, third reading of bills. Minister of Justice.

### Third Reading of Bills

BILL 10:

TEMPORARY VARIATION OF STATUTORY TIME PERIODS (COVID-19 PANDEMIC MEASURES ACT),  
CARRIED

**HON. CAROLINE WAWZONEK:** Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the honourable Member for Sahtu, that Bill 10, Temporary Variation of Statutory Time Periods (COVID-19 Pandemic Measures) Act, be read for the third time. Mr. Speaker, I request a recorded vote. 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. The Minister has requested a recorded vote. 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 Tu Nedhe-Willideh, 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. SPEAKER:** All those opposed, please rise. All those abstaining, please rise. The results of the recorded vote: 17 in favour, zero opposed, zero abstentions. The motion is carried.

---Carried

Bill 10 has had third reading. Members, before we adjourn today's sitting, I wish to say some final words.

Our Assembly was one of the first in Canada to resume full operations with all Members in attendance. Congratulations. Other legislatures have operated with minimum numbers of Members. Political parties selected those who were allowed to attend. Our consensus government does not work that way. Although we may not always agree, consensus requires that each Member be heard.

In making it possible for us all to attend, I want to acknowledge and thank Kim Wickens, the deputy clerk, Members' and precinct services, and her team. This includes Brian Thagard, the Sergeant-at-Arms; Derek Edjericon, deputy Sergeant-at-Arms; Michael Butt, security supervisor; and all the security team for their hard work, professionalism, and problem-solving in coming up with a plan for us all to attend this sitting safely.

Members, the months of isolation, stress, and trying to keep our residents informed during this pandemic took a toll on all of us. When we returned, this affected us all. I am proud of how Members overcame challenges, moved forward, and got the important work of government done. I encourage all of you to reflect on what you have accomplished in the last three weeks:

- a full budget for the government was reviewed and passed;
- two supplementary appropriations were reviewed and passed;
- Bill 10 was passed to allow for adjustment of legislative timelines during the pandemic;
- standing committees delivered three committee reports, with 18 motions adopted; and
- the House adopted a motion calling for a Northwest Territories seniors' and elders' strategy.

Members, we would not have completed this work without the dedicated staff of the departments and Legislative Assembly who have worked hard, both here in the building and at home, to support our efforts.

Today, the Northwest Territories will enter phase 2 of Emerging Wisely. As we look forward to the summer ahead, I encourage all Members and

residents to continue to practice safe hygiene practices and physical distancing. It is a time for us all to spend time with our friendship and family circles.

Mr. Clerk, orders of the day.

### Orders of the Day

**CLERK OF THE HOUSE (Mr. Mercer):** Orders of the day for Thursday, October 15, 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
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 Thursday, October 15, 2020, at 1:30 p.m.

---ADJOURNMENT

The House adjourned at 12:08 p.m.