



NORTHWEST TERRITORIES
**LEGISLATIVE
ASSEMBLY**

2nd Session

Day 50

19th Assembly

HANSARD

Thursday, November 5, 2020

Pages 1689 - 1724

The Honourable Frederick Blake Jr, Speaker

Legislative Assembly of the Northwest Territories

Members of the Legislative Assembly

Speaker

Hon. Frederick Blake Jr.
(Mackenzie Delta)

Hon. Diane Archie

(Inuvik Boot Lake)
Deputy Premier
Minister of Infrastructure
Minister responsible for NWT Power Corporation

Mr. Ronald Bonnetrouge

(Deh Cho)

Ms. Caitlin Cleveland

(Kam Lake)

Hon. Paulie Chinna

(Sahtu)
Minister responsible for NWT Housing Corporation
Minister responsible for Homelessness
Minister responsible for Youth
Minister of Municipal and Community Affairs
Minister responsible for Youth

Hon. Caroline Cochrane

(Range Lake)
Premier
Minister of Executive and Indigenous Affairs
Minister responsible for the Covid-10 Secretariat

Hon. Julie Green

(Yellowknife Centre)
Minister of Health and Social Services
Minister responsible for Seniors
Minister responsible for Persons with Disabilities

Mr. Jackie Jacobson

(Nunakput)

Mr. Rylund Johnson

(Yellowknife North)

Mr. Jackson Lafferty

(Monfwi)

Ms. Frieda Martselos

(Thebacha)

Ms. Katrina Nokleby

(Great Slave)

Mr. Steve Norn

(Tu Nedhe-Wiilideh)

Mr. Kevin O'Reilly

(Frame Lake)

Ms. Lesa Semmler

(Inuvik Twin Lakes)

Hon. R.J. Simpson

(Hay River North)
Government House Leader
Minister of Education, Culture & Employment
Minister of Justice
Minister responsible for the Public Utilities Board

Mr. Rocky Simpson

(Hay River South)

Hon. Shane Thompson

(Nahendeh)
Minister of Environment and Natural Resources
Minister of Lands
Minister responsible for the Workers' Safety and Compensation Commission

Hon. Caroline Wawzonek

(Yellowknife South)
Minister of Finance
Minister responsible for the Status of Women
Minister of Industry, Tourism and Investment

Officers

Clerk of the Legislative Assembly

Mr. Tim Mercer

Deputy Clerks

Mr. Glen Rutland
Ms. Kim Wickens

Committee Clerks

Mr. Michael Ball
Ms. Cynthia James
Ms. Jennifer Franki-Smith

Law Clerks

Ms. Sheila MacPherson
Ms. Alyssa Holland

Box 1320
Yellowknife, Northwest Territories
Tel: (867) 767-9010 Fax: (867) 920-4735 Toll-Free: 1-800-661-0784
<http://www.assembly.gov.nt.ca>

TABLE OF CONTENTS

PRAYER	1689
MINISTERS' STATEMENTS	1689
95-19(2) – Work Plan for the Development of the GNWT Action Plan in Response to the Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls Final Report (Wawzonek)	1689
96-19(2) – Workers' Safety and Compensation Commission Support to Employers during COVID-19 (Thompson).....	1690
97-19(2) – Sport Canada COVID-19 Funding Support (Chinna).....	1690
98-19(2) – Family Violence (Green).....	1690
MEMBERS' STATEMENTS	1692
Remembrance Day (R. Simpson)	1692
Food Security (O'Reilly).....	1692
Recognition of Interpreters (Bonnetrouge).....	1693
Affirmative Action (Norn)	1693
Remembrance Day (Nokleby).....	1694
Reflections on Effecting Positive Change (Martselos).....	1694
Remembrance Day and Wish List (Jacobson).....	1694
Call on All Politicians to End Systemic Racism (Cleveland).....	1695
Elders' Housing Needs (Lafferty)	1696
Guaranteed Basic Income (Johnson).....	1696
National Skilled Trades and Technology Week - Recognition of Michael Turner-Davis and Nathan Dunn (Cochrane)	1697
Remembrance Day (R.J. Simpson).....	1697
National Skilled Trades and Technology Week - Recognition of Joel Hanthorn and Joseph Lemieux (Archie).....	1697
National Skilled Trades and Technology Week - Recognition of Slavomir Rohac (Wawzonek).....	1697
Eulogy for Elaine Blake (Chinna)	1698
RETURNS TO ORAL QUESTIONS	1698
RECOGNITION OF VISITORS IN THE GALLERY	1699
ORAL QUESTIONS	1699
WRITTEN QUESTIONS	1710
RETURNS TO WRITTEN QUESTIONS	1710

TABLING OF DOCUMENTS	1710
MOTIONS	1712
22-19(2) – Appointment of Law Clerk (Cleveland)	1712
23-19(2) – Appointment of Sole Adjudicators (Johnson)	1712
24-19(2) – Changes to Committees Membership (O'Reilly)	1712
25-19(2) – Extended Adjournment of the House to February 3, 2021 (Johnson)	1713
FIRST READING OF BILLS	1713
Bill 22 – Supplementary Appropriation Act (Infrastructure Expenditures), 2021-2022	1713
SECOND READING OF BILLS	1713
Bill 22 – Supplementary Appropriation Act (Infrastructure Expenditures), 2021-2022	1713
CONSIDERATION IN COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE OF BILLS AND OTHER MATTERS.....	1714
REPORT OF COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE.....	1720
THIRD READING OF BILLS.....	1720
Bill 22 – Supplementary Appropriation Act (Infrastructure Expenditures), 2021-2022	1720
ASSENT TO BILLS.....	1722
ORDERS OF THE DAY.....	1723

YELLOWKNIFE, NORTHWEST TERRITORIES**Thursday, November 5, 2020****Members Present**

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

The House met at 1:30 p.m.

Prayer

---Prayer

DEPUTY SPEAKER (Ms. Semmler): Welcome, colleagues. Item 2, Ministers' statements. Minister responsible for the Status of Women.

Ministers' Statements

MINISTER'S STATEMENT 95-19(2):
WORK PLAN FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE
GNWT ACTION PLAN IN RESPONSE TO THE
MISSING AND MURDERED INDIGENOUS
WOMEN AND GIRLS FINAL REPORT

HON. CAROLINE WAWZONEK: Madam Speaker, later today, I will be tabling a draft work plan that outlines how the Government of the Northwest Territories will undertake the preparation of an action plan to respond to the calls for justice presented in the final report of the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls. This document represents this government's next steps forward in addressing the systemic causes of violence directed at Indigenous women, girls and 2SLGBTQIA people.

The 231 calls for justice are far-reaching and complex; developing a response is not simply a matter of reviewing and signing off on work already being done. This process will take a careful and thorough review of what we are currently doing, realistically and honestly assessing the effectiveness of what we are doing now, what we need to do in the future, and setting targets to measure progress moving forward. The work plan also asks GNWT departments to review and analyze how well our current programs, services, and policies reflect the spirit and intent of the calls for justice and what could be done to address the inequities identified in the calls for justice.

Madam Speaker, this government is already doing a lot to address these calls for justice. We have partnerships and bilateral agreements in place with a number of Indigenous governments. We have, and continue to, collaborate with Indigenous and

community organizations in providing programs and services that respond to the needs of NWT residents. Indigenous languages, traditional knowledge, and respect and valuing of culture are already incorporated into many of our programs and services and are an integral part of how we do business. As a government, we pride ourselves in our ability to work with community partners. The calls for justice also direct that Indigenous governments, community governments, territorial NGOs, local organizations, and people with lived experience be engaged and given an opportunity to help shape how governments respond to the calls for justice.

The draft work plan I am tabling later today, includes engagement in the NWT as we prepare our response to the calls for justice. There is a lot for the Government of the Northwest Territories to absorb and consider in responding to the final report, and we are committed to thoughtfully considering and responding to each of the calls for justice. We also recognize that some of the calls for justice may take longer to implement than others. For example, there are calls to establish new legislation or revise existing legislation, and this takes time. However, this does not mean we will forget about this important work or put it on the back burner.

When preparing the GNWT action plan, we also have to be mindful that the Government of Canada is working on the development of a national action plan in response to the calls for justice. Territorial officials will continue to collaborate at the federal, provincial, and territorial level to ensure that the Northwest Territories has a voice nationally. The draft work plan is a living document. It will be reviewed regularly to measure progress and to make any changes necessary to address the evolving nature of this work. I want to assure the Members there will continue to be opportunities to provide input throughout the process.

Survivors and families of missing and murdered Indigenous women in the NWT deserve our respect and our help. We are working with departments to develop and implement a timely and comprehensive response so that we support them in their healing journeys. I do want to note that the Government of Canada has created a support line that is available for anyone affected by missing and

murdered Indigenous women and girls who may need immediate emotional assistance. The support line can be reached at 1-844-413-6649.

Madam Speaker, the GNWT welcomed the recommendations of the National Inquiry on Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls. We are focused on, and committed to, improving the safety and well-being of Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQQIA people, now and in the future. Thank you, Madam Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER: Ministers' statements. Minister responsible for the Workers' Safety and Compensation Commission.

MINISTER'S STATEMENT 96-19(2):
WORKERS' SAFETY AND COMPENSATION
COMMISSION SUPPORT TO EMPLOYERS
DURING COVID-19

HON. SHANE THOMPSON: Thank you, Madam Speaker. I would like to highlight some of the work the Workers' Safety and Compensation Commission is doing to support employers and workers in the Northwest Territories during the COVID-19 global pandemic. The Workers' Safety and Compensation Commission acted swiftly to put in place financial relief measures for employers who were unable to make their assessment payments. These measures extended the deadline for the first instalment of 2020 assessment payments to August 1st and gave valuable time to employers to adjust their payroll estimates and to make their payments later in the year without facing any late payment penalties.

Madam Speaker, many businesses that have remained open or have successfully reopened during the pandemic are continuing to do so safely with the support of the Office of the Chief Public Health Officer working in partnership with the Workers' Safety and Compensation Commission. As part of the Emerging Wisely Plan, employers must complete an exposure control plan for how they will identify and manage the risk of COVID-19. An exposure control plan is also a requirement under the Northwest Territories Safety Act and Northwest Territories Occupational Health and Safety Regulations. Employers are responsible for ensuring a healthy and safe workplace. That responsibility has not changed.

Employers do not need to send their exposure control plans to the Workers' Safety and Compensation Commission for approval; however, Workers' Safety and Compensation Commission occupational health and safety inspectors will only request a copy of the completed plan from employers when they are responding directly to concerns or doing an inspection. To date, Workers' Safety and Compensation Commission staff has

provided direct assistance to over 2,500 employers through outreach and inspections to help them to develop their pandemic exposure control plans and to put practical solutions in place. Many employers and industry organizations have proactively reached out to the Workers' Safety and Compensation Commission for this assistance, showing the commitment that employers here in the Northwest Territories have to keeping their staff and their customers safe.

As other parts of Canada see their pandemic case numbers rising, the Workers' Safety and Compensation Commission remains committed to supporting local businesses to review their plans regularly, to make sure that they are prepared and to continue to provide support as needed to protect the health and safety of workers, clients, and customers. There are a number of great resources available on the Workers' Safety and Compensation Commission website. I strongly encourage any business that has concerns about how to do a good risk assessment or put a plan in place to look there for guidance or to get in touch with the Workers' Safety and Compensation Commission.

Finally, Madam Speaker, I would like to recognize the contributions of three outgoing members of the Workers' Safety and Compensation Commission Governance Council, Mr. David Tucker, Mr. Abe Thiel, and Mr. Jack Rowe. I would like to thank the members for their service and important work overseeing the Workers' Safety and Compensation Commission and representing the interests of workers, employers, and the general public. Thank you, Madam Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER: Ministers' statements. Minister of Municipal and Community Affairs.

MINISTER'S STATEMENT 97-19(2):
SPORT CANADA COVID-19 FUNDING SUPPORT

HON. PAULIE CHINNA: Madam Speaker, today, I am pleased to announce the successful distribution of \$1.583 million in COVID emergency support funding for sport organizations. This funding has been provided by the Government of Canada through the Department of Canadian Heritage's Emergency Support Fund for Cultural, Heritage and Sport Organizations. The funding provides additional temporary relief to support sport organizations and helps them plan for the future. This funding is being used to support the continuation of sport and recreation program operations across the Northwest Territories. The funds will enable them to support the healthy lifestyle goals outlined in the Government of the Northwest Territories' Emerging Wisely Plan to manage the impacts of the pandemic.

Municipal and Community Affairs distributed funding for sport and recreation programs in the amounts of:

- \$721,000 to 33 community governments;
- \$634,000 to 29 territorial sport organizations; and
- \$228,000 to territorial and regional sport and recreation non-government organizations.

Madam Speaker, the innovative projects being supported through this funding are impressive, they include:

- Outdoor events such as winter cultural day camps with fishing, trapping, and traditional Indigenous games;
- Upgrades and repairs to outdoor sport and recreation areas like parks, as well as ski and hiking trails;
- The doubling of some program offerings so that everyone interested can participate even when attendance restrictions limit the number of people at any single event;
- Cleaning supplies and personal protective equipment for staff;
- On-line programming; and
- Extra staff and additional cleaning costs.

Community governments have also been reaching out to schools to support student and resident access to services so that health and wellness can be supported in these challenging times. MACA continues to support community governments and sport and recreation organizations dealing with the impacts of the pandemic by extending resources from all existing programs. Communities have demonstrated the flexibility to adapt programs to deal with restrictions under the public health order.

Madam Speaker, the Government of Canada's support for NWT sport programming could not have come at a better time. Through innovative planning and careful health and safety measures, this funding will be supporting important sport and recreation programs that directly impact the physical and mental health of all Northwest Territories residents. Mahsi, Madam Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER: Ministers' statements. Minister of Health and Social Services.

MINISTER'S STATEMENT 98-19(2):
FAMILY VIOLENCE

HON. JULIE GREEN: Thank you, Madam Speaker. We know that family violence continues to be a serious issue. The Northwest Territories consistently records among the highest rates of violence against women in Canada, as reported by Statistics Canada. Two women have been murdered in the last two months. This violence is as heartbreaking as it is unacceptable. As a territory, we need to do better.

This month is Family Violence Prevention Month in the Northwest Territories. Let us take time to focus on promoting a change in attitudes and behaviours about violence against women and the harm that comes with it. The government is dedicated to providing the necessary resources to reduce the incidence of family violence in the territory and better support those who have experienced this type of trauma.

We know that family violence can have a lifelong impact on children and youth and influence how their relationships are formed. It is critical that we do everything we can to stop this cycle and promote positive, healthy relationships.

Madam Speaker, the response to family violence involves many GNWT departments and agencies taking a whole-of-government approach. It also requires us to work closely with our community partners to ensure that the solutions reflect the priorities of the communities. We have established an interdepartmental working group that will review GNWT programs and services providing family violence supports. This team is working on an action plan on the Calls to Justice from the Final Report of the Murdered and Missing Indigenous Women and Girls national inquiry. This work will contribute to addressing the issue of domestic violence, among other things. We look forward to seeing the results.

Family Violence Shelters are territorial resources that can be accessed 24 hours a day. There are shelters in Tuktoyaktuk, Inuvik, Yellowknife, Hay River, and Fort Smith. Even if there is not a shelter in your community, travel assistance is available to get to one. During the COVID-19 pandemic, it is not necessary to call 811 to get an exemption to the public health orders to be in a shelter with non-family members. Call the family crisis line directly at 1-866-223-775. Staff will help you to make a safety plan, if required, and apply for an emergency protection order to keep the abuser away.

Shelters also provide a range of support programs for women and children who are trying to leave an abusive relationship. Shelter supports include supportive counselling, case management and referral, support in identifying housing and income supports, links to transitional housing supports, and, most importantly, a safe place to stay. For the

five communities with shelters, the GNWT provides \$3.5 million annually in core funding. In addition to this, we appreciate the support of the federal government, which, in August, announced one-time-only funding of \$321,000 to support cleaning in the shelters.

Madam Speaker, we believe that the incidents of intimate partner family violence are likely escalating during the COVID-19 pandemic. Families may be stressed by the challenges they face and self-isolation may make things worse. In the early stages of the pandemic, very few women were seeking admission to the family violence shelters. However, at the same time, the number of emergency protection orders increased.

Although these trends are disturbing, as a government, we have implemented a number of measures to help intervene at this difficult time. We have communicated to residents that NWT family violence shelters remain open and available during the pandemic. We have distributed over 150 cell phones to victim service providers to distribute to those in need. This ensures there is a safe way for women to seek information and support. The NWT Help Line, community counselling services, and child and youth care counsellors remain ready to help. We are continuing to monitor this situation closely and encourage anyone who needs help to reach out to one of these supports.

Madam Speaker, as a territory we cannot afford to view family violence as a special awareness week or a one-time initiative. The health and well-being of our residents depends on a coordinated approach to breaking the silence and working together in meaningful ways to end all forms of family violence. Thank you, Madam Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER: Ministers' statements. Item 3, Members' statements. Member for Hay River South.

Members' Statements

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON REMEMBRANCE DAY

MR. ROCKY SIMPSON: Madam Speaker, in November of 1918, on the 11th hour of the 11th day of the 11th month, the First World War ended. Beginning in 1919, Armistice Day, now referred to as Remembrance Day in Canada, was first observed throughout the British Commonwealth. This was to observe the armistice agreement that ended the First World War. Subsequent to that, new conflicts arose and continue to arise to this very day. To this day, we still have many Canadians placed in harm's way.

Madam Speaker, remembrance is not only the right thing to do, but it is our duty and our moral duty. Although it is but one brief moment on November 11th, as Canadians, we pause for that moment of silence. During that pause and during that silence, we remember and honour all those men and women who now serve, have served, and those who sacrificed their lives for Canada.

Madam Speaker, throughout our history, more than 23 million Canadians have served, while more than 118,000 have died to protect us, all to provide present and future generations with a chance at a safe, healthy, and bright future. This recognition and sacrifice is why Canada, along with the Northwest Territories and eight other jurisdictions, declared Remembrance Day a statutory holiday.

Madam Speaker, for those who have paid the ultimate sacrifice for us and for those who continue to protect us, I would ask and encourage all residents of the Northwest Territories to take the time to pause, reflect, and think of those persons, not only on November 11th, but each and every day going forward. Thank you, Madam Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER: Members' statements. Member for Frame Lake.

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON FOOD SECURITY

MR. O'REILLY: Merci, Madame la Presidente. Food security can generally be defined as having reliable access to a sufficient quantity of affordable and nutritious food. The 2019-2023 mandate of this government identifies actions to support food security with food industry development, increasing country food harvesting, and improving Nutrition North. We have an agriculture strategy called "The Business of Food," a name that implies the largely commercial focus of its initiatives. These are helpful, but the almost exclusive focus on agriculture as a business will not necessarily lead to food security. We have a lot of work to do and a lot of questions to answer.

COVID had brought the issue of food security to the forefront. This summer, the requirements for social distancing and isolation prompted many more people to grow their own food in home and community gardens and to get out on the land and water and harvest country foods. In the NWT, we did experience some disruptions to our supply chains through the cancellation of flights and reductions in trucking. What lessons did we learn from this past harvest, and was our government there to support this convergence of interest and necessity of local food production during the pandemic?

There have been some incredible examples of food security in the NWT over the last season, including the Great Potato Collaboration with the donation of 50,000 pounds of seed potatoes by an Alberta farmer and the development of a local market garden in Kam Lake on a basic gravel pad.

It's hard to know how successful our current programs and supports are towards food security when there appears no clear measurement of agricultural or country food production and consumption by our Bureau of Statistics. If you don't measure it, how can we gauge the effectiveness of even our current focus on agri-business? I'll have questions for the Minister of ITI on how we can build real food security in the NWT, learn from the lessons of the pandemic, and ensure we can actually measure progress. Mahsi, Madame la Presidente.

DEPUTY SPEAKER: Members' statements. Member for Deh Cho.

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON RECOGNITION OF INTERPRETERS

MR. BONNETROUGE: Mahsi, Madam Speaker. The NWT is the only jurisdiction in Canada that has an Official Languages Act that recognizes 11 official languages. I'll give the Minister of ECE the honour of naming them all at the appropriate time. The Official Languages Act recognizes that preserving and enhancing the use of official languages is a shared responsibility of the Legislative Assembly, the GNWT, and the NWT language communities. The Official Languages Act establishes three legislative bodies that play a role in protecting, revitalizing, and promoting Indigenous languages. The Minister responsible for the Official Languages Act has the responsibility for setting the direction and coordination of GNWT policies and programs related to official languages. The Minister responsible for the Official Languages Act is the Minister of Education, Culture and Employment.

Madam Speaker, I would like to recognize the interpreters who have been providing interpretation services for the duration of this current session. I understand, due to COVID issues, not all of the official languages are in attendance in the House. The interpreters are: for the Tlicho, her Dene name, Maro Drygeese Sunberg from Dettah; Jonas Lafferty from Behchoko. The proper terminology for North Slavey is Sahtuot'ine Yati. We have Sarah Cleary, who is originally from Deline, and Theresa Etchinelle from Tulita. From South Slavey, the proper terminology is Dene Zhatie. We have Joe Tambour from K'atl'odeeche. It's the Hay River Reserve. The Chipewyan, the proper terminology is Dene Suline. We have Tom Unka from Fort Resolution and Dennis Drygeese from Lutselk'e. For the French, and I just found out this is by a live

feed from Edmonton, we have Francine Lapointe and David Black. All the interpreters were provided with NWT flag pins and Legislative Assembly pins.

Madam Speaker, this House is appreciative of the continued services the interpreters provide to the Legislative Assembly so many of the language speakers in the Northwest Territories can keep abreast of the business of the House. Masi.

DEPUTY SPEAKER: Members' statements. Member for Tu Nedhe-Wiilideh.

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON AFFIRMATIVE ACTION

MR. NORN: Marsi cho, Madam Speaker. I'll be continuing on with talking about the Affirmative Action Policy from yesterday. Many of the problems that I see with the Affirmative Action Policy have already been stated in this House at length over the years, including this week. However, I still see a few glaring gaps in the hiring processes in the GNWT. It often impedes with the chances of Indigenous candidates from successful job competitions. That's why this policy was created in the first place, to help even a playing field for underrepresented people to be hired by the GNWT. As a Member for Tu Nedhe-Wiilideh riding, I have heard many complaints of this process and heard many grievances from current employees that were shared with me because they were afraid of repercussions at work.

Madam Speaker, picture this: you work for the GNWT. To apply, there are several steps and procedures that must be followed, such as sending your resume, being screened in, interviewed, and then going through further steps such as reference checks before you are sent a job offer and then so on and so on. One of the main issues being reported to me is that we are still seeing newly hired GNWT indeterminate employees that are bypassing our HR processes. One loophole that I noticed, and after hearing my colleagues speak, I can clearly see that there are GNWT staff being hired through casual pools. Once hired as a casual, I have received reports where they are getting job offers without even being interviewed. In my view, this is not acceptable or ethical.

Madam Speaker, I know that the Affirmative Action Policy has helped with the number of interviews Indigenous people will receive. However, this does not always translate to Indigenous hires by the GNWT. I'm hoping we can fix that. More can be done based on everything we have heard recently and there is an appetite to see some tangible changes in the way GNWT hires good, hardworking minorities into its workforce. Marsi cho, Madam Speaker. I will have questions for the Minister of Finance at the appropriate time.

DEPUTY SPEAKER: Members' statements.
Member for Great Slave.

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON
REMEMBRANCE DAY

MS. NOKLEBY: Thank you, Madam Speaker. From today until November 11th, Canadians will mark Veterans' Week and commemorate the 75th anniversary of the end of the Second World War. Over one million Canadians from across our country and all walks of life enlisted and served, with 45,000 souls giving their lives in sacrifice for the greater good.

Like many proud Canadians, several of my relatives have served our nation in a variety of capacities and conflicts, including in both world wars as well as the Korean War. My uncle, William Grant, my mom's brother, served as an airplane mechanic with the Royal Canadian Air Force spending many years as a peacekeeper stationed overseas in places like Germany and the Suez Canal. Some of my favourite things about his visits as a child were his gifts of dehydrated Air Force rations and t-shirts with F-18s on them.

One notable Canadian that always stands out in my mind when I think of November 11th is Lieutenant Colonel John McCrae, poet, physician, and author, who served with the Canadian Expeditionary Force as a medical officer in the First World War. He gave his life for our country but left behind the precious legacy of his poem, "In Flanders Fields", still recited by schoolchildren across Canada every year.

Every year, I wear my poppy with pride as I think of all the brave men and women who sacrificed so much for the wellbeing of others, and every year, I feel the significance and weight of the day even more. This year, I plan to visit some of the resources available online to honour and remember Canada's veterans, including those in my own family. Yellowknife's Remembrance Day ceremony will be held at a reduced capacity this year, so I encourage everyone to join me and attend the Legion's virtual ceremony online at 10:50 a.m. on November 11th and take time that day and every day to give thanks to those who ensured our freedom today.

DEPUTY SPEAKER: Members' statements.
Member for Thebacha.

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON
REFLECTIONS ON EFFECTING POSITIVE
CHANGE

MS. MARTSELOS: Madam Speaker, making changes for the betterment of people and lands in which we serve is what we were put in this House to do. As elected leaders, we have a duty and

responsibility to enact the changes that we committed to which helped propel us into this House. We each have a mandate entrusted upon us by our constituents with the expectation that we work together and make positive changes. Madam Speaker, change is never realized or accomplished easily. Change is always, always met with resistance. There will always be those who prefer or even enjoy the status quo because that is what they are used to. Changes will never take effect if there is inability or outright refusal to think outside the box. Madam Speaker, people who are resistant to change are comfortable with the status quo. They are comfortable with keeping things the way they are.

Madam Speaker, maintaining the status quo is not what I was put into this House to do. I was put here to stand up to the status quo and to fight for the little guy, to fight for justice, to fight for my community of Fort Smith, and do right for all the people of the Northwest Territories. Madam Speaker, thinking outside the box can be an amazing thing. As we do, we can accomplish nearly anything that put our minds to. All it takes is some political will. Political will, however, is not just flowery speech with little concrete action. Political will requires critical thinking, decisive action, and it requires working together as we achieve common goals for the people we represent.

Madam Speaker, regardless of where any of us are in this House stand on any issue, my hope is that, at the end of each day, we're able to come together at the table and be open for change to take effect. We need to have open minds and open hearts if we ever intend to enact any substantive changes over the course of this 19th Assembly. I seek unanimous consent to complete my statement, Madam Speaker.

---Unanimous consent granted.

MS. MARTSELOS: Lastly, Madam Speaker, I would like to wish all of my colleagues well as we conclude our final day of session today. I hope you all enjoy some time off until we return for our committee work in a couple of weeks. I hope we may all return with fresh ideas and change on the horizon. I'd also like to thank my amazing constituents of Thebacha for their continued support of me and for the work we do here at the Legislative Assembly. Thank you, Madam Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER: Members' statements.
Member for Nunakput.

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON
REMEMBRANCE DAY AND WISH LIST

MR. JACOBSON: Thank you, Madam Speaker. I don't normally think about Christmas until after

Remembrance Day, so let me start by thanking those brave men and women who served in Canada's Armed Forces, especially those who have given their lives in defence of our great country. I hope everyone will be paying their respects on Remembrance Day in their home communities with myself and my ranger brother and sisters. I look forward to seeing them when I get home.

Now, since this is the last day in the House before Christmas and the holiday season and Christmas is 50 days away and business planning is coming, this is my Christmas wish-list for Nunakput. For the biggest present, I need 35 houses, at least 10 for Tuktoyaktuk, Ulukhaktok, and Paulatuk, and five for Sachs Harbour, and my elder's facility for Ulukhaktok, which is going to come before we're done here in the next four years, Madam Speaker. The Housing Corporation must reach out to the community IRC corporation to help make sure that we spend this \$60 million that we desperately need. Nunakput needs the Housing Corporation to remove policies and barriers to keep low income from elderly for maintaining for their homes. People should not have homeowner's insurance that still need to work to be done. Insurance in my riding is not a luxury, Madam Speaker. Nunakput needs from Municipal and Community Affairs first need to find the Paulatuk to finish their sewage lagoon and you're not taking that \$53,000 back. We have got to have that spent for you.

I haven't raised up this in the House, but the hamlet of Tuktoyaktuk has recently upgraded our community road so any damage that the school project is going to do that the government's on tap for it, so they're going to pay if there is any damage to the road. It's going to be minus 50 pretty soon, and there are going to be damages.

Minister Archie, I would like to thank you for this upcoming successful sealift season, so start planning now for next season. You had an awesome crew doing your work up in my riding. I look forward to meeting with you and my leadership in Tuktoyaktuk for the Inuvik Tuktoyaktuk Highway, for the maintenance program that we are going to start establishing and working towards. Since the Minister is responsible for NTPC, do not be surprised. I don't like those limiters, so please rethink, please rethink, because I don't want to bring it in tomorrow's. Madam Speaker, I seek unanimous consent to conclude my statement.

---Unanimous consent granted

MR. JACOBSON: Maybe we could give those limiters away for Christmas presents as an ornament. Anyways, Madam Speaker, NTPC, get rid of them.

Minister Green, as the pandemic wears on, the impact multiplies for the people who travel repeatedly for medical appointments, so let's make it a priority for testing to ensure they spend most of the possible time with their families. Make those rapid testing kits available for medical travellers. I am looking forward to our tour next week, the next two weeks, in my riding of Nunakput with you. I am looking for that.

Premier Cochrane, please spend that COVID money that we just approved with you; be really frugal. Make sure it's spent in the right place. Thank you for the work you guys are doing. The needs of our people, the funding is limited. Let's make this government's money spent helping the most needy and vulnerable residents in the territory.

I wish my constituents in Nunakput, my colleagues in this House, and the people of the Northwest Territories safe and happy holiday season. Thank you, Madam Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER: Members' statements. Member for Kam Lake.

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON CALL ON ALL POLITICIANS TO END SYSTEMIC RACISM

MS. CLEVELAND: Madame Speaker, I read a thought-provoking and upsetting article in the Globe and Mail by Arlen Dumas, Grand Chief of the Assembly of Manitoba Chiefs. Chief Dumas is denouncing Manitoba's Bill 2, the Budget Implementation and Tax Statutes Amendment Act, arguing that there are two items buried in this omnibus bill threatening to further perpetuate poverty and vulnerability for Manitoban First Nations people.

The first affects children in care, 90 percent of whom are First Nations. As Chief Dumas explains, in 2005, the Manitoba government redirected federal funding meant to support these kids to flow through the province, arguing the province was paying for care. Since then, over \$388 million has diverted to Manitoba's general revenues. Bill 2 affirms this policy and forbids First Nations foster children from taking court action to seek repayment. I agree with Chief Dumas, who says, "It is wrong to steal from First Nations children. It is wrong to take away their basic rights to seek redress for the wrongs committed against them."

In 2018, the Manitoba Public Utilities Board froze rates for customers on First Nations reserves. Manitoba Hydro appealed, and the court overturned the decision, resulting in 6.5-percent increase for on-reserve customers, effective September 2020. The Manitoba government is now giving itself the authority to impose hydro increases without board

oversight and has proposed a 2.9-percent increase for residents. Consequently, Manitobans on reserves face a "crippling and cumulative" 9.6-percent increase in their power. Imagine, Madam Speaker, if that was your household.

Chief Dumas says, "This is what systemic racism looks like; it is unconscionable, and it is wrong." This got me thinking. I have had many conversations with friends and constituents who don't really seem to understand what systemic racism is. Systemic racism lives in our dark corners. Because it is systemic, it is so ingrained in our colonial way of drafting laws and doing business that we don't see it for what it is. We need to shine a light on systemic racism and force it out into the open, where it can be identified and eradicated.

As Chief Dumas points out, Canadians support reconciliation and want a new relationship based on fairness and mutual respect. He has called on all politicians to listen and to act. I am listening, Madam Speaker, and will act by continuing the public dialogue needed to help end systemic racism. I would like to see our government act by undertaking the work needed to identify where system racism hides in our own laws, regulations, and policies. In order to stamp it out, we need to root it out. Thank you, Madam Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER: Members' statement. Member for Monfwi.

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON ELDERS' HOUSING ISSUES

MR. LAFFERTY: Masi, Madam Speaker. [Translation] I would like to make a statement regarding elders. We have a mandate to protect the elders, for them to live in dignity. We have great respect for our elders. They are our guides, and we do not want them suffering in any way. We need to do the best for them. We see a lot of the elders who are suffering. [Translation ends]

Madam Speaker, the number one issue that Monfwi constituents have is that of housing. I have been here for the past 15 years, and over those years, I have made so many statements on housing, too many to remember, in fact, whether it be in the House, at the Cabinet table, or in the Speaker's office.

One area that they are most concerned about is how we treat our elders with respect to housing needs. I already brought up to the NWT Housing Corporation Minister the need to have a program in place so that qualified journey-persons can travel to small communities, especially the most isolated communities, to service their furnaces, plumbing, inspect water heaters, water and sewage tanks, et cetera for our elders.

I have heard enough stories from my elderly constituents about black smoke coming out of their furnace exhaust pipe because their furnaces have not been serviced for years. Surely, this cannot be safe, Madam Speaker. I am not an oil-burner mechanic, but something like this can lead to carbon monoxide poisoning in their homes, I am sure.

Yesterday, my office sent the NWT Housing Corporation Minister a picture of a water tank belonging to an elderly couple in Whati; yesterday, Madam Speaker. That water tank is operating with a screwdriver lodged to the side of the tank in order to plug a hole, in this day and age, Madam Speaker. When that screwdriver is removed, water starts leaking from the tank. Again, I am not a certified technician, but this cannot be safe. In fact, I believe it would be a hazard in the household. Madam Speaker, I will have questions for the Minister responsible for the Northwest Territories Housing Corporation at the appropriate time. Masi.

DEPUTY SPEAKER: Members' statements. Member for Yellowknife North.

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON GUARANTEED BASIC INCOME

MR. JOHNSON: Thank you, Madam Speaker. The Northwest Territories regularly has one of the highest GDPs per capita in the world, and we are consistently amongst one of the highest government spending per capita in the world. No doubt, the first statistic is largely due to the fact that we have a small population and diamond mines, and the second fact is due to the difficulty of delivering services over such a vast territory. However, in this same time period, Madam Speaker, we have seen very little progress on many of our things. Our high school graduation rates and our housing inequality have all largely stayed the same or gotten worse.

I have multiple times made statements in this House about the importance of a guaranteed basic income as I believe this the path to addressing some of these systemic issues. However, I want to emphasize that this is not just a progressive issue. There are people on the left, certainly. Our Time Yellowknife has called for this; there are conservative senators; the Canadian Chamber of Commerce has endorsed this; the Liberal Party in their Caucus has made this a priority. I really believe there is political will across the political spectrum to look at this.

I want to emphasize that this is also about streamlining a number of programs. Right now, we have a wage top-up program, where, if you are earning minimum wage, you get topped up to \$18 an hour, but if you actually did not apply for that and

you apply for income assistance and say you had your childcare covered, you'd get topped up to \$25 an hour because you are eligible, if you are working full-time on minimum wage, to get income assistance. Our income assistance is, in fact, also a wage subsidy program.

However, then, we have other programs coming in, such as DILIS (ph) from the federal government, disability supports, old age supplements, guaranteed income supplement for the elderly, the Canadian Child Benefit for parents with children, the working income tax benefit; we have the northern residents tax reduction; we also have things like the housing rent subsidy, CHAP funding, home heating subsidy for seniors.

I do not believe anyone is looking at how all of these programs interact and work together, especially once we get to the federal level. There seems to be some miscommunication. So often, the question is: how much does a guaranteed basic income cost? However, I don't believe we can answer that unless we do the work to figure out what is currently being spent across all departments and all levels of governments supporting our most vulnerable. I will have questions for the Minister of Education, Culture and Employment if we can begin that work. Thank you, Madam Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER: Members' statements. Member for Range Lake.

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON
NATIONAL SKILLED TRADES AND
TECHNOLOGY WEEK - RECOGNITION OF
MICHAEL TURNER-DAVIS AND NATHAN DUNN

HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE: Madam Speaker, I'd like to recognize two residents of Range Lake whose achievements have made our riding proud by winning the top marks in their trade for their levels. I'd like to recognize Michael Turner-Davis, who is Level 2 Automotive Service Technician, and Nathan Dunne, who is Level 1 Sprinkler Systems Installer. Congratulations to you both and to all apprentices throughout the Northwest Territories for the work you do. Thank you, Madam Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER: Members' statements. Member for Hay River North.

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON
REMEMBRANCE DAY

HON. R.J. SIMPSON: Madam Speaker, each year on November 11th, Canadians pause to remember the sacrifices of the men and women who gave their lives for our country so that we may enjoy the freedoms that we have today. I encourage residents to reflect on the bravery of Canadians,

both past and present, who have put their lives on the line to protect the peace and safety that make up the fabric of our society. The heroes who have stepped up in the name of freedom and democracy have done so in conflicts that span every generation.

During some of our darkest days, Madam Speaker, Canadians left their families behind to fight against the evils of the time, to keep our country safe. For that, we are forever grateful. We must remember those who have been forever changed by war, those who never returned home, and the families, friends, and communities who continue to feel the impacts of those losses. They defended democracy and helped build peace here at home and around the world. They gave up their future for the future of others, and it is important that we take the time to reflect on this selflessness and honour those who answered their country's call.

Remembrance Day is also a time to honour and thank all members of Canada's military for their service in times of war, conflict, and peace. Over the years, Canadians from all walks of life have stood in cooperation and friendship with our allies as we have contributed to the fight against forces of tyranny. Madam Speaker, we can never repay the debt we owe to the many men and women who have paid for our freedom with their lives. What we can do is remember their sacrifices and pay tribute to their bravery and patriotism, lest we forget. Thank you, Madam Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER: Members' statements. Member for Inuvik Boot Lake.

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON
NATIONAL SKILLED TRADES AND
TECHNOLOGY WEEK – RECOGNITION OF JOEL
HANTHORN AND JOSEPH LEMIEUX

HON. DIANE ARCHIE: Thank you, Madam Speaker. National Skilled Trades and Technology Week is a Canada-wide event designed to promote awareness of the many opportunities in skilled trades and technology. Awards are being provided to apprentices who have achieved the highest mark equal or greater to 80 percent in their theory examination for their trade and level, as well as those who have achieved journeyman status in 2019-2020.

Today, I am pleased to acknowledge the hard work of a couple of constituents from Inuvik Boot Lake who are on their path to getting their journeymen's trade status. I would first like to acknowledge Joel Hanthorn, who successfully completed the second year of his Construction Electrician ticket. I would also like to acknowledge Joseph Lemieux, who has successfully completed the third year of his Plumber/Gasfitter ticket.

The trades are important to keeping the people of the North safe and our economy moving ahead in a positive manner. Madam Speaker, there is always a need for tradespeople in the territories, to build our houses, keep our roads and airports open, keep our ferries running. We need tradespeople to heat the lights and keep the water running. In short, Madam Speaker, we need tradespeople for everyday lives. Thank you, Madam Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER: Members' statements. Member for Yellowknife South.

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON
NATIONAL SKILLED TRADES AND
TECHNOLOGY WEEK - RECOGNITION OF
SLAVOMIR ROHAC

HON. CAROLINE WAWZONEK: Thank you, Madam Speaker. I, too, want to acknowledge the National Skilled Trades and Technology Week here in Canada and, as my colleague from Inuvik Boot Lake has just outlined, some of the important features that come from this opportunity to encourage the trades and for young people to gain skills.

Madam Speaker, I am also very happy to take this opportunity to congratulate one of my constituents, Slavimir Rohak, for achieving this award and obtaining one of the highest marks for the Level 2 Heavy Equipment Technician. Thank you, Madam Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER: Members' statements. Member for Sahtu.

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON
EULOGY FOR ELAINE BLAKE

HON. PAULIE CHINNA: Thank you, Madam Speaker. Today, I am going to be recognizing one of our Northwest Territories Housing Corporation employees. The employee worked for us at the local housing authority in Tsiigehtchic. It is with great sadness and regret that I convey the news of the passing of a great Northerner, Ms. Elaine Blake of Tsiigehtchic. I want to express my whole-hearted condolences to her family and friends, and to the residents of Tsiigehtchic for their loss.

Elaine had been the local housing association manager in Tsiigehtchic for nearly 14 years. Prior to working as a housing manger, she was the housing coordinator for the community of Tsiigehtchic and, prior to that, she was also the contractor for the Petroleum Products Division of the Government of the Northwest Territories.

Elaine was a long-term resident of Tsiigehtchic and had moved to the community in 1980. She was the mother of two boys, Jeremy and Darby, and two

girls, Charlene and Sasha. She is also survived by nine grandchildren.

Madam Speaker, Elaine was very active in the community as a volunteer, helping with Mackenzie Valley Jamborees, Canoe Days, and spending her free time cooking for elders. She was an avid canoer. She enjoyed travelling the Northwest Territories to spend time on the water canoeing and in competitions. She also enjoyed sharing traditional activities with her children and grandchildren.

The Northwest Territories Housing Corporation will be missing her and her tireless work, and her commitment to the Northwest Territories Housing Corporation's provision of affordable and quality care and the safe and adequate client service that she had provided. People tell me that she went door to door and always opened her door, and she was always available for people at any time, in any circumstance. She went above and beyond to meet the client service of all public housing tenants. She addressed them seriously, and she addressed them with professionalism.

Madam Speaker, our communities need more Elaine Blakes to display and to help us with our client service at the community level. I ask Members of the House to join me in a moment of silence to celebrate the life of Ms. Elaine Blake, a northern hero. Mahsi, Madam Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER: Members, we will have a moment of silence.

---Moment of silence

Our thoughts and prayers are with the family. Members' statements. Item 4, returns to oral questions. Minister of Health and Social Services.

Returns to Oral Questions

RETURN TO ORAL QUESTION 358-19(2): LONG-TERM CARE FACILITY

HON. JULIE GREEN: Thank you, Madam Speaker. I have a Return to Oral Question asked by the Member of Deh Cho on October 16, 2020, regarding long-term care facility.

The former health centre building in Fort Providence was deemed surplus by the department when the new health and social services centre was constructed. It was determined by Department of Health and Social Services and the Department of Infrastructure that the building had reached the end of its useful life from both a technical and program perspective. It would have been cost prohibitive to upgrade the facility and meet current

healthcare design and infection control standards to continue to be used a health facility.

The Department of Health and Social Services has determined that building long-term care facilities in communities outside of regional centers is not feasible because of the high cost of building and operating a long-term care facility and the need for adequate nursing and personal care staff to operate it safely.

The Department of Health and Social Services is committed to improving homecare services to enable elders with care needs to remain living in their community longer. As part of the mandate commitment to support seniors to age in place with dignity, we are working with our partners in other government departments to identify gaps and help improve other services and housing options that meet the growing needs of seniors.

With respect to the former health centre, the Department of Infrastructure is responsible for the disposal of the property in accordance with the GNWT Disposal of Improved Real Property Policy. I have been advised that, in early October, the Minister of Infrastructure provided the Member with an update on the disposal process for the former Fort Providence Health Centre, which is being done in accordance with this policy. I understand there is currently an assessment of the building under way and the Department of Infrastructure has already received interest from local groups. Thank you, Madam Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER: Returns to oral questions. Item 5, recognition of visitors in the gallery. Member for Range Lake.

Recognition of Visitors in the Gallery

HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE: Thank you, Madam Speaker. I'd like to recognize Eleese Scott, who is a guest in our gallery. She's the Chief Governance Officer with WSCC and a resident of Range Lake. I'd also like to take a moment to recognize the media, Madam Speaker, who have been here every day. Your work is critically important, and our work would be a lot harder without you. Thank you for being part of our work. Thank you, Madam Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER: Recognition of visitors in the gallery. Member for Nahendeh.

HON. SHANE THOMPSON: Thank you, Madam Speaker. I would also like to recognize Eleese Scott, Chief Governance Officer, and Debbie Molloy, President and Chief Executive Officer for WSCC. I greatly appreciate the work that these ladies do. They're very responsive, and they do

great work and so does WSCC. Thank you, Madam Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER: Welcome. It's been a while since we've had anybody in here. Recognition of visitors in the gallery. Member for Yellowknife North.

MR. JOHNSON: Thank you, Madam Speaker. I would also like to recognize Debbie Molloy. She does great work as the President and CEO of WSCC but also great work as a Yellowknife North constituent. Thank you, Madam Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER: Recognition of visitors of the gallery. Item 6, acknowledgements. Item 7, oral questions. Member for Tu Nedhe-Willideh.

Oral Questions

QUESTION 477-19(2): DIRECT APPOINTMENTS IN GOVERNMENT OF THE NORTHWEST TERRITORIES

MR. NORN: Marsi cho, Madam Speaker. I have some questions for the Minister of Finance after my Member's statement today on affirmative action. My first question for the Minister is: will the Minister provide statistics on the number of direct appointments to the public service that have been made per year over the last five years? Marsi cho, Madam Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you, Member. Minister of Finance.

HON. CAROLINE WAWZONEK: Thank you, Madam Speaker. I can pull those numbers out and give some information for the Member back to 2016 to 2017. Actually, before I do that, Madam Speaker, let me just take note that there are currently 5,922 employees in the public service, not including casuals. As for those that were direct appointment in 2016-2017, we have 122; 2017-2018, 97; 2018-2019, 124; and in 2019 and into 2020 the number changes quite a bit because there were significant changes to the collective agreement. The number is 301, owing to the fact that there were a number of modifications in response to the collective agreement. Thus far, there are 76, but I would note that there were a number of direct appointments arising from what was the response to COVID-19. Thank you, Madam Speaker.

MR. NORN: Thank you for those stats. It's really important we have the public understand a little bit more about the direct appointment process. It leads more to my next line of questioning. I would like to find out how many people find their way into the public service permanently by starting out in a casual position and getting direct appointment into an indeterminate position. Will the Minister provide

a breakdown of how many of the direct appointments were for people appointed into an indeterminate position from a casual one?

HON. CAROLINE WAWZONEK: In the last five years, out of all of the numbers I had just read, 224 of those went into an indeterminate position from a casual one.

MR. NORN: Okay. Thank you for that from the Minister. Will the Minister also provide a breakdown of how many of the direct appointments were Indigenous, P1 status?

HON. CAROLINE WAWZONEK: I am trying to do math quickly. I don't have the breakdown for Indigenous Aboriginal Northwest Territories individuals here. In the last five years, I have 335 direct appointments were for Indigenous people, but again, in the way that the public service works, that can mean Indigenous to the Northwest Territories, not necessarily Indigenous Aboriginal. I will see that I get a full breakdown for the Member.

DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you, Minister. Supplementary, Member for Tu Nedhe-Wiilideh.

MR. NORN: My apologies for interrupting, Madam Speaker. Thank you for the response. We could get that particular breakdown in writing, that would be much appreciated. My last question, and again I want to speak a little bit to this a little more. This direct appointment process, it's been criticized in the past, has been had before. There has been some political patronage there. There is no transparency or accountability, either. I think there should be more checks and balances there. There are other ways that this could be handled rather than running it through Cabinet solely.

Again, it would be nice to see an HR representative or even one of my colleagues from the Regular side sitting on these direct appointments, just an idea. Anytime we do this and there is some sort of secrecy here, what's the legal term, act of omission, we have to tighten up those loopholes. That's my comment on that. My last question is: will the Minister commit to developing options for new, more accountable, and transparent direct appointment approach? Marsi cho.

HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE: I'd like to take that since it's a Cabinet question. Currently, the requirement for direct appointments is to be reviewed by Cabinet. It's established under the Public Service Act. That ensures that department appointments are being used appropriately. However, Madam Speaker, the Public Service Act is currently under review, and part of that review, we can consider changes to the direct appointment process. Thank you, Madam Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you, Madam Premier. Oral questions. Member for Frame Lake.

QUESTION 478-19(2):
FOOD SECURITY

MR. O'REILLY: Merci, Madame la Presidente. My questions are for the Minister of Industry, Tourism and Investment. My statement referred first to this government's mandate commandment to increase food security through food industry, increasing country food harvesting, and improving Nutrition North. Of course, there are several tasks there. Can the Minister give us a brief update on the current status of this mandate commandment on increasing food security? Mahsi, Madam Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you, Member. Minister of ITI.

HON. CAROLINE WAWZONEK: Thank you, Madam Speaker. There are quite a number of initiatives taking place right now. There is, of course, the sustainable livelihoods program that is led by ENR that was introduced back in August of 2019. That includes a significant amount of work in terms of food security with respect to on-the-land and harvesting mentorship of young people to engage in on-the-land harvesting and on-the-land food security. In addition to that, there is work happening over in Health and Social Services. They are responsible for meat regulations, responsible for anti-poverty funding, responsible for nutrition supports. In addition to that, Education, Culture and Employment is responsible for supporting students and income support individuals who may require supports with food security.

Furthermore, there now is the Department of ITI with which I am standing to give a bit more information. ITI is responsible for the agriculture strategy and for the implementation of that. We have recently put in place a senior advisor for food security. I think it is envisioned that this individual will help coordinate all of this work that is clearly happening across the GNWT, and currently, that person is conducting an inventory of all of these different programs. I have not mentioned an exhaustive list. I've given only the highlights. One other one, I suppose, is the fish strategy with which ITI is responsible, and we have advanced that project just in the last month. I have two hours just tomorrow, in fact, where I will be sitting down with the department to see where that's at. Thank you, Madam Speaker.

MR. O'REILLY: I want to thank the Minister for that. Could say something about fish there, but we had a great fish lunch today, too. I mentioned that the pandemic did disrupt some of our supply chains, put our food security at some risk. There was a lot of renewed interest in local food production. I

mentioned some of the wonderful projects that took place this summer. It's not clear, though, whether we took full advantage of that convergence of events and interest. Can the Minister tell us what lessons we've learned about building food security during this pandemic?

HON. CAROLINE WAWZONEK: There certainly has been a lot of work done in ITI around the supply chains, monitoring those supply chains and ensuring that they are supported. I would say that the course of the pandemic and the need to maintain the supply chains was an opportunity to develop a lot more relationships, and good relationships, across the supply chain, both from the grocery store and all the way to those who are transporting the food. In addition to that, there has been certainly a renewed interest in terms of food production.

I would be remiss not to note that, while there is a lot more interest in food security, which is certainly helpful to all of those programs I mentioned earlier, the convergence is not entirely complete. There of course are challenges between: do we provide, for example, free seeds of potatoes, or do we encourage commercial production? It's not quite so simple, and there has to be a balance struck. However, I think this opportunity over the summer was a chance to start having those conversations so that we can be better going forward.

MR. O'REILLY: I want to thank the Minister for that. I have looked for data and reports on the output of the agricultural sector here in the Northwest Territories, and it's really hard to find anything. The ITI website has an agricultural sector profile page, but there is not much quantification there. The Bureau of Statistics doesn't seem to have much data on its web page, either. Of course, if you can't count it, how can we measure progress on building food security? Can the Minister tell us what steps she is taking to ensure that we can actually measure food security improvements with real targets and measurement of progress?

HON. CAROLINE WAWZONEK: There was an initial sector-wide survey done back in 2017-2018, as the agriculture strategy was getting rolling and being implemented. That does need to be updated, and another round of surveys does need to take place in order to compare to that baseline. I would note that one important thing that has happened this year, Madam Speaker, is the formation of a territorial agri-food association that can also help advocate for these issues and help ensure that, when we are gathering the data, we are, in fact, going to the right places to gather the data from that membership. Hopefully, there can be, in fact, more information and more quantified information going forward.

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

MR. O'REILLY: Merci, Madame la Presidente. I want to thank the Minister for that. I really look forward to counting carrots in the future. We are going to get some hard statistics. I spoke about how ITI's efforts on agriculture seem to be largely focused on business and commercial food production. I think that there is some real urgency in building a food security strategy here for the Northwest Territories. Can the Minister commit to developing a real food security strategy for the Northwest Territories that incorporates food self-sufficiency, including agriculture, country foods, inter-settlement trade, and programs that deliver on targets, with regular evaluation reporting? Can the Minister commit to a food security strategy for the Northwest Territories? Mahsi, Madam Speaker.

HON. CAROLINE WAWZONEK: The need to look at food security and to improve food security is part of the mandate of this government, but the ITI lead is focused largely on the commercial side of that. It is not the only side of the food security issue, and that is why Health and Social Services, ECE, and ENR are also involved, because each department has a part to play. Again, I can certainly reaffirm the commitment to achieve what's in the mandate, but I cannot stand alone and say that there will be a particular strategy developed. I would again point back to the fact that we do have now the senior advisor of food security who can ensure that this work is being coordinated so that we can achieve the mandate item around food security. Thank you, Madam Speaker.

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

QUESTION 479-19(2):
INCOME ASSISTANCE

MR. JOHNSON: Thank you, Madam Speaker. Firstly, I would like to acknowledge that the Department of ECE in income assistance does lots of great work, and we have probably one of the most generous income assistance programs in the country. I think the department even inherently recognizes some of the benefits of a basic income. During the pandemic, one of the first things we did is we payrolled people for three months to give them more guaranteed time to report. We also got rid of the productivity requirements such that they got their money whether they failed to show up for a meeting or whatnot. I believe the roots are there, but I believe we need to break out and look at what every department is doing and what the federal government is also doing to really make a proper guaranteed basic income. My question for the Minister of ECE is: as part of our income assistance review, will we conduct a feasibility

assessment of a guaranteed basic income? Thank you, Madam Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you, Member. Minister of ECE.

HON. R.J. SIMPSON: Thank you, Madam Speaker. I pretty much agree with everything the Member has said and earlier in his statement, as well. I will just answer the question. Are we going to conduct a review or a feasibility study for universal basic income? No. However, that is because I do think that the Income Assistance Program has a strong foundation and that we can build on it. In many ways, it's just a tweaking of a few rules here and there, and we have something that is very similar to what the Member is talking about. We have already made some of those changes, and he mentioned those, as well. He is doing my job for me today, so I think I will leave it at that and wait for the next question. Thank you, Madam Speaker.

MR. JOHNSON: Numerous studies have said that the biggest issue for implementing a guaranteed basic income is actually jurisdictional; it's getting the federal money streams to line up with the provinces and territories. I know every time the federal government rolls out a new program, we in income assistance have to go change and see whether we are going to include it or not, is the first decision. Then we have to recalculate the seniors' subsidy; sometimes, pensions get involved; sometimes, income assistance gets involved. It causes this bureaucratic mess of programs not aligning. The federal government, this Liberal Caucus, has made a basic income one of their number one priorities. Our Arctic framework number one goal and the number one priority is ending poverty. I believe, when that framework comes out with lobbying, we could get it to be a guaranteed basic income. Is the Minister willing to write to the federal government and lobby for us to be a pilot project for rolling out a basic income?

HON. R.J. SIMPSON: I am not going to write to the federal Minister to ask that question. I am going to look into what we are doing, how we can do it better. When I have the conversations with the appropriate federal ministers and when I am on these FTP calls, I will have those types of conversations and promote the types of changes that we are looking at. The Member mentioned there are a number of different programs that we offer across the GNWT, across departments, and that the federal government offers, as well. Within the GNWT, part of the income assistance review is going to be looking at everything that is offered, what housing offers, what health offers, what ECE offers, because we need to move to a more streamlined approach. I think it will cut down on paperwork; it will make people's lives easier, and it will be more client-centred. I have no problem

suggesting that the federal government does something similar, but it's a little difficult to get the federal government to change their programs just for us.

The Member mentioned that one of the biggest difficulties of implementing this is the federal government, but I think one of the biggest difficulties for implementing a guaranteed universal basic income is the amount of money. I think it's as simple as that. If we had \$50-, \$100-, \$800-million to put towards a guaranteed basic income, we could use that money to solve a lot of problems. This is a very blunt instrument. Maybe we put a hundred million dollars into after-care for when people come back from treatment; they have a place to go where they know they can stay sober, and they can avoid all the issues that lead them back on the road to addictions. Then we can take another \$100 million, and we can build economies in small communities. We can take another \$100 million and do this. It's not as simple as just saying we want to do this. It's a lot of money, and I don't know if a blunt instrument like a universal basic income is something that would work necessarily in the territory, considering how different every community is.

MR. JOHNSON: I believe the problem with saying that it costs a lot of money is: we have not actually done the assessment to see what it costs, and we have not looked at the way all of these programs are working together and how much is already being spent. I personally believe we could actually lower income assistance if it meant we guaranteed the money for longer periods of time and with less bureaucracy. I heard the Minister of health the other day mention the idea of putting a seniors' portal such that all of the applications of funding for seniors is in one place, and I laughed because I know how impossible of a task that is. There are different pools of seniors' funding across multiple levels of government, not to mention pensions. Trying to bring one person to bring that all together is extremely difficult. It requires political will. As part of the income assistance, can I get a commitment from the Minister that he will not only look across departments what we're doing but also what the federal government is doing and roll that into the cost analysis.

HON. R.J. SIMPSON: Yes, we'll look at what everyone's doing. If we're going to review something, we're going to review the money that, a program that's solely about the money that people are getting, we're going to look at what money people are getting from every source. That includes the federal government.

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

MR. JOHNSON: Thank you, Madam Speaker. I've got a refusal to do a feasibility assessment. I've got a refusal to do a roadmap. Can I get something from the Minister that he can give me an idea of what we think it would cost because I honestly don't know? I don't know if there's already enough money that we could roll this out tomorrow or whether it is in the hundreds of millions of dollars. Can we do some preliminary costing, Madam Speaker?

HON. R.J. SIMPSON: Last year, about 4,000 people accessed income assistance. If we were to pay each one of those people the max amount that you can get on income assistance each year, it would be about \$80 million. That's an extra \$50 million on top of the \$30 million that we spend now. If we did the real universal basic income where everyone in the territory regardless of income gets that amount, we're looking at \$800 million. The very low end of this is \$80 million. To the Member's point, if we spend money here, costs elsewhere go down. I get that. Same thing with education, but that doesn't mean that we have all this money to put into these things. I would love to put money into education right from prenatal all the way up to post-secondary. I think that would solve all of our problems in a generation. This would be utopia, but the fact is: there're needs now, and it's difficult to reallocate money that way. I'd be happy to sit down with the Member and have these discussions because income assistance is one of the areas that hasn't been thoroughly reviewed in a number of years, and it's one of the arguments that, by the end of this Assembly, I really want to make improvements to so that we can get to a system similar to what the Member is talking about. Thank you, Madam Speaker.

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

QUESTION 480-19(2):
ADDRESSING SYSTEMIC RACISM

MS. CLEVELAND: Thank you very much, Madam Speaker. My questions today are for the Premier. My first question is: what is this government currently doing to address the problem of systemic racism? Thank you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you, Member. Madam Premier.

HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE: Thank you, Madam Speaker. Across the government, we are taking a variety of actions to address systemic racism. It's a huge issue, and Members have said 50 percent of our population is Indigenous. We've already talked all week about the affirmative action. We need to do something, so we're doing our best. We're ensuring that our decisions, including the creation of new programs and services, are all

contemplated using what's called the gender-based analysis plus lens. Everything that we do should be considered through this lens. It's not only about gender. It's not only about women and men. It's about how different groups in our territory will be affected differently by every decision, every policy, every program that we set up.

We're also implementing modern treaties including self-government agreements and land claims. This is an important part of what we do as the Government of the Northwest Territories, and it respects Indigenous self-determination and self-governments. It's something I take totally to my heart. We're also implementing the United Nations Declaration and calls for justice from the Truth and Reconciliation. As well, we have an Indigenous Employee advisory committee, which is committed to providing advice and feedback to HR, human resources branch, with regards to identifying barriers and increasing the representation of Indigenous people at all levels of our public service. It also works to create an environment that supports and promotes Indigenous people currently within the government to the Northwest Territories workforce.

As well, Madam Speaker, we meet with our counterparts in other jurisdictions to discuss best practices at all times. For example, the previous Minister of Justice, she attended an FTP meeting on systemic racism in the justice system. Subsequently, she reached out to the Indigenous governments and began a conversation about what we can do to address some of these issues within the justice system, and that work is still carrying on. Thank you, Madam Speaker.

MS. CLEVELAND: The Premier touched a little bit on my next question, but I'm wondering if she can expand on how the GNWT is doing this. My next question was about my gender-based analysis that the GNWT does with Cabinet and the Financial Management Board. I'm wondering if she can explain what tools they use to ensure that there is a systemic racism lens used in that work, as well.

HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE: The Management Board Secretariat has added gender-based analysis plus to the assessment process for Financial Management Board's submissions, and I think this was new to our government. It wasn't done before if I remember. It's huge. This is a huge thing. The initial focus, again, on a gender-based analysis plus lens is on gender. However, like I said before, the differences for all populations, not only just about biological, but it also considers our social, cultural issues, and how different programs, et cetera, affect different people

We also have multiple characteristics that intersect and contribute to who we are. The gender-based

analysis plus considers many other factors. Like I said, it considers race, ethnicity, religion, age, mental, and physical disability and how that interaction between these factors influence the way we might experience government policies and initiatives using the gender-based analysis plus lens when analyzing, planning, and making decisions means carefully and deliberately examining the implementations of our work in terms of gender and other factors. Madam Speaker, it's not easy work, but it's critical work and important if we do recognize that our population is half Indigenous and half other. We really take this work seriously.

MS. CLEVELAND: Some of the regulations and laws that contain kind of those hidden moments or hidden pieces of systemic racism are often ones that we often overlook and have been in our system for decades. I'm wondering: what work is being done right now to dig those out and make sure that all of those pieces of legislation and pieces of policy work are being used on that lens because a lot of the programs that are getting that lens are new programs? What are we doing about our old existing programs?

HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE: I'd like to start by saying that, when I heard the story from the Member about how another jurisdiction had kind of slipped in, I've always said that, throughout my term, that I'm really glad that we're a consensus government because we have a different way of bringing legislation. It's not just if you have a majority government or you have to work more if you're a minority government. Within our consensus government, it means that all Members have a say on how we move forward with that. Again, it's another example how I'm really proud that we are a consensus government in the NWT.

The other thing, too, is that, within our mandate, we committed this government to work with our Indigenous governments to create and implement an action plan that identifies the changes required in the GNWT legislation and policies to best reflect the principles set out in the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. We're still committed to doing this work. Again, it's going to take a lot of work, but if we're going to do this, we need to do it right. It is a commitment of this government as we move forward.

DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you, Madam Premier. Final supplementary. Member for Kam Lake.

MS. CLEVELAND: Thank you very much, Madam Speaker. As an MLA, a lot of times, we have specific, case-by-case issues that come to our desks from constituents. Sometimes, we solve that problem at face value without looking at the bigger picture of what's going in on with the constituent

and how we sometimes are able to change that situation for our territory as a whole. What I'm wondering from the Premier today is: what does she recommend that people, say, living in Tulita or living in Fort Providence or living in Ulukhaktok, do when they find a policy or a legislation that has a route of systemic racism in it? How do they reach out, and what's the best way that they make change from their communities? Thank you.

HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE: I also see that a lot in various portfolios I've had with this program and also as being a Regular MLA. The most effective way of reaching out is to work through your MLA. Your MLAs, that is their job to bring concerns of the constituents to the government but also work with the Ministers. Every Minister here cares about the people. There are some things we can't change easily. If it's something in legislation, that takes a longer process, but if it's a policy, all Ministers care. I've heard the comments behind, and they want to work. If they can change policies, I know that they look at doing that.

Again, Madam Speaker, it's important that, when people feel that, they do reach out, they do call for help. It's not okay to just ignore it. If it's ignored, it will be ignored. Bring forward the issues if you see the systemic racism. Work through your MLAs. Work through Ministers. We will do our best to help. Thank you, Madam Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you, Madam Premier. Oral questions. Member for Monfwi.

QUESTION 481-19(2): ELDERS HOUSING

MR. LAFFERTY: Masi, Madam Speaker. [Translation] When I talked about the Member's statement, I talked about the elders who are living at home, how they are taken care of. A lot of times, our elders are not well taken care of at home. I have a question for the Minister responsible for the NWT Housing Corporation. [End of translation] [Microphone turned off] ...issues in my region. In my Tlicho way or Dene way of life, we always, always take care of our elders. Allowing elders to remain in their own home is a win-win all around; for our elders, for our families, the community, and also for this government. We allow family members to live with their parents or grandparents, to look after them, and to care for them. These caretakers' income should not be considered or impacted when it comes to elders' household income in order to qualify for this program.

My first question to the Minister responsible for the Housing Corporation is: that being said, why doesn't the NWT Housing Corporation and this government use common sense and assist these elders with their housing needs without all the red

tape that is before them? We need to step up, be proactive, and do a better job of caring for our elders, and it's also part of our mandate. Madam Speaker, masi.

DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you, Member. Minister responsible for the Northwest Territories Housing Corporation.

HON. PAULIE CHINNA: Thank you, Madam Speaker. I hear the Member's comment. I resonate with this very clearly because we have a lot of elders who do reside in our smaller communities. We do have a limited number of elders' facilities, as well. The Northwest Territories Housing Corporation has constructed nine nine-plexes throughout the Northwest Territories to work with our elders and to have them age in place. The other thing I hear the Member speaking about is the household income, where they're disqualified for programming based on the number of people who are living within that public housing unit or within their private unit, as well. This is something that I really take seriously. If elders are coming forward to apply for housing programs within the Housing Corporation, we are looking at how we are going to be calculating, how we are going to better serve our elders in the smaller communities who are residing in private homes, to try to alleviate those barriers so our programming is more adequate and it's more accessible to our people in our smaller communities.

To the Member, I will follow up with him on solutions that we are working on within the Housing Corporation to try to alleviate the number of barriers that we do have for the elders in the smaller communities to access our elders' programming. Mahsi.

MR. LAFFERTY: We forwarded that information just the other day with pictures, and it's a real issue. Obviously, the screwdriver has been in place for a number of years, as you can tell. It's all rotten away, and it's unacceptable. The couple applied out of Whati. I'm not going into specific detail with their names. The couple applied, and the daughter is living with them, looking after them. Because of the daughter, they didn't qualify. That is due to the red tape that is before us. When can we see that red tape lifted? It's getting cold. It's almost minus 20, minus 30 in our communities now, and these elders are struggling. They can't fix the issue themselves, so we need the Housing Corporation and local housing authorities to come in, fix that simple issue. Again, it's all the paper, the red tape, "You don't qualify," and just leave it alone for a number of years. How long are we going to leave it alone? Change that red tape now.

HON. PAULIE CHINNA: In the Tlicho area, we do have a housing working group that opens the door

for us as the Housing Corporation, us as a government, to come in and work with the Indigenous groups. This is something I want to bring back. I am looking at maybe a partnership or some sort of programming that we could work with the community, where they could identify these areas and this programming that would adequately fit the specific communities. Also, I just wanted to say that it's really disheartening and unfortunate that a member of our elders' community in the Tlicho area is experiencing this right now. I have received the email, and my department has acted on it. I know this is one of several cases throughout the Northwest Territories, and as the Minister responsible for the Housing Corporation, we are going to be working and addressing these issues as we go forward, because one is too many of them.

MR. LAFFERTY: The Minister is correct: there are quite a few elders who cannot speak for themselves. In my region, they speak the Tlicho language. It's very difficult for them to access the NWT housing program. We always say there are online programs, but they can't access online programs. I am glad the Minister and her department are working with the local housing authority to establish some sort of mechanism to deal with these elders, and I certainly do not want to stand here in February or March addressing the same issue that is before us today. I am certainly hoping that it will be resolved by then. Just to continue on with my next question: what progress, and I raised this issue in the House before, has been made in creating a program under the NWT Housing Corporation so that qualified journeymen ticket holders can go into isolated communities such as my community to do this critical servicing of furnaces? We need permanent technicians in our isolated communities now, before it gets too cold.

HON. PAULIE CHINNA: Also, just in regard to the list of programs, I want to advise the Member that I will provide a list in February to the Member of the elders' programs that we did offer and the number of clients that we did serve within these next months coming up. Also, looking at the journeymen, entrance in trades programming is a challenge for us in the Northwest Territories but also for the Housing Corporation. We are working with the Tlicho Housing Working Group. I will identify this with our Housing Corporation staff to bring this back to the working group, that this is something we need to partner up on and we need to address, to make sure that we are working toward certified journeymen within the Tlicho area to start delivering this programming on our behalf or else in partnership to work with the Tlicho government.

DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you, Minister. Final supplementary. Member for Monfwi.

MR. LAFFERTY: Masi, Madam Speaker. An elder once told me, "Enough talking. Do the action now. Fix the problem." There is an issue here, a real challenge for this elderly couple, and I would like to know from the Minister: could we have a dedicated person to deal with these issues? I understand she is dealing with the Tlicho government, the agency, and so forth. There is lots of talk happening, but elders want to see somebody who can service the furnaces, somebody who can service the plumbing. Could we have a dedicated service person, technician, in the community to deal with those during the winter months? Masi, Madam Speaker.

HON. PAULIE CHINNA: The Northwest Territories Housing Corporation is really very strong and adamant about Indigenous partnership. I looked at this as an opportunity as I have worked with other communities throughout the territory where we had a similar issue such as this, and the Housing Corporation was able to enter into a community initiative program with the Indigenous groups. With looking at the issue for servicing the furnaces and looking at offering programming for the seniors in the Tlicho area, I will follow up with the Member and look at a possible opportunity that we could access additional funding to look at how we are going to have a representative in his riding. Thank you, Madam Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you, Minister. Member for Hay River South.

QUESTION 482-19(2):
HIRING LOCAL

MR. ROCKY SIMPSON: Thank you, Madam Speaker. There are many small businesses throughout the NWT that are still struggling to survive these difficult economic times. Some are finding work and for various reasons others are not. The NWT Housing Corporation is in a position to provide that support to those without work. I'm referring to those businesses that are located in our regional and small communities. Madam Speaker, I'd like to ask the Minister responsible for the NWT Housing Corporation if she will commit to identifying those projects slated for the regional and smaller communities and work with those businesses without work to ensure they are providing some work, even if it means sole-sourcing or negotiating the work. Thank you, Madam Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you, Member. Minister.

HON. PAULIE CHINNA: Thank you, Madam Speaker. I appreciate that question because, for the Northwest Territories Housing Corporation, hiring local is a priority. Hiring local businesses, Indigenous businesses, and what I had provided, I want to say last week, is that 95 percent of our

contractors are local. Looking at what we actually can offer I would like to follow up with the Member, as well, and look at his riding because we do have a rollout now of RCMP units that are being constructed. We do have some public housing units, as well, that are going through repairs and there is opportunity. My priority as a housing Minister is to hire local and keep the local people employed, offer training and opportunity. I'm open to hearing the Member's comments because I would like to become very strategic in how we deliver programs at the local level. Thank you, Madam Speaker.

MR. ROCKY SIMPSON: We do not provide enough support to our small community contractors. They are the ones that provide the much-needed employment in those communities and deserve our support and sometimes direction in order to build capacity. I would ask the Minister to commit to either doing away with suspension lists for contractors in these small communities or, at a minimum, work and support the contractors to ensure that they are successful and avoid failure.

HON. PAULIE CHINNA: For the contracts and tenders that are put out, and we do end up with some carry-overs because due to contract failures, I don't want to see businesses not being able to access to bid again our public tender. We also have to take into consideration the reason and the process that it has taken for us at that time. If we see contractor failure or else a carry-over of a project, we do take an assessment of that. Looking at the contractor suspension, I would look at this very clearly because I would not want to have a contractor suspended. I've seen it already in my time while I've held the housing portfolio. I've been able to work with a client and been able to bring them back and having them work for us again. Again, it's the quality of work that's being displayed that we've got to be very careful of. It ends up costing the Housing Corporation a significant amount if the buildings are not constructed adequately.

MR. ROCKY SIMPSON: As I previously stated, the NWT Housing Corporation projects are essential and the bread and butter to small community contractors and a source of employment for the residents. I ask the Minister: how many projects are slated for those regional small communities this winter, and is the department in the position to add additional projects, if required, if we find contractors without work?

HON. PAULIE CHINNA: This year, we had a few negotiated contracts that we have entered into with Indigenous groups that have not been finalized, but we have been approached with that interest. Looking at that, I don't have the numbers right on the top of my head, but I'd have to get back to the

Member with the number of projects that we do have listed that are slated for the next couple of years. I know the Member is quite concerned about the contractors and also creating employment at the local community level. I want to really just emphasize that that's a priority of the Housing Corporation. We do try and do our best to make sure that our contracts stay local and they stay within the community, and we do emphasize on education and training.

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

MR. ROCKY SIMPSON: Thank you, Madam Speaker. One area that the NWT Housing Corporation can support our northern businesses is with the transportation of the material going into the communities on the winter road. We have contractors with tractors and trailers down the valley that will be looking for work this winter. Maybe with COVID-19 in front of us it makes sense to use our northern contractors to provide those services. Can the Minister commit to her department to review on how they can ensure our northern contractors who supply trucking services are provided every opportunity to haul the material going down the winter road for their projects this winter? Thank you, Madam Speaker.

HON. PAULIE CHINNA: I think the Member was reading my mind. I just actually just had this conversation with my department. We are in COVID-19 and the Housing Corporation did find it a challenge getting material into our smaller remote communities. I was actually speaking about looking at our supply for this year and slating for the next couple of years for our projects, and how are we going to be getting them into the smaller communities, and the trucking service, as well, and what is available in the territory. I will be looking at that, and I will follow up with the Member. Thank you, Madam Speaker.

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

QUESTION 483-19(2):
ALCOHOL STRATEGY

MS. CLEVELAND: Thank you very much, Madam Speaker. My questions today are for the Minister of Health and Social Services. The Minister of Health and Social Services has spoken about the harm of alcohol to all of our communities multiple times within the House here. We've also heard multiple times about the upcoming alcohol strategy that is expected in the Northwest Territories. I'm wondering if the Minister can just talk to us about what she intends the alcohol strategy to accomplish. Thank you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you, Member. Minister of Health and Social Services.

HON. JULIE GREEN: Thank you, Madam Speaker. I want the alcohol strategy to produce better health. We have some very troubling indicators for heavy alcohol use in this territory. For example, the rate of heavy drinking, which is defined as having four or five or more alcoholic beverages in a single sitting, is 43 percent in the NWT. That compares to 19 percent across Canada. Better health means that people are not falling into the poor health outcomes of excessive alcohol use and also not falling into the personal despair of excessive alcohol use. To that end, the department has hired a federally funded senior advisor on the alcohol strategy who started work in August 2020. She is completing the following tasks: setting up a representative working group to guide the development of an alcohol strategy; reviewing feedback from an alcohol evidenced action workshop held in March on this issue; preparing a full workplan and engagement plan on this issue; and this work will be moving along with public consultation that will begin early next year. Thank you.

MS. CLEVELAND: I'm wondering if the Minister can speak to how they intend to roll out public engagement and make it accessible to everyone, given the COVID-19 restrictions?

HON. JULIE GREEN: I see engagement as a real issue even if there was no COVID. The difficult thing will be to find people with lived experience to participate in the engagement to talk about what will or could have helped them at some point in their journey. I don't have the details of how that engagement strategy is going to work, but I do recognize that hearing from people with lived experience would be a very valuable part of it.

MS. CLEVELAND: I'm wondering if the Minister can speak to at what points during the development of the engagement strategy will the public be able to weigh in and see how it's going, or will committee be able to see how it's going, as well? Does the department plan on waiting until the very end of the alcohol strategy to then release pieces of it or the whole thing? Where is the public's opportunity to be involved beyond?

HON. JULIE GREEN: This is a fairly new project, but we have offered and are still willing to provide the Standing Committee on Social Development a briefing and to take questions on what committee would like to see in an alcohol strategy. We are following an outline from the group called CAPE, which is the Canadian Alcohol Policy Evaluation. They have a number of different domains that they suggest an alcohol strategy focus on, so that is the outline we are looking at now. My preference would be to make this an iterative process so that there is

more than one occasion on which the general public can be involved in providing their feedback and that the feedback could come in a lot of different forms. It need not only be written. It could be video. It could be voice. It could be song and dance, just whatever it takes to get the information.

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

MS. CLEVELAND: Thank you very much, Madam Speaker. The Department of Finance houses our liquor and cannabis commission and also administers the Liquor Act. I am wondering how the Minister of Health and Social Services intends to include the Department of Finance in this process and how she sees the alcohol strategy influencing the work of the Department of Finance. Thank you.

HON. JULIE GREEN: These different domains speak to a whole-of-government approach. For example, impaired driving countermeasures would involve the Department of Justice; marketing and advertising controls would probably involve the Department of Finance, where the liquor commission is housed there; pricing and taxation and the physical availability of alcohol are also Department of Finance issues; Justice may take on the minimum legal drinking age, which is another recommendation in this set of issues to look at. It's going to be important for the department of health, as the lead on this, to bring all these other departments in so that we can present a coordinated approach to alcohol use. Thank you.

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

QUESTION 484-19(2):
INGRAHAM TRAIL FIRE SERVICES FROM
DETTAH

MR. JOHNSON: Thank you, Madam Speaker. My first set of questions a few weeks ago, when we started this session, were on the Ingraham Trail fire services, and my last questions will be on the Ingraham Trail fire services. The Member for Tu Nedhe-Wiilideh raised the idea of Dettah providing fire services to the Ingraham Trail. My question for the Minister of MACA is: is that a feasible option, and have we done any work on that? Thank you, Madam Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you, Member. Minister of MACA.

HON. PAULIE CHINNA: Thank you, Madam Speaker. The question was only asked last week. My department has been in communication with YKDFN and with Dettah, as well. As soon as we have more of a report to provide, I will keep the Member informed. Thank you, Madam Speaker.

MR. JOHNSON: On my first set of questions, the Minister said there was presently a working group and that we were dealing with the City of Yellowknife. My question is: has an offer been made to the City of Yellowknife of what they would need to continue fire services for the Ingraham Trail?

HON. PAULIE CHINNA: The Department of Municipal and Community Affairs and the City of Yellowknife are working jointly on this initiative, as well. We need to get out; we need to consult; we need to look at stakeholders; and we need to see what it is that we are able to provide at Ingraham Trail. We still need to have the conversation with the City of Yellowknife. They are strategizing on their end, as well. Nothing has changed. Once we meet with the City of Yellowknife, I will provide an update to the Member. As I said, we have just started working with them within the last week.

MR. JOHNSON: I want to press the urgency of this issue. If, on April 1st, fire services run out, first, it's people lose fire services to their homes, which is an emergency. However, also, a number of my constituents' insurance bills will simply double due to us not being able to sort out an issue here. There is a direct cost to my constituents that I would like to avoid. When can we expect the department to reach out to those residents and communicate with them?

HON. PAULIE CHINNA: I don't want to sound as if I am avoiding the question, but there is a lot of discussion that has to take place before MACA comes in and starts to make the decision. We need to be working with the City of Yellowknife respectfully and respectfully with the Indigenous groups, as well, and also speaking with the residents of Ingraham Trail and what it is that they are looking at; the fire services, as well; speaking with Dettah, as well. There are a lot of parties that are at the table. I do understand the urgency for April 1st coming up. It's very close. I will keep the Member informed because I just, right now, do not have an update, but we are working in conjunction with the working group.

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

MR. JOHNSON: Thank you, Madam Speaker. I am a little frustrated. The way I see this, there are three options. One, we contract with Dettah, and we make sure that a fire hall that has struggled to get insurance and get a full crew of volunteers happens by April 1st; two, we contract with the City of Yellowknife, who has been extremely resistant to providing services; or, three, in the next few months, we construct a fire hall on the Ingraham Trail, which also seems extremely impossible. My question for the Minister is: what is the plan to

make sure fire services continue on the Ingraham Trail? Thank you, Madam Speaker.

HON. PAULIE CHINNA: I would have to follow up with the Member, but we cannot make decisions because we are working with the Indigenous groups and with the City of Yellowknife. Considering the number of people who are going to be involved, strategically looking at how are we going to provide fire services in Ingraham Trail, we are working with this, and we do have a strategy right now. I will provide the Member with an update. It has not been finalized. We are working with the City of Yellowknife in respect to them, too, and YKDFN. I need to be very clear and strategic when I prepare the response. I need to hear from the affected parties first. Thank you, Madam Speaker.

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

QUESTION 485-19(2):
INCREASED WINTER TRUCKING AND COVID-19
CONSIDERATIONS

MR. ROCKY SIMPSON: Thank you, Madam Speaker. I have a question for the Minister of Health and Social Services. We are getting into the winter season. We are getting into the ice road season. I am just wondering if the department is looking at any special orders or changes to the orders or if anything will be in place for the truckers hauling to the mines and hauling down the winter road. I think we have that 30-hour turnaround in place, and I think we are going to be going over that, especially this winter when we are heading into Colville Lake, Norman Wells, some places like that. I am just wondering what the department is doing with respect to that. Thank you, Madam Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you, Member. Minister of Health and Social Services.

HON. JULIE GREEN: Thank you, Madam Speaker. Thank you to the Member for Hay River South for the question. It's an excellent question, and I am sorry I don't have an answer ready to it. However, I do take his point that this is something we need to sort out now. That 30 hours would not be enough time into Colville Lake or to drive up to the diamond mines. There will need to be some consideration of how to make that possible since those are essential services and time-limited services that are being provided. Thank you.

MR. ROCKY SIMPSON: With the trucks coming into the territories and going up the winter road and to the mines and that, are we going to be adding any monitoring to that? Are we going to step that up, say, in Yellowknife and along the winter road, as well? Is there anything different that you think

might be happening in that respect, on the monitoring side?

HON. JULIE GREEN: With respect to the road to the mines, it's a private road, and there is a dispatch office in the industrial area of Yellowknife that truckers go to to be dispatched. They leave at specific time intervals a numbers of trucks at a time. That would continue. It's a private road, so they would continue doing that. They have security on that road. I know that they are vigilant about the speed limit and how many hours the driver has been on the road and so on and so forth. For the rest of the territory, I think that the enforcement would be maintained through the current border controls that are in place now. I can certainly find out if they are planning to increase that capacity at all to deal with the volume of trucks that come up through the early winter.

MR. ROCKY SIMPSON: When I think about Hay River, as well, we have a number of trucks coming in and fuelling up, and just knowing what's happening with monitoring and enforcement right now, all of a sudden, we're going to have a lot more trucks in there. Most of the truckers, I think, are following the rules, following the orders, but you always get the odd one that figures they can go around town and that. I just want to make sure that Hay River -- we're lucky; we've been fortunate that we haven't had a COVID case, but this winter, I could see that happening just because of the number of trucks that are moving in and out of there daily. I look forward to getting a response from the Minister with respect to enforcement and monitoring for this winter. That's all.

HON. JULIE GREEN: I appreciate the Member's concern. It usually is a lot of traffic. The road to the mines is usually in the realm of 7,000 to 9,000 trucks a winter over a two-month period, so it is a very intense amount of traffic that will be coming right from the border through the South Slave up into the tundra. With respect to other truckers who deliver fuel to small communities on winter roads, I see the need to be vigilant there so that they don't unintentionally spread COVID-19 to those communities. I will be in touch with the Office of the Chief Public Health Officer to ensure that these issues are on her radar, as well.

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

MR. ROCKY SIMPSON: Thank you, Madam Speaker. Just one last question, and that is: are we going to be looking at any quick tests for COVID where we can reduce the amount of time or assist the truckers who are coming in here to ensure that they are COVID-free when they come across our border? Is that something that we may be looking at this winter? Thank you, Madam Speaker.

HON. JULIE GREEN: The problem with rapid testing is that it really doesn't work if you only do it once. There is a period of time over which somebody could become infectious, have symptoms, have a fever, so you can't really do one test and say, "Okay. That's good. You don't have any COVID." It's usually a series during the 14-day isolation period. I know that what they're doing now with essential health workers is a test right when they come in to see that they're well, and then they're asking them to really self-isolate except for those times that they are at work. There is a model to follow there that may be helpful to make sure that truckers are not held up but are also well enough to go into the communities. Thank you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you, Minister. Colleagues, our time for oral questions has expired. Item 8, written questions. Member for Kam Lake.

Written Questions

WRITTEN QUESTION 21-19(2): APPLICATIONS TO THE NATIONAL CO- INVESTMENT FUND

MS. CLEVELAND: Thank you, Madam Speaker. My question is for the Minister responsible for the Northwest Territories Housing Corporation on the National Co-Investment Fund. Can the Minister please provide the status of all applications to the National Co-Investment Fund of which the Northwest Territories Housing Corporation has knowledge, and can the Minister please advise:

1. How many Northwest Territories Housing Corporation employees are currently assigned to work on applications to the National Co-Investment Fund;
2. What percentage of those employees' time is spent working on applications to the National Co-Investment Fund; and
3. What communication activities has the Northwest Territories Housing Corporation completed in support of increasing applications to the National Co-Investment Fund?

Thank you, Madam Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you, Member. Written questions. Item 9, returns to written questions. Mr. Clerk.

Returns to Written Questions

RETURN TO WRITTEN QUESTION 19-19(2): HOMEOWNERS INSURANCE

CLERK OF THE HOUSE (Mr. Mercer): Madam Speaker, I have a return to Written Question 19-

19(2) asked by the Member for Kam Lake to the Minister responsible for the Northwest Territories Housing Corporation on October 15, 2020, regarding homeowner's insurance.

The Member asked how the Government of the Northwest Territories intends to support homeowners in remote northern communities to access homeowner's insurance. The Government of the Northwest Territories recognizes that insurance is important to protect residents' most valuable possessions: their homes. The GNWT has raised its concerns with the cost of insurance with private insurance providers. GNWT departments will continue to make investments in community infrastructure, especially those structures and services that may make an impact on lessening insurance premiums.

The Member also inquired about how many Northwest Territories homeowners do not qualify for home insurance because of their community location. Data on how many homeowners do not have access to insurance is not available. In general, home insurance may not be available if a homeowner does not have appropriate land tenure.

Lastly, the Member asked how does the lack of homeowner's insurance and associated disrepair drive northern homelessness. There are no studies available that link the lack of homeowner's insurance to homelessness. The GNWT does recognize that having insurance was a requirement for major repair programs or homeownership purchase, which involved larger financial contributions. This provision protected residents in case something should happen to their home.

One action that is being taken to increase access to repair programs is to remove the requirement for insurance for residents living in small, rural, and remote communities where obtaining insurance may be challenging. In larger regional centres, insurance will still be required. Thank you, Madam Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. 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 Finance.

Tabling of Documents

TABLED DOCUMENT 235-19(2):
TAKING ACTION - A WORK PLAN TO ADDRESS
THE CALLS FOR JUSTICE IN RECLAIMING
POWER AND PLACE: FINAL REPORT OF THE
NATIONAL INQUIRY INTO MISSING AND
MURDERED INDIGENOUS WOMEN AND GIRLS

TABLED DOCUMENT 236-19(2):
INTERIM PUBLIC ACCOUNTS OF THE
GOVERNMENT OF THE NORTHWEST
TERRITORIES FOR THE YEAR ENDED MARCH
31, 2020

TABLED DOCUMENT 237-19(2):
NORTHWEST TERRITORIES BUSINESS
DEVELOPMENT AND INVESTMENT
CORPORATION 2019-2020 ANNUAL REPORT

TABLED DOCUMENT 238-19(2):
GRANTS AND CONTRIBUTIONS RESULTS
REPORT 2019-2020

TABLED DOCUMENT 239-19(2):
CONSOLIDATED BUDGET 2020-2021

TABLED DOCUMENT 240-19(2):
NORTHWEST TERRITORIES OIL AND GAS
ANNUAL REPORT 2019

HON. CAROLINE WAWZONEK: Madam Speaker, I wish to table the following six documents: "Taking Action: A Work Plan to Address the Calls for Justice in Reclaiming Power and Place: Final Report of the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls;" "Interim Public Accounts of the Government of the Northwest Territories for the Year Ended March 31, 2020;" "Northwest Territories Business Development and Investment Corporation 2019-2020 Annual Report;" "Grants and Contributions Results Report 2019-2020;" "Consolidated Budget 2020-2021, Government of the Northwest Territories;" and "Northwest Territories Oil and Gas Annual Report 2019." Thank you, Madam Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Tabling of documents. Minister of Health and Social Services.

TABLED DOCUMENT 241-19(2):
NWT HEALTH AND SOCIAL SERVICES SYSTEM
ANNUAL REPORT 2019-2020

TABLED DOCUMENT 242-19(2):
TLICHO COMMUNITY SERVICES AGENCY
HEALTH AND SOCIAL SERVICES ANNUAL
REPORT 2019-2020

TABLED DOCUMENT 243-19(2):
2019-2020 ANNUAL REPORT OF THE
NORTHWEST TERRITORIES HEALTH AND
SOCIAL SERVICES AUTHORITY

TABLED DOCUMENT 244-19(2):
HAY RIVER HEALTH AND SOCIAL SERVICES
AUTHORITY ANNUAL REPORT 2019-2020

HON. JULIE GREEN: Thank you, Madam Speaker. I wish to table the following four documents: "NWT Health and Social Services System Annual Report 2019-2020;" "Tlicho Community Services Agency Health and Social Services Annual Report 2019-2020;" "2019-2020 Annual Report of the Northwest Territories Health and Social Services Authority;" and "Hay River Health and Social Services Authority Annual Report 2019-2020." Thank you, Madam Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. tabling of documents. Minister responsible for the Northwest Territories Power Corporation.

TABLED DOCUMENT 245-19(2):
ANNUAL REPORT 2019-20 NORTHWEST
TERRITORIES HYDRO CORPORATION AND
NORTHWEST TERRITORIES POWER
CORPORATION

HON. DIANE ARCHIE: Thank you, Madam Speaker. I wish to table the following document: "Annual Report 2019-2020 Northwest Territories Hydro Corporation and Northwest Territories Power Corporation." Thank you, Madam Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you, Minister. Tabling of documents. Minister of Education, Culture and Employment.

TABLED DOCUMENT 246-19(2):
ANNUAL REPORTS FOR THE NORTHWEST
TERRITORIES EDUCATION BODIES FOR THE
2019-2020 SCHOOL YEAR ENDING JUNE 30,
2020 VOLUMES 1 AND 2

HON. R.J. SIMPSON: Madam Speaker, I wish to table the following document: "Annual Reports for the Northwest Territories Education Bodies for the 2019-2020 School Year Ending June 30, 2020 Volumes 1 and 2." Thank you, Madam Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Tabling of documents. Minister of Municipal and Community Affairs.

TABLED DOCUMENT 247-19(2):
OPERATIONS REPORT 2019-2020 WESTERN
CANADA LOTTERY PROGRAM

TABLED DOCUMENT 248-19(2):
NORTHWEST TERRITORIES HOUSING
CORPORATION ANNUAL REPORT 2019-2020

HON. PAULIE CHINNA: Madam Speaker, I wish to table the following two documents: "Operations Report 2019-2020 Western Canada Lottery Program;" and "Northwest Territories Housing Corporation Annual Report 2019-2020." Thank you, Madam Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Tabling of documents. Member for Kam Lake.

TABLED DOCUMENT 249-19(2):
EXCERPT FROM GLOBE AND MAIL, NOVEMBER 3, 2020 - "IN MANITOBA, AN OMNIBUS BILL PUTS SYSTEMIC RACISM AGAINST INDIGENOUS PEOPLE IN PLAIN VIEW"

MS. CLEVELAND: Thank you very much, Madam Speaker. I wish to table an excerpt from the Globe and Mail of November 3, 2020, titled: "In Manitoba, an omnibus bill puts systemic racism against Indigenous people in plain view." Thank you, Madam Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Tabling of documents. Item 15, notices of motion. Item 16, motions. Member for Kam Lake.

Motions

MOTION 22-19(2):
APPOINTMENT OF LAW CLERK,
CARRIED

MS. CLEVELAND: Thank you, Madam Speaker. WHEREAS Section 54(3) of the Legislative Assembly and Executive Council Act provides that the Commissioner, on the recommendation of the Board of Management, shall appoint a Law Clerk on such terms and conditions that the Board of Management may recommend;

AND WHEREAS the Board of Management is tasked with recommending an individual to the Legislative Assembly and the Legislative Assembly is prepared to make a recommendation to the Commissioner;

NOW THEREFORE I MOVE, seconded by the honourable Member for Sahtu, that the Legislative Assembly recommends the appointment of Ms. Sheila MacPherson as Law Clerk and Mr. Toby Kruger as Deputy Law Clerk as recommended by the Board of Management.

AND FURTHER, that the Speaker be authorized to communicate the effective date of appointment to the Commissioner. Thank you, Madam Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. The motion is in order. To the motion.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Question.

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

---Carried

Motions. Member for Yellowknife North.

MOTION 23-19(2):
APPOINTMENT OF SOLE ADJUDICATORS,
CARRIED

MR. JOHNSON: Thank you, Madam Speaker. WHEREAS section 103 of the Legislative Assembly and Executive Council Act provides for the approval of sole adjudicators by the motion of this House;

AND WHEREAS it is desirable to have persons approved for appointment as sole adjudicators for conflict of interest matters under section 103 of the Legislative Assembly and Executive Council Act;

NOW THEREFORE I MOVE, seconded by the honourable Member for Hay River North, that the following persons be approved by the Legislative Assembly as sole adjudicators: Hon. Maurice Herauf; and Jeffrey Schnoor, Q.C. Thank you, Madam Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER: The motion is in order. To the motion.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Question.

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

---Carried

The motion is carried. Motions. Member for Frame Lake.

MOTION 24-19(2):
CHANGES TO COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP,
CARRIED

MR. O'REILLY: Merci, Madame la Presidente. WHEREAS Mrs. Frieda Martselos was appointed to the Standing Committee on Economic Development and Environment by Motion 11-19(1) on December 10, 2019;

NOW THEREFORE I MOVE, seconded by the honourable Member for Hay River North, that the appointment of Mrs. Frieda Martselos to the Standing Committee on Economic Development and Environment be revoked; and further,

WHEREAS Rule 89(2) requires that Members be appointed to the Standing Committee on Government Operations;

NOW THEREFORE I MOVE, seconded by the honourable Member for Hay River North, that Mr. Steve Norn be appointed as an alternate member to the Standing Committee on Government Operations. Mahsi, Madam Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER: The motion is in order. To the motion. Member for Frame Lake.

MOTION TO AMEND MOTION 24-19(2),
CARRIED

MR. O'REILLY: Merci, Madame la Presidente. I move, seconded by the honourable Member for Deh Cho, that Motion 24-19(2), Changes to Committee Membership be amended by adding the following: AND FURTHERMORE, whereas Mr. Steve Norn was appointed to the Special Committee on Reconciliation and Indigenous Affairs by Motion 21-19(2) on October 29, 2020;

NOW THEREFORE I MOVE, seconded by the honourable Member for Deh Cho, that Mrs. Frieda Martselos replace Mr. Steve Norn as a member of the Special Committee on Reconciliation and Indigenous Affairs. Mahsi, Madam Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER: The amendment is in order. To the amendment.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Question.

DEPUTY SPEAKER: Question has been called. To the amendment. All those in favour? All those opposed? The motion is carried.

---Carried

Members, we are now debating the motion as amended. To the motion.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Question.

DEPUTY SPEAKER: Question has been called. To the motion as amended. All those in favour. All those opposed. The motion is amended is carried.

---Carried

The motion is carried. Motions. Member for Yellowknife North.

MOTION 25-19(2):
EXTENDED ADJOURNMENT OF THE HOUSE TO
FEBRUARY 3, 2021, CARRIED

MR. JOHNSON: Thank you, Madam Speaker. And now to the most important motion, the one that adjourns this House until February 3rd. I move, seconded by the honourable Member for Hay River North, that, notwithstanding Rule 4, when this House adjourns on Thursday, November 5, 2020, it shall be adjourned until Wednesday, February 3, 2021;

AND FURTHER, that any time prior to February 3, 2021, 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, Madam Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER: The motion is in order. To the motion.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Question.

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

---Carried

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

First Reading of Bills

BILL 22:
SUPPLEMENTARY APPROPRIATION ACT
(INFRASTRUCTURE EXPENDITURES), 2021-
2022

HON. CAROLINE WAWZONEK: Madam Speaker, I move, seconded by the Honourable Member for Range Lake, that Bill 22, Supplementary Appropriation Act (Infrastructure Expenditures), 2021-2022, be read for the first time. Thank you, Madam Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. The motion is in order and nondebatable. All those in favour. All those opposed. The motion is carried.

---Carried

Bill 22 has had first reading. First reading of bills. Item 19, second reading of bills. Minister of Finance.

Second Reading of Bills

BILL 22:
SUPPLEMENTARY APPROPRIATION ACT
(INFRASTRUCTURE EXPENDITURES), 2021-
2022

HON. CAROLINE WAWZONEK: Madam Speaker, I move, seconded by the Honourable Member for Range Lake, that Bill 22, Supplementary Appropriation Act (Infrastructure Expenditures), 2021-2022 be read for the second time. This bill authorizes the Government of the Northwest Territories to make appropriations for infrastructure expenditures for the 2021-2022 fiscal year. It also sets out limits on amounts that may be borrowed by the Commissioner on behalf of the government, includes information with respect to all existing

borrowing and all projected borrowing for the fiscal year, and authorizes the making of disbursements to pay the principle amounts borrowed. Thank you, Madam Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. The motion is in order. To the principle of the bill.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Question.

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

---Carried

Bill 22 has had second reading. Second reading of bills. Item 20, consideration in Committee of the Whole of bills and other matters: Committee Report 6-19(2), Standing Committee on Rules and Procedures Report on Remote Sitings; Minister's Statement 77-19(2), National Housing Co-investment Fund; Tabled Document 165-19(2), Government of the Northwest Territories Response to Committee Report 1-19(2), Report on Long-term Post-Pandemic Recovery, Recommendations to the GNWT; Tabled Document 166-19(2), Government of the Northwest Territories Response to Committee Report 2-19(2): Report on the Long-term Post-Pandemic Recovery, Recommendations to the GNWT; Tabled Document 167- 19(2), Government of the Northwest Territories Response to Committee Report 3-19(2): Report on Long-Term Post-Pandemic Recovery - Recommendations to the GNWT, with Member for Hay River South in the Chair.

Consideration in Committee of the Whole of Bills and Other Matters

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Rocky Simpson): I will now call Committee of the Whole. Member for Frame Lake.

MR. O'REILLY: [Microphone turned off] ...Mr. Chair, I appreciate that. Committee would like to deal with Committee Report 6-19(2), Standing Committee on Rules and Procedures Report on Remote Sitings. Thanks, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Rocky Simpson): Does committee agree?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Rocky Simpson): We'll take a short recess.

---SHORT RECESS

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Rocky Simpson): Okay. We will call the committee back to order. Committee, we have agreed to consider Committee Report 6-

19(2), Report on Remote Sitings. I will go to the chair of the Standing Committee on Rules and Procedures for any opening comments. Member for Frame Lake.

MR. O'REILLY: Thanks, Mr. Chair. I do have a few comments here. In June, Members will recall that we passed changes to The Legislative Assembly and Executive Council Act that now provide us with the authority to conduct remote sittings of the House. The Standing Committee on Rules and Procedures was tasked with providing some guidance to the Speaker on how and why the Assembly might sit remotely and when it would be appropriate for a Member to take part remotely and what changes or amendments to rules might be needed to enable all of that. The committee reviewed emerging best practices from Parliament, provincial legislatures, and some international examples as this is an issue that has emerged, of course, in many countries around the world with the ongoing pandemic.

The committee discussed each question from the Speaker at length. We debated various scenarios to come up with a set of recommendations in this report that tried to find the right balance and make sure that Members' rights to participate in the Assembly are protected, with making sure that we can try to do all of that efficiently.

The committee also reviewed the orders of the day and proposed a number of changes in the event of a remote sitting. Of course, these recommendations will basically serve as drafting instructions for actual rule changes. Those rule changes will come back to the House in the new year for review and approval, and then we can start to meet remotely as the Assembly. There is also a provision for these changes to be reviewed after each remote sitting to see if we can make improvements.

I would like to thank my fellow committee members for their diligence and thoughtful review of our rules and procedures that led to the recommendations I am going to present shortly, and I look forward to hearing from all of our colleagues as we work our way through. Those are my opening remarks, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Rocky Simpson): I will now open the floor to general comments on Committee Report 6-19(2), Report on Remote Sitings. Do any Members have general comments? Member for Yellowknife Centre.

HON. JULIE GREEN: Thank you, Mr. Chair. My general comment is: I would like to express appreciation to the committee for undertaking this work. We do not know when we will need it, but what we have here is a very comprehensive road map of what a virtual sitting could look like. No

doubt, there are things that we have not considered, but I thank the committee for getting us off to a good start. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Rocky Simpson): Do Members have any other general comments? Member for Yellowknife North.

MR. JOHNSON: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Yes. First, I would also like to thank the committee. I just want to make a note to not downplay the historical significance of this. There are lots of assemblies around the world that have been struggling with how to sit online, and committee has gone and come up with some very comprehensive notions of how we can do that. This institution and legislative assemblies in general are not institutions that are quick to change or adapt, but I think committee really went there. I am excited at the possibility of being able to pass laws digitally. It's truly a step for democracy, so I just do not want to downplay the significance of this. Thank you, committee.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Rocky Simpson): Thank you, Member. Are there any further general comments? Seeing no further comments, Member for Frame Lake.

COMMITTEE MOTION 59-19(2):
COMMITTEE REPORT 6-19(2): STANDING
COMMITTEE ON RULES AND PROCEDURES
REPORT ON REMOTE SITTINGS -
AUTHORIZING SPEAKER TO CONDUCT
REMOTE SESSION,
CARRIED

MR. O'REILLY: Thanks, Mr. Chair. I appreciate the comments from my colleagues.

Mr. Chair, I move that this committee recommends that the rules of the Legislative Assembly authorize the Speaker to conduct part or all of a session remotely, using an approved platform, in the event of a state of emergency declared for the entire territory under the Emergency Measures Act or a public health emergency declared under the Public Health Act; and further, that the rules authorize the Speaker to convene part or all of a session remotely if the Speaker is satisfied after consultation with the Executive Council and Members of the Legislative Assembly that the health, safety, or well-being of Members would be at risk by meeting in person. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Rocky Simpson): Thank you, Member. The motion is in order. To the motion.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Question.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Rocky Simpson): All those in favour? Oppose? Abstentions? The motion is carried.

---Carried

Member for Frame Lake.

COMMITTEE MOTION 60-19(2):
COMMITTEE REPORT 6-19(2): STANDING
COMMITTEE ON RULES AND PROCEDURES
REPORT ON REMOTE SITTINGS - DISPLAY OF
MACE DURING REMOTE SITTINGS,
CARRIED

MR. O'REILLY: Thanks, Mr. Chair. I move this committee recommends that the Mace, as a symbol of the authority of the people of the Northwest Territories, should be placed in the Chamber on its normal stand if possible and, if not, displayed in another manner in keeping with its symbolic significance during any remote sitting of the Assembly. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Rocky Simpson): Thank you, Member. The motion is in order. To the motion.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Question.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Rocky Simpson): Question has been called. Member for Hay River North.

HON. R.J. SIMPSON: Thank you. I have a question about this recommendation. It recommends that the Mace be put in its place, which is here in the Assembly on its perch. In the event of a remote sitting, would this tie our hands in any way? If the reason we are having a remote sitting is because we cannot get into the building, would it cause any issues for Legislative Assembly staff? How is that contemplated? Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Rocky Simpson): Thank you, Minister. Member for Frame Lake.

MR. O'REILLY: Thanks, Mr. Chair. Yes, committee did turn its mind to this matter. Of course, we have recommended remote sittings only in limited circumstances. I think I mentioned the public health emergency and a state of emergency under the Emergency Measures Act or if the Speaker is satisfied that the health, safety, or well-being of a Member might be compromised, so already, remote sittings are only contemplated in a limited set of circumstances, recognizing that one of those might be if we do not have a building to meet in any further.

We did not go as far as to say that staff had to be here, in this building, even if we were meeting remotely. I think that is an operational level of detail that we did not really need to get into, and I think

that we want to leave some discretion for the Speaker in how the House might conduct itself, including where the Mace might be appropriately displayed. There is provision in here for the Mace to be placed in a symbolic place. It could be in the lobby or in another location as part of a video-conferencing platform. I do not think we wanted to get too prescriptive but to try to maintain the dignity of the House by having the Mace or a representation of the Mace in some way as part of the proceeding. I hope I have answered the question. Thanks, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Rocky Simpson): Thank you, Member. Are there any further questions? Question has been called, so all those in favour? Opposed? Abstentions? Motion carried.

---Carried

Member for Frame Lake.

COMMITTEE MOTION 61-19(2):
COMMITTEE REPORT 6-19(2): STANDING
COMMITTEE ON RULES AND PROCEDURES
REPORT ON REMOTE SITTINGS REPORT ON
REMOTE SITTINGS – AUTHORIZATION BY
SPEAKER OF REMOTE ATTENDANCE OF
MEMBERS FOR SESSION, CARRIED

MR. O'REILLY: Thanks, Mr. Chair. I move this committee recommends that the rules of the Legislative Assembly authorize the Speaker to allow a Member to attend all or a part of a session remotely when that Member is unable to travel due to a state of emergency being declared in the Member's home community, the Member is under an order of the Chief Public Health Officer prohibiting travel, or the Speaker believes travel would put the Member's health or safety at risk. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Rocky Simpson): Thank you, Member. The motion is in order. To the motion. Member.

MR. O'REILLY: Thanks, Mr. Chair. Yes, just very briefly, committee did turn its mind to this, and we only wanted to allow Members to participate remotely for a very narrow set of reasons but also give the Speaker some discretion if people are taking discretionary travel, even business travel related to the Assembly. Sitting here is really a privilege and a duty, and we want to make sure that MLAs make every effort to come here in person. We prescribed a very narrow set of circumstances under which a Member could participate remotely. Thanks, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Rocky Simpson): To the motion.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Question.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Rocky Simpson): Question has been called. All those in favour? Opposed? Abstentions? The motion is carried.

---Carried

Member for Frame Lake.

COMMITTEE MOTION 62-19(2):
COMMITTEE REPORT 6-19(2): STANDING
COMMITTEE ON RULES AND PROCEDURES
REPORT ON REMOTE SITTINGS REPORT ON
REMOTE SITTINGS - APPLICATION OF RULE
12(10) FOR REMOTE ATTENDANCE, CARRIED

MR. O'REILLY: Thanks, Mr. Chair. I move that this committee recommends that Rule 12(10), which states, "When in the Assembly, every Member shall be attired in traditional Indigenous attire or in a manner that does not offend the dignity of the Assembly," apply when a Member is appearing remotely. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Rocky Simpson): Thank you, Member. The motion is in order. To the motion.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Question.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Rocky Simpson): Question has been called. All those in favour? Opposed? Abstentions? The motion is passed.

---Carried

Member for Frame Lake.

COMMITTEE MOTION 63-19(2):
COMMITTEE REPORT 6-19(2): STANDING
COMMITTEE ON RULES AND PROCEDURES
REPORT ON REMOTE SITTINGS REPORT ON
REMOTE SITTINGS - TRAINING AND HEADSETS
FOR ONLINE SITTINGS,
CARRIED

MR. O'REILLY: Thanks, Mr. Chair. I move that this committee recommends that training and orientation for online sittings should be provided; and further, that the board of management should look at providing a headset to each Member to ensure consistency; and furthermore, that any Member attending remotely be required to wear a headset. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Rocky Simpson): Thank you, Member. The motion is in order. To the motion.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Question.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Rocky Simpson): Question has been called. All those in favour? Opposed? Abstentions? The motion is carried.

---Carried

Member for Frame Lake.

COMMITTEE MOTION 64-19(2):
COMMITTEE REPORT 6-19(2): STANDING
COMMITTEE ON RULES AND PROCEDURES
REPORT ON REMOTE SITTINGS REPORT ON
REMOTE SITTINGS – NEUTRAL BACKGROUND
FOR VIDEO CONFERENCES,
CARRIED

MR. O'REILLY: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I move that this committee recommends that any member attending remotely by videoconference be required to have a neutral background on screen; and further, if the Speaker determines a background is distracting to the House, the Speaker be empowered to order the Member to rectify the issue and, if the Member refuses, to turn off the Member's video and allow the Member to participate via audio only. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Rocky Simpson): Thank you, Member. The motion is in order. To the motion.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Question.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Rocky Simpson): Question has been called. All those in favour? Opposed? Abstentions? The motion is carried.

---Carried

Member for Frame Lake.

COMMITTEE MOTION 65-19(2):
COMMITTEE REPORT 6-19(2): STANDING
COMMITTEE ON RULES AND PROCEDURES
REPORT ON REMOTE SITTINGS REPORT ON
REMOTE SITTINGS – RECORDED VOTES IN
REMOTE SITTINGS,
CARRIED

MR. O'REILLY: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I move that this committee recommends that, whenever a Member is attending session remotely, all votes on readings of bills, or on any motion that requires notice, be conducted as a recorded vote. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Rocky Simpson): Thank you, Member. The motion is in order. To the motion.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Question.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Rocky Simpson): Question has been called. All those in favour? Opposed? Abstentions? The motion is carried.

---Carried

Member for Frame Lake.

COMMITTEE MOTION 66-19(2):
COMMITTEE REPORT 6-19(2): STANDING
COMMITTEE ON RULES AND PROCEDURES
REPORT ON REMOTE SITTINGS REPORT ON
REMOTE SITTINGS – REGISTRATION OF
VOTES IN EVENT OF LOSS OF CONNECTION,
CARRIED

MR. O'REILLY: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I move that this committee recommends that, when a Member attending remotely loses their connection just prior to or during a vote, the Member immediately contacts the table officer to register their vote, and that the Clerk will announce to the House how that Member voted at the end of the roll call; and further, that three minutes will be counted from the end of the roll call to when the Speaker announces the results if a Member has lost connection prior to voting to allow the Member time to contact the table officer. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Rocky Simpson): Thank you, Member. The motion is in order. To the motion.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Question.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Rocky Simpson): Question has been called. All those in favour? Opposed? Abstentions? The motion is carried.

---Carried

Member for Frame Lake.

COMMITTEE MOTION 67-19(2):
COMMITTEE REPORT 6-19(2): STANDING
COMMITTEE ON RULES AND PROCEDURES
REPORT ON REMOTE SITTINGS – ROLL CALL
PROCEDURES,
CARRIED

MR. O'REILLY: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I move that this committee recommends that, when conducting a roll call, the Clerk call on the mover of the motion, followed by each Member attending remotely by order of their normal seat in the House, then each Member seated in the Chamber; and further, that, for Members attending remotely, they will be called no more than three times for their vote before the Clerk moves on to the next Member. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Rocky Simpson): Thank you, Member. The motion is in order. To the motion.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Question.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Rocky Simpson): Question has been called. All those in favour? Opposed? Abstentions? The motion is carried.

---Carried

Member for Frame Lake.

COMMITTEE MOTION 68-19(2):
COMMITTEE REPORT 6-19(2): STANDING
COMMITTEE ON RULES AND PROCEDURES
REPORT ON REMOTE SITTINGS –
DISCONNECTION AND RECONNECTION
DURING ORAL QUESTIONS,
CARRIED

MR. O'REILLY: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I move that this committee recommends that, during oral questions, if a Member attending remotely is disconnected while asking a question, if the Member is successful in reconnecting before the allotted time expires, the Speaker will allow the Member to continue their questions; and further, if the Member is not able to reconnect before the allotted time expires, the Member may choose to submit the full question and up to three supplemental questions in writing, and that the Minister would have two sitting days in which to respond. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Rocky Simpson): Thank you, Member. The motion is in order. To the motion.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Question.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Rocky Simpson): Question has been called. All those in favour? Opposed? Abstentions? The motion is carried.

---Carried

Member for Frame Lake.

COMMITTEE MOTION 69-19(2):
COMMITTEE REPORT 6-19(2): STANDING
COMMITTEE ON RULES AND PROCEDURES
REPORT ON REMOTE SITTINGS –
REDIRECTION OF QUESTIONS DURING LOSS
OF MINISTERS' CONNECTIONS,
CARRIED

MR. O'REILLY: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I move that this committee recommends that, if a Minister attending remotely loses their connection when a question has been asked to that Minister, then the

question shall be redirected to the Premier or designate to respond. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Rocky Simpson): Thank you, Member. The motion is in order. To the motion.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Question.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Rocky Simpson): Question has been called. All those in favour? Opposed? Abstentions? The motion is carried.

---Carried

Member for Frame Lake.

COMMITTEE MOTION 70-19(2):
COMMITTEE REPORT 6-19(2): STANDING
COMMITTEE ON RULES AND PROCEDURES
REPORT ON REMOTE SITTINGS –
ANNOUNCEMENT OF WRITTEN QUESTIONS,
CARRIED

MR. O'REILLY: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I move that this committee recommends that, when a Member files a written question with the Office of the Clerk, the Member should note if, in the event the Member loses their connection, the written question can be announced by the Clerk and be printed in its entirety in Hansard. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Rocky Simpson): Thank you, Member. The motion is in order. To the motion.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Question.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Rocky Simpson): Question has been called. All those in favour? Opposed? Abstentions? The motion is carried.

---Carried

Member for Frame Lake.

COMMITTEE MOTION 71-19(2):
COMMITTEE REPORT 6-19(2): STANDING
COMMITTEE ON RULES AND PROCEDURES
REPORT ON REMOTE SITTINGS – MEMBERS'
STATEMENTS IN EVENT OF LOSS OF
CONNECTION,
CARRIED

MR. O'REILLY: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I move that this committee recommends that, in the event a Member loses connection while delivering a Member's statement, the Speaker ask the Member to conclude their statement once they are reconnected, provided the House has not moved to another order; and further, in the event that Members' statements have been concluded when the Member reconnects, the Member's statement

would be printed in full at the end of Member's statements. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Rocky Simpson): Thank you, Member. The motion is in order. To the motion.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Question.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Rocky Simpson): Question has been called. All those in favour? Opposed? Abstentions? The motion is carried.

---Carried

Member for Frame Lake.

COMMITTEE MOTION 72-19(2):
COMMITTEE REPORT 6-19(2): STANDING
COMMITTEE ON RULES AND PROCEDURES
REPORT ON REMOTE SITTINGS – REVISED
DAILY ORDERS FOR REMOTE SITTINGS,
CARRIED

MR. O'REILLY: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I move that this committee recommends that the House adopt a revised daily order of business in the Rules of the Legislative Assembly for a remote sitting, pursuant to the changes listed in this report. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Rocky Simpson): Thank you, Member. The motion is in order. To the motion.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Question.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Rocky Simpson): Question has been called. All those in favour? Opposed? Abstentions? The motion is carried.

---Carried

Member for Frame Lake.

COMMITTEE MOTION 73-19(2):
COMMITTEE REPORT 6-19(2): STANDING
COMMITTEE ON RULES AND PROCEDURES
REPORT ON REMOTE SITTINGS – REFERENCE
GUIDE FOR REMOTE SITTINGS,
CARRIED

MR. O'REILLY: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I move that this committee recommends that the Legislative Assembly direct the Office of the Clerk to produce a reference guide for Members and staff outlining key changes and best practices to be used while sitting remotely; and further, that the Office of the Clerk be mandated to update the reference guide as needed as new practices are identified. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Rocky Simpson): Thank you, Member. The motion is in order. To the motion.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Question.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Rocky Simpson): Question has been called. All those in favour? Opposed? Abstentions? The motion is carried.

---Carried

Member for Frame Lake.

COMMITTEE MOTION 74-19(2):
COMMITTEE REPORT 6-19(2): STANDING
COMMITTEE ON RULES AND PROCEDURES
REPORT ON REMOTE SITTINGS – STANDING
COMMITTEE REVIEW OF REMOTE SITTINGS,
CARRIED

MR. O'REILLY: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I move that this committee recommends that, after any remote sitting, the Standing Committee on Rules and Procedures be tasked with conducting a review and to provide any recommendations for improvements. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Rocky Simpson): Thank you, Member. The motion is in order. To the motion.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Question.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Rocky Simpson): Question has been called. All those in favour? Opposed? Abstentions? The motion is carried.

---Carried

Thank you, committee. Do you agree that you have concluded consideration of Committee Report 6-19(2), Report on Remote Sitting?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Rocky Simpson): Thank you, committee. We have concluded consideration of Committee Report 6-19(2), Report on Remote Sitings. What is the will of committee? Mr. Norn.

MR. NORN: Marsi cho, Mr. Chair. I move that the chair rise and report progress.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Rocky Simpson): Thank you, Mr. Norn. There is a motion on the floor to report progress. The motion is in order and non-debatable. All those in favour? Opposed? Abstentions? The motion is carried.

---Carried

I will now rise and report progress.

DEPUTY SPEAKER: Report of the Committee of the Whole. Member for Hay River South.

Report of the Committee of the Whole

MR. ROCKY SIMPSON: Thank you, Madam Speaker. Your committee has been considering Committee Report 6-19(2), Standing Committee on Rules and Procedures Report on Remote Sitings, and would like to report progress with 16 motions carried. Committee Report 6-19(2) is concluded. Madam Speaker, I move that report of the Committee of the Whole be concurred with.

DEPUTY SPEAKER: Do we have a seconder? Member for Yellowknife Centre. All those in favour? All those opposed? Motion is carried.

---Carried

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

Third Reading of Bills

BILL 22:

SUPPLEMENTARY APPROPRIATION ACT
(INFRASTRUCTURE EXPENDITURES), 2021-
2022

HON. CAROLINE WAWZONEK: Madam Speaker, I move, seconded by the Honourable Member for Range Lake, that Bill 22, Supplementary Appropriation Act (Infrastructure Expenditures), 2021-2022, be read for the third time. Madam Speaker, I would request a recorded vote. Thank you, Madam Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER: The motion is in order. To the motion. Member for Frame Lake.

MR. O'REILLY: Merci, Madame la Presidente. I recognize that I'm one of the few things that is standing in the way of a much-needed break for us all, so I'm going to try to keep my remarks pretty short here. There was a very significant announcement by the Minister of Finance in the House yesterday. It's largely gone unnoticed by the public and media. That was some changes that the Minister agreed to make moving forward as a result of our discussions around the 2021-2022 capital budget. There was \$15 million added to the Northwest Territories Housing Corporation budget over three years to help leverage the federal co-investment fund, \$60 million carveout. We also agreed that there should be a \$2.5 million one-time increase in the municipal infrastructure funding for 2021-2022. I want to sincerely thank all my Regular MLA colleagues for our work together on these priorities and to our Cabinet colleagues as well. Moving forward, this is the kind of collaboration I

want to encourage and work towards. This is how consensus government can and should work.

People know that I tend to be a fairly stubborn, principled MLA. I want to make some remarks about the capital budget itself. Of course, it's the largest ever, and I'm quite concerned with the direction that it is taking. I don't think even the Finance Minister is entirely happy with it. I think this is really what I might categorize as a bad hangover from the last Assembly of overspending on capital, and capital not necessarily in the right areas. I support a lot of the spending in the bill, but we need to find a better balance between the programs and services and for our people and the large infrastructure projects. I don't think we've achieved that with this capital budget. Therefore, I will not be voting in favour of the bill, but I look forward to a better balance in the next capital budget. I'm happy to be part of a more collaborative process moving forward. Thank you, Madam Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you, Member for Frame Lake. To the motion. Member for Yellowknife North.

MR. JOHNSON: Thank you, Madam Speaker. Perhaps I'm a little less stubborn than my colleague from Frame Lake, but I share many of his sentiments. Ultimately, I will be voting in favour of this capital budget. I think there are a number of problems, but I believe our Cabinet and our government are aware of them. One I would like to see addressed is some of the smaller infrastructure at times. I'm happy to see that \$2.5 million for our municipal funding gap, but we know there is plenty of more work to do. The Department of Infrastructure's deferred maintenance budget is growing every single year, I think, sometimes, as politicians, shiny, new, large infrastructure projects can seem very attractive, but if we're not making sure the existing infrastructure we have is properly maintained, that's ultimately going to cost us in the long run.

Additionally, I think there is a lot of work to be done with procurement, but I'm confident that this Cabinet will go out and do that work. Therefore, as we roll out this capital budget and we catch up on those carry-overs and we get this money out the door, it will truly employ Northerners. Lastly, I think all of us in this House are happy to see more money for housing and more money for our communities. I think both of those items are essential to our economic recovery and to the prosperity of our citizens. I would like to thank everyone for their work on this capital budget, and I look forward to continuing in the new session on the next one. Thank you, Madam Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. To the motion. Member for Tu Nedhe-Wiilideh.

MR. NORN: Marsi cho, Madam Speaker. Again, we can always make compromises and I think this was a good example in the last couple days how all 18 of us worked together and looked for solutions to find ways to pick away at our mandate items. We have some lofty goals, and we're doing this through a pandemic. I'm really happy that we earmarked some allocation of funds for housing and for MACA. I'm very glad to work with our colleagues. It was good to see that chemistry happen and make those things happen. I'm very happy for that.

In terms of the appropriation act as a whole, again, it's one of those things that I don't want to say upsets me; I'm disappointed. We need to see more for our small communities. There needs to be more evenness throughout our infrastructure items. I said in the House before, in the last, I'd say over 100 years ago, 80, 90 years ago, there was a depression. The Great Depression happened and what a lot of the governments did, too, is they put money back into their infrastructure projects to keep people working. Again, I'm starting to see that trend again happening. I'm hoping that happens here because this is going to be a tough time for the next while, and we're going to find ways to keep people working, keep people housed, keeping the food on the table and not just in the larger centres and our regional centres but in our small communities, as well. That's what we need. With that, I won't be supporting this motion, but I just wanted to say that, moving forward, I'm hoping we can find more equity. I want to say marsi cho to all my colleagues.

DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. To the motion. Member for Hay River South.

MR. ROCKY SIMPSON: Thank you, Madam Speaker. I'm going to vote in favour of this motion. We have to work with what we have. We have a lot of issues out there, and I think a lot of them were raised and addictions was one of them that I think that we as a government really have to take seriously and put some effort into and some financial backing. I look at housing in Hay River; there is a real shortage, so I'm glad that there is money going into that so we can access some of that co-investment dollars, rapid housing and so on. The other thing when I think about this budget, I think about Hay River requiring a new waterline or at least a waterline repair. We also need a new water plant. We need new pipes in the ground. Some of them are probably as old as me, so there you go. I think that what we did here is we compromised. It was consensus government maybe not at its best, but I think it worked. I think we should be proud of what we did here and move forward. I'll be voting in favour of the motion. Thank you, Madam Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER: To the motion. Minister of Finance.

HON. CAROLINE WAWZONEK: Thank you, Madam Speaker. I wanted to speak briefly to the collaboration that was already described, and I appreciate that. The collaboration sometimes to the outside, to the public, isn't necessarily obviously or transparent. It's one of those things that we don't want it to be seen as something that happens behind closed doors; it doesn't. It happens between MLAs. It happens between the people who have been elected here and the conversations that are being had between Cabinet and between all of the Regular MLAs. Those conversations started all the way back in the summer. There have been presentations between the department, multiple departments, in fact; there have been multiple conversations, both in terms of individuals coming to me and then, of course, on behalf of committee. I do want to emphasize that collaboration, it really is quite a meaningful thing. There were a lot of conversations that were had, and that was what ultimately made this capital estimates better, made it strong, and it made it more representative.

Madam Speaker, we cannot possibly do all things all at the same time. That is not possible, and it's not financially feasible or not fiscally responsible. We have to recognize and remember that there are needs across the whole of the Northwest Territories. We lag behind. The age of our infrastructure and the simple lack of infrastructure is a fact across the entire Northwest Territories, and we cannot let that hold us back. We cannot let that hold back the future prosperity of the Northwest Territories, and that prosperity depends in turn on having healthy people, educated people. I am happy to say that the capital estimates include funding for schools; for health centres; for the fish plant in Hay River; lots of investments in parks; include transportation corridors, including in MLA Norn's riding, we have advanced a project. This has really been an opportunity to look across the needs of the territories and try to find ways that we can collaborate and do the best we can with what we have.

It is ambitious, Madam Speaker. It is ambitious. Fortunately, we do have the procurement review that is going to be taking place in advance of the timing of these capital estimates so that, hopefully, we can make the dollars that far going to be spent here more sticky into the Northwest Territories, if that is how the procurement review unfolds, and also ensure that, when we have this plan roll out, we are really delivering on all of our promises to ensure prosperity in the Northwest Territories, as I say. I am very happy, again, that we are able to vote on this today. I am looking forward to support, and I am also wanting to reflect that it was, at times, difficult but, ultimately, a consensus process that brought us here today. Thank you, Madam Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. To the motion.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Question.

DEPUTY SPEAKER: Question has been called. The Minister has requested a recorded vote. All those in favour, please stand.

RECORDED VOTE

CLERK OF THE HOUSE (Mr. Mercer): The Member for Yellowknife South, the Member for Range Lake, the Member for Yellowknife Centre, the Member for Hay River South, the Member for Thebacha, the Member for Nahendeh, the Member for Sahtu, the Member for Inuvik Boot Lake, the Member for Hay River North, the Member for Great Slave, the Member for Kam Lake, the Member for Deh Cho, the Member for Yellowknife North, the Member for Monfwi.

DEPUTY SPEAKER: All those opposed, please stand.

CLERK OF THE HOUSE (Mr. Mercer): The Member for Tu Nedhe-Wiilideh, the Member for Frame Lake.

DEPUTY SPEAKER: All those abstaining, please stand. The results of the recorded vote are: 14 in favour, two opposed, zero abstentions. The motion is carried.

---Carried

Bill 22 has had third reading. Third reading of bills. Mr. Clerk, will you ascertain if the Commissioner of the Northwest Territories, the Honourable Margaret Thom, is prepared to enter the Chamber and assent to the bills?

COMMISSIONER OF THE NORTHWEST TERRITORIES (Hon. Margaret Thom): Please be seated. Good afternoon, Madam Speaker, Premier Cochrane, Ministers, Members of the Legislative Assembly, and staff.

[English translation not available] [Translation] Thank you very much. [Translation ends] [Microphone turned off] ...your patience during these challenging times.

It is my honour to take this moment to encourage and remind everyone of the dedication and proud service made by current and past brave members of the Canadian Armed Forces. Remembrance Day is on Wednesday, November the 11th. It is a day when we remember and honour all who left their homes and families to fight for our country and, more importantly, for our freedoms. Some of these brave men and women never returned home; they died serving Canada.

As your Commissioner, I will proudly take part in the outdoor Remembrance Day ceremony at the Yellowknife Cenotaph. I will be accompanied by my aide-de-camp, and, together with others at the ceremony, we will remember and honour the fallen and their ultimate sacrifice for our country.

As this sitting comes to an end, I would like to wish each and every one of you good health, happiness, and prosperity. Please enjoy the Christmas season with your family and constituents. It will be different this year, yet it is still a joyful and blessed season. Be creative, and continue to be good role models, keeping in mind the safety protocols put in place to protect the health and safety of all residents.

In closing, may you be gifted with continued guidance and vision as you work together cooperatively for the betterment of all residents of the Northwest Territories. I wish you all safety in your journey home to your loved ones.

Assent to Bills

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

- Bill 15, Miscellaneous Statute Law Amendment Act, 2020
- Bill 17, An Act to Amend the Corrections Act
- Bill 18, An Act to Amend the Legal Profession Act
- Bill 19, An Act to Amend the Student Financial Assistance Act
- Bill 21, Supplementary Appropriation Act (Operations Expenditures), No. 2, 2020-2021
- Bill 22, Appropriation Act (Infrastructure Expenditures), 2021-2022

Mahsi cho, thank you, quyanainni, merci beaucoup, koana.

DEPUTY SPEAKER: Colleagues, on behalf of this House, I thank the Commissioner, the Honourable Margaret M. Thom, for being here today. It is always a pleasure to have her in the Chamber.

Thank you also to the interpreters who have worked so hard throughout this sitting. We honour our official languages by using them. The interpreters make this possible for us. Thank you.

My thanks to each of you. Your hard work and dedication over the past few weeks has accomplished a great deal, and I am proud of the work that has been done.

Colleagues, next Wednesday is Remembrance Day. We have observed Remembrance Day for more than a hundred years. As Canadians, we are fortunate to live in such a prosperous and beautiful country during times of peace. For this, we must be grateful. Members, please join me in thanking our veterans and serving members of our armed forces.

---Applause

This House will not sit again until the new year, but we will remain busy. Our days will be filled with the ongoing business of committees and government, and serving our constituents. Remember to make time for those closest to us, our friends and family, those we rely on for support and assistance. These are the people who make it possible for us to do our important work. Take the time to tell them how much you appreciate all they do.

As we approach the holiday season, we must recognize it will be different this year. We may not be able to travel to visit family and friends or host the same feasts and get-togethers. Members, the holidays will be challenging this year, but as Northerners, we can and will celebrate the season safely. Take time to check in on those in your communities who may be having a difficult time. Together, we are stronger. As we celebrate the holidays, please remember to do so safely. Follow the public health orders. Travel safely on our roads and on the land.

I would like to take this time to thank all colleagues here today. Mr. Clerk, orders of the day.

Orders of the Day

CLERK OF THE HOUSE (Mr. Mercer): Orders of the day for Wednesday, February 3, 2021, at 1:13 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
 - Minister's Statement 77-19(2), National Housing Co-Investment Fund
 - Tabled Document 165-19(2), Government of the Northwest Territories Response to Committee Report 1-19(2): Report on Long-Term Post-Pandemic Recovery - Recommendations to the GNWT
 - Tabled Document 166-19(2), Government of the Northwest Territories Response to Committee Report 2-19(2): Report on Long-Term Post-Pandemic Recovery - Recommendations to the GNWT
 - Tabled Document 167-19(2), Government of the Northwest Territories Response to Committee Report 3-19(2): Report on Long-Term Post-Pandemic Recovery - Recommendations to the GNWT

21. Report of Committee of the Whole
22. Third Reading of Bills
23. Orders of the Day

DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. This House stands adjourned until Wednesday, February 3, 2021, at 1:30 p.m.

---ADJOURNMENT

The House adjourned at 5:01 p.m.

