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The Honourable Frederick Blake Jr, Speaker

Legislative Assembly of the Northwest Territories

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YELLOWKNIFE, NORTHWEST TERRITORIES**Friday, February 5, 2021****Members Present**

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

The House met at 10:02 a.m.

Prayer

---Prayer

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

Ministers' Statements**MINISTER'S STATEMENT 104-19(2):
PUBLIC LAND ACT - PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT**

HON. SHANE THOMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The Public Land Act received assent on August 21, 2019, at the end of the 18th Legislative Assembly. The new Public Land Act consolidates the existing Northwest Territories Lands Act and the Commissioner's Land Act into one cohesive land management regime. To bring the Act into force, new regulations must be developed.

The Department of Lands is taking a phased approach to regulation development. Phase 1 is focusing on the essential regulations necessary to bring the Public Land Act into force in the first quarter of the fiscal year 2022-2023. These regulations will address public land grants and dispositions such as leases and licences of occupation, quarry administration, security requirements and restoration, and general rights to use public land. With the Public Land Act in force, phase 2 will then commence and focus on evolving the regulatory model to address policy approaches and needs. As the Minister responsible, I am committed to having these regulations in place as soon as possible. With that said, the process and the timelines must allow for meaningful involvement of Members of this Legislative Assembly, Indigenous and community governments, leaseholders, stakeholders, and the public.

Mr. Speaker, the first round of engagement, which began on December 10, 2020, introduces the project and invites comments and ideas for developing the regulations. As of January 22, the online engagement platform has seen over 1,200 visits and over 105 people engaging with the content. Lease fees are a key topic of discussion on

the engagement platform. Lease fees are calculated differently under the two existing acts. The new regulations will create consistency around public land valuation and pricing, which is a key objective of the new regulations. The Department of Lands will also be reviewing the types of leases that can be issued with the objective of providing greater clarity for residential and commercial land users, including those in the agricultural sector.

Mr. Speaker, Northwest Territories residents have the opportunity to shape legislation that supports our decisions on how land and resources in the Northwest Territories are administered and used, both for current residents and our future generations. I encourage all residents to visit the Department of Lands website and click on the Have Your Say section to provide input on how the Government of the Northwest Territories regulates public land. This first phase of engagement will be open until February 12th.

As you know, the Government of the Northwest Territories is looking at a proposed approach for how standing committees could be more involved in the development of regulations. The Department of Lands will follow the process and plan once it is developed. In the interim, I would invite committee Members to engage in this work over the coming months. A second round of public engagement is targeted for the Fall of 2021 and will provide an opportunity for public comment on the proposed regulations.

It is important to emphasize that we are all users of public land. Developing new tools for managing land and natural resources is an ongoing commitment since devolution. These regulations are part of that ongoing work. This engagement is an opportunity for the Northwest Territories residents to contribute to decisions about Northwest Territories land and resources according to their own priorities. Mr. Speaker, this is an important milestone for the Department of Lands and the Government of the Northwest Territories. Residents can be part of the history of the land management in the Northwest Territories by participating in the public engagement to develop the Public Land Act regulations. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

MINISTER'S STATEMENT 105-19(2):
HOMEOWNERSHIP PROGRAM CHANGES

HON. PAULIE CHINNA: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In my time as the Minister responsible for the Northwest Territories Housing Corporation, I have made it a priority to travel into communities to listen to what our residents are telling us about housing in communities and seeking solutions to barriers that are identified. Homeownership is a goal for many of us, but it can be challenging. The costs of owning and maintaining a home can be expensive and out of reach for many of us, especially those who are in rural and more remote communities. The Housing Corporation was tasked to look at their housing programs to identify ways to address these barriers and, where necessary, come up with new options to help encourage, increasing sustainability for homeownership. The Housing Corporation is working towards a new approach in how to eliminate the requirement for land tenure and home insurance when accessing emergency and major repair programs in rural and remote communities.

Mr. Speaker, as much as we always want our homeowners to have tenure and insurance so that they have a level of protection for their homes, it is not always available or affordable. For our smaller rural and remote communities, these are two major challenges faced by homeowners in accessing funding for much-needed major repairs. Supplies and services are often limited to Local Housing Organizations, or LHOs, and public housing is typically the only source of housing. Homeownership can be challenging to achieve without government support. We have a lot of skilled homeowners with the know-how and the desire to do their own repairs. However, many communities lack a readily available source for materials and items needed for those repairs. The Housing Corporation will provide access to LHO materials and services in communities where they do not exist.

Mr. Speaker, helping our residents get into homeownership offers considerable benefits. To achieve this, the Housing Corporation will increase their focus on the sale of detached public housing inventory to expand homeownership to those who have lived in these homes long term. The program will be available to all families who are residing in a detached public housing unit and can afford the cost of operating and maintaining their own home. In doing so, we will also build replacement public housing that not only reduces waiting lists but also creates opportunities to address critical areas such

as affordable housing for single and two person households.

While this is a great step forward, these actions would not be complete if we did not also support these households in their transition. Moving from renter to homeowner brings on more responsibilities, and people need to be prepared for that. To ensure this, tenants will be provided with the tools to become successful homeowners such as additional counselling, as well as maintenance and repair courses, and courses on developing financial skills.

Mr. Speaker, in 2020, the Housing Corporation is planning to build at least three new homes and implement a new pilot program targeted to income-earning families to transition to homeownership from public housing. The Housing Corporation will also begin the lease-to-own program beginning in early 2021. Mr. Speaker, supporting homeownership is essential for addressing housing needs in the NWT. Homeownership obviously is not for everyone, but if we can do this in a way that supports the needs our people, the benefits will be meaningful. Mahsi, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Minister. Ministers' statements. Item 3, Members' statements. Member for Thebacha.

Members' Statements

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON SENIORS HOUSING

MS. MARTSELOS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As a government, we have been working on addressing universal childcare for the people of the NWT, which is good and a much-needed service. However, I would like to suggest that we begin to address the care for seniors in a similar, across-the-board manner, at least in terms of housing and cost.

Mr. Speaker, right now, there is a policy within the NWT Housing Corporation called Core Need Income Threshold. According to the NWT Housing Action Plan 2019-2022, Core Need Income Threshold is the income limit for each community that represents the amount of income a household must have to be able to afford the cost of owning and operating a home without government assistance.

In essence, Mr. Speaker, Core Need Income Threshold is a housing policy which the NWT Housing Corporation uses to determine which individuals qualify for public housing, based solely on the applicant's income level. To be fair, the NWT Housing Corporation also considers adequacy and suitability to determine an applicant's core housing

need. However, the Core Need Income Threshold has been a repetitive issue to a number of my senior constituents applying for public housing.

For example, there is an elderly couple in Fort Smith who are in their eighties, who have been married for 63 years and have lived and worked in the NWT for their entire adult lives. They have been trying for years to move out of their home into a more suitable home at that time will account for and address their mobility, safety, and social needs as seniors. This couple has been trying to move into NWT Housing Corporation's senior public housing in Fort Smith but have been denied eligibility to this facility because their combined monthly income exceeds the Core Need Income Threshold. Mr. Speaker, the Core Need Income Threshold is preventing this couple from even being considered a spot on the waiting list for the senior public housing. Mr. Speaker, I seek unanimous consent to conclude my statement.

---Unanimous consent granted

MS. MARTSELOS: This is not an acceptable or just policy. The NWT Housing Corporation must start accounting for clients' age and mobility when determining their eligibility for public housing. It cannot be about income. On paper, this couple does have the ability, financially speaking, to own their own house outside of public housing. However, this does not accurately represent their whole situation. At this stage in their lives, they do not have the physical ability to own and maintain a multi-level home any longer.

Therefore, Mr. Speaker, I suggest the NWT Housing Corporation implement a universal flat rental rate to all seniors applying for public housing regardless of income, race, gender, or otherwise. They also need to consider the mobility level of each client when determining the client's core housing need. There can be no discrimination against seniors, period. I will have questions for the Minister of housing later today. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON TAR SANDS MONITORING

MR. BONNETROUGE: Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. There are ongoing concerns with the environment due to the recent uncontrollable rising water levels. "Uncontrollable" could include natural variables such as increasing snow accumulations and melt. This could include the man-made dams south of us. Many of the residents believe the high water levels could be attributed to the man-made dams turning on their taps for whatever reasons beyond our

control. Therein lies the problem. We just do not know when the southern governments will decide to release vast amounts of water at one time, and there are several dams. Mr. Speaker, this is overly concerning for the residents of the Northwest Territories, as we are impacted by the flow of the water into our tributaries. The ENR Department states that they are actively monitoring the water levels through monitoring stations in key areas leading to the tributaries.

Mr. Speaker, the residents are especially concerned with the Alberta tar sands tailings ponds during this period of uncontrollable high water levels. Mr. Speaker, the GNWT may have transboundary water agreements with the southern provinces, transboundary this and transboundary that. These agreements are meaningless when there are no active communications with each other. The southern provinces didn't provide any advance warnings should they let out waters from the dams. Heaven forbid we even receive any type of communications regarding tar sands tailings ponds leaking into the water systems from the Alberta government. Mr. Speaker, I will have questions for the ENR Minister at the appropriate time. Mahsi.

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

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON MENTAL HEALTH

MR. NORN: Marsi cho, Mr. Speaker. This morning, when I woke up and got out of my vehicle, I had my speech all prepared for a business speech, but we have a business theme next week. Today I thought I would go off the script and speak from the heart with a message for the people. I thought about mental health, and I looked at the weather. It's going to be very cold this weekend, and it made me think about the Dene laws. One of the Dene laws states that we should always help each other. This weekend out there, if anybody in the public is out there and you see somebody who might be hurting or might be distressed, reach out to them. One of our staff told me before, "Words matter," and they do. Reach out. Help each other.

Mental health, this is going to be one of my messages here today. Pre-COVID, we had to deal with seasonal affective disorder, we had to deal with things like residential school trauma, and all of that is kind of heightened now with pandemic fatigue. That is something else we have to deal with. Before, we would just get up, book a flight or jump in our vehicle, and go and just escape for the weekend. Now, all we have are staycations. Now, all we have is each other. We have to reach out. All of these mental health maladies will be more

coming to the surface now because of pandemic fatigue. I urge everybody to reach out and help out each other above all else and just keep that simple message out there. Keep it simple, and do not make it too complicated.

To conclude, I think I look back to our elders who keep busy. Even when it got dark, they kept busy. They kept their hands busy. They sewed. They told stories. I looked it up. I was doing my research before I got here. I was thinking about this, and it made me smile. I thought about the classic example of Grandma Moses. I don't know if anybody knows American history a little bit. I like to read, and I am a trivia buff. She was 78 years old when she started painting. She had the creative juices all her life, and she let it out later on. My message to all our listeners is to keep busy; never stop learning; never stop hustling; don't stop. If you are hurting, reach out. Reach out. I will have some questions for the Minister of Health and Social Services. Marsi cho.

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

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON HOME INSURANCE

MR. O'REILLY: Merci, Monsieur le President. Home insurance is proving to be a growing barrier to home ownership in the NWT, and we heard the Minister of housing actually say that literally minutes ago in this House. I've had constituents contact me about their inability to obtain home insurance. This past holiday season, we had our own home insurance cancelled by Aviva Canada after five claim-free years simply because we put in a wood-pellet boiler system five years ago. The cancellation happened outside of the regular renewal period. Luckily, our broker was able to find only one other insurer willing to take us on at a 40-percent increase in premiums. As bad as it may be in Yellowknife, I can't imagine how difficult it must be for homeowners in small communities to obtain insurance. I also met with Yellowknife Catholic Schools last week, who raised the same issue of the difficulties in finding an insurer for its schools and of rapidly escalating premiums that have increased almost 600 percent over two years.

I've raised this issue before, about accessibility and affordability of home and now non-profit-sector asset insurance in the NWT. Previously, I've mentioned the Saskatchewan Government Insurance, a Crown corporation established in 1944, that offers products in five Canadian provinces. It also operates as SGI Canada in Saskatchewan, British Columbia, Alberta, Manitoba, and Ontario. It has operated in Manitoba since 1993, in Ontario from 2001, in Alberta since

2006, and in BC beginning in 2015. It offers home, farm, business, and even auto insurance.

I have asked this government to approach SGI about possible expansion of their services to the NWT, to ensure our residents, non-profits, and businesses have access to insurance as there is a failure of the private market to cover our jurisdiction. I will have questions later today to see if Cabinet is serious about ensuring our residents have access to affordable insurance. Mahsi, Mr. Speaker.

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

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON WOMEN IN TRADES

MS. CLEVELAND: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. On Wednesday, the Minister of ECE advised that the department is producing a media campaign to promote women in trades. However, Mr. Speaker, a picture of a woman holding a pencil did not inspire my mother to become an architect any more than a photo of a woman in a hardhat inspired my colleague to become an engineer. Pictures of women holding hammers do not create tradespeople. Mr. Speaker, if we want our children to become tradespeople, we need to foster their curiosity, value trades education, and support employers and students. To foster curiosity, ECE has already developed a great tool, Take Your Kid to Work Day. However, the existing program has become stagnant. This past year, students either set up their own opportunities or they went to school. To revitalize the program, ECE needs to reach out to employers who have been and would continue to be involved and pair students with the right placement.

I also see great potential for summer camps through Aurora College, where students can get their hands dirty and see their own potential. As a northern high school student, I took religion, which helped establish and articulate a moral compass and is something I use every day here, but I was expected to have more credits from religion than from CTS. This sends the wrong message about the value of trades education. Trades is not a second-rate career option for those who do not excel academically. Mr. Speaker, the apprenticeship wage subsidy is too low and needs to be increased. ECE currently has a wage subsidy for employers set at over \$13, but the hourly wage subsidy for apprentices is \$8.

Finally, Mr. Speaker, we need to start universal childcare somewhere, so why not start with our Aurora College students. According to Childcare Canada, 16 percent of community college students are single parents and 75 percent of single parents are women. Numerous studies have shown that a

lack of affordable and accessible childcare is keeping women with young children out of the workforce. According to Finance Minister Bill Morneau's economic advisory council, if women's participation in the workforce was increased to that of men, it would generate an extra \$13 billion to Canada's GDP. Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I look forward to discussing these ideas with the Minister later today.

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

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON PRIORITIES FOR PAULATUK

MR. JACOBSON: Mr. Speaker, I would like to bring Paulatuk's priorities for today. For housing, there is a shortage of housing for our local population. People are living in overcrowded conditions, which makes COVID-19 a higher risk for the community. Also, the conditions in units people are living in are poor. People's homes are poorly insulated and cold. It drives up the cost of heating fuel and is dangerous when cold weather hits. We need emergency housing in Paulatuk. The hamlet and local authority, the housing authority, we are waiting to hear back on what is going on with our emergency shelter which was promised to us last year.

Also, for health, the lack of eye and dental clinics due to COVID pandemic could last a long time. The GNWT needs to come forward with a plan to bring dental and eye services into the communities, Mr. Speaker. When we get professionals coming into the community, they do not stay long, especially doctors. They come in on a Wednesday and leave Friday, so it's not long enough. They should be staying in a community for a week to see all patients, which would save our government a lot of money for flying them out. Due to high demand, it's very difficult to book appointments with doctors. They should stay the full week, like I said.

For MACA, the municipal funding gap affects the community of Paulatuk and all of my riding. There is a lack of forced growth for operational maintenance funding. We received a new water treatment plant last year but with no increase for the O and M. Likewise, for our operational funding for the hamlet, the SAO in Paulatuk has been there since 2017 and has not seen a funding increase in that community since he has been there.

Education, there is a lack of staff housing. Non-resident teachers are having to share housing, and it's becoming more difficult to attract qualified applicants. Can ECE and Housing Corporation see what the federal housing funding could do to fix these long-standing problems?

Alternative energy, the hamlet installed solar panels to generate power to the limit allowed by NTPC. They are interested in installing more. They also want to explore wind generation to move off of the diesel-generated power. NTPC constraints limit the use of alternative power sources.

Mr. Speaker, it seems to me that the needs for all my communities are the same and always a last priority. Small communities, it seems to me, are one of the last priorities to this government. Could we start helping us in taking all these same problems for the past few years? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Member for Nunakput. Members' statements. Member for Great Slave.

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON ACCESS TO COUNSELLING SERVICES

MS. NOKLEBY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It is becoming extremely difficult for Health Canada counsellors who are contracted to provide counselling services to Northwest Territories residents impacted by the Indian Residential schools, the Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls crisis, as well as day school clients, to carry out their work. They are self-employed contractors and work alone with no supports. These trauma therapists, employed under Health Canada's Indian Residential School Resolution Health Support Program, often travel into communities to see their clients, adding additional barriers to receiving help in the COVID era.

One of the main solutions to issues created by COVID has been to move things online or into the virtual realm. Trying to adapt to a virtual world and conduct therapy through telehealth is near impossible as there is no one in these designated communities to set up these sessions. Additionally, we know most people living outside Yellowknife do not have access to the Internet. When they do, it is extremely limited, given the high cost of data in the North. Internet speed and reliability in the NWT becomes a big issue when considering telehealth options. Those who do have cellphones are limited by the high costs of minutes and plans further creating barriers to accessing services.

Another barrier to receiving help is the lack of privacy in our communities. Many individuals are living in multi-generational homes or are in dangerous domestic situations and are afraid of being overheard by their abuser or abusers. We must ensure that privacy and safety issues are considered when trying to connect with people on a therapeutic level. We also need to work harder to gain trust in order to account for the trauma that colonization of Indigenous people has caused. Often, people in need will not contact health centres

for fear they will be scrutinized for accessing services for mental health issues. Most prefer face-to-face interaction and are unlikely to leave a voicemail in a general mailbox asking for help.

Providing counselling services through telehealth also creates issues with documentation. We need to advocate and send people for trauma and drug and alcohol residential treatment, all of which requires documentation. Most individuals do not have means to send faxes and/or scan documents to initiate the application process. As trauma counsellors are deemed an essential service under the COVID emergency orders, they are asking that the Minister of Health please consider, for the safety and benefit of people and their communities, to prioritize COVID vaccinations for those therapists and all essential workers who work across the territory. These people work intimately with our northern population in an effort to provide essential services and protect northern residents while providing essential mental health support throughout this pandemic that is escalating the demand for their services. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Member for Great Slave. Members' statements. Member for Hay River North.

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON
60TH ANNIVERSARY OF JULIA AND MAX
TRENNERT

HON. R.J. SIMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Today I would like to recognize and congratulate Max and Julia Trennert, who are celebrating their 60th wedding anniversary today. Max and Julia first met 61 years ago in Inuvik. He was working as a surveyor and also managing the Mackenzie Hotel. She was a student at the time. They say it was love at first sight.

Max and Julia were married on February 5, 1960, in Inuvik. That's also where their first three children were born. From Inuvik, they moved to Fort Simpson, where their fourth child, Brendalynn, who most of us know, was born. Max and Julia then relocated close to Kakisa, where they owned and operated a gas station in K'agee. Max and Julia eventually moved to Hay River, where they retired and have lived for the past 15 years, and we're thrilled to have them.

Mr. Speaker, it's important to note that Max is one of the original wildlife officers in the NWT. He covered off the area of Nahendeh, Deh Cho, and the South Slave. Julia was a full-time, stay-at-home mom and raised a family she is proud of. She is also well-known for her artistry when it comes to tuftings, and I have her work hanging in my office.

Max and Julia now have four grandchildren and five great-grandchildren. They are still very much in love with each other and they cherish their family very much. I wish them all the best on this special day. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Member for Hay River North. Members' statements. Member for Yellowknife North.

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON
UNITED NATIONS DECLARATION ON THE
RIGHTS OF INDIGENOUS PEOPLES

MR. JOHNSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I am glad to see that the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous People was a priority for this Assembly and was at the heart of many of our Premier's mandate letters to Ministers. I am thankful that direction went in to those Ministers. However, those words seem to have a disconnect with actual changes within the over 5,000 civil servants on the ground. Our mandate committed that, by summer 2020, a terms of reference would be developed, as well as a working group with Indigenous governments to create an implementation plan for the United Nations declaration. That work has not been completed. I have not seen a terms of reference, and I have not seen who is on such a working group. It is now winter 2021.

I am still confused about who is in charge of this work. I have yet to see any public announcement of what this mandate item actually means and what has been done to date. I have yet to see a piece of legislation that actually changes the system of laws we operate on and devolves powers to Indigenous governments. I don't think it is clear where we are going with this item, and I don't believe it is properly funded nor set out.

Mr. Speaker, there is a lot of work to properly implement the declaration. This was passed in 2007 by the General Assembly for the United Nations, and Canada, for over a decade, resisted implementing it. We in this House took the step of making it a priority because we see a different Canada and a different system of laws that truly gives Indigenous peoples their rights. I would like to see an education act that devolves education truly in the spirit of UNDRIP, to give Indigenous peoples control over the education authorities, their own curriculum, their own hiring processes. I would like to see a proper clause setting out free, prior, and informed consent. For decades, lawyers fought over what free, prior, and informed consent meant, and this is why we never implemented the declaration. I am still confused about what the GNWT's position is on that matter.

More needs to be done in this area. We need those terms of reference, we need that working group, and we need an implementation plan to see what those words actually meant in the mandate letter. I will have questions for the Premier. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON
APPRECIATION FOR COVID AND ISOLATION
CENTRES STAFF

HON. SHANE THOMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As people of aware, I had to travel south in November to deal with a personal family matter. It was a very difficult situation, but something I needed to do. With this in mind, I followed the process as set out by the CPHO. I submitted my self-isolation plan, and after a few conversations with staff over a few days, it was identified that I would have to stay at one of the isolation centres in Yellowknife.

As we got off the plane, we were ushered into the airport, lined up, and had the opportunity to meet with the COVID staff at the airport. They were very professional, answering questions people had. Once this was done, you were directed to pick up your luggage, then, if you were going to an isolation centre, to the transportation. The driver was very helpful at the time and was following the CPHO orders. Upon arriving at the hotel, I was directed to the front desk and then to the Yellowknife isolation centre office. I was impressed with the job the staff did, signing me in and providing me with clear directions of what we could and could not do during the stay.

During my stay at the centre, I witnessed the same message repeated to every person who signed in. I was very impressed with the way staff were able to provide this information consistently and in such a positive way. I would like to also share some of the things I witnessed. The manager of the self-isolation centre has reached out to the Department of Health and Social Services dietician to review the hotel's menu and improve it for the people. If people had dietary needs or requests, they just needed to reach out to the office and bring it forth. These requests were forwarded to the kitchen staff, and it was implemented throughout their stay.

Some of the other things I got to see was the helpfulness of the staff. One individual was looking for a carry-on bag, and the staff person brought an underarm bag and brought it to this individual. It was brand new, Mr. Speaker, and when the person asked what the cost was, it was said, "Nothing." I watched and witnessed people ask for medication

and supplies to be delivered to them during their stay at the isolation centre, and it was met in a very positive nature; they just did it without any regard to their time. They would do it during off hours, just to help the residents.

Mr. Speaker, we sometimes hear the bad things, but I would like again to thank the staff, the frontline staff of the COVID Secretariat and CPHO's office that did this great job. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Members' statements. Item 4, returns to oral questions. Item 5, recognition of visitors in the gallery. Item 6, replies to budget address, day 2 of 7. Item 7, acknowledgements. Item 8, oral questions. Member for Thebacha.

Oral Questions

QUESTION 502-19(2): SENIORS HOUSING

MS. MARTSELOS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Can the Minister tell us if she considers the current policy of core needs income thresholds within the NWT Housing Corporation as a fair and just policy for the residents of the NWT? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Member for Thebacha. Minister responsible for Northwest Territories Housing Corporation.

HON. PAULIE CHINNA: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In developing the core needs threshold for the Northwest Territories, it's an ongoing process. The last time it was updated was 2015, but we do hear a lot of concerns regarding the core need income threshold. We are taking a look at it. Also, I want to keep the Member informed that we do charge the 30 percent of the tenant's annual income, and we are the lowest across Canada looking at the needs that we do have and looking at the cost of living in the Northwest Territories. We do try to work very effectively with our residents throughout the territory to making sure that our program is affordable and it meets the needs of the people of the Northwest Territories. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MS. MARTSELOS: The core needs income threshold policy has been in effect for at least 20 years or more. Does the Minister feel that the time has come to eliminate this discriminatory policy and replace this policy with something that suits the needs of seniors in the 21st century?

HON. PAULIE CHINNA: The Housing Corporation has developed this criteria in order to program deliver and to meet the needs of the Northwest Territories, as well. I just want to say that the last time that this was updated was 2015, and it did take an exclusive amount of detail throughout the

Northwest Territories to determine our final reporting. It doesn't stop the Housing Corporation from taking a look at this policy and seeing what it is that we need to furthermore investigate and furthermore acknowledge through the policy to meet the needs of the people of the territory.

MS. MARTSELOS: Will the Minister commit to review the policy of core needs income threshold in order to properly account for one's level of mobility and social and safety needs for seniors?

HON. PAULIE CHINNA: I hear the Member's comments, as well, because seniors in the Northwest Territories do require housing but then adequate housing. We need to be making sure that we meet the needs that our housing that is developed and the programs that we offer do meet the needs of the seniors but also accessibility and mobility, as well. Yes, I am open to looking at that core needs threshold and taking a look at it and reviewing it because of the needs for seniors have changed significantly over the past 20 years, so I will follow-up with the Member.

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

MS. MARTSELOS: Mr. Speaker, will the Minister consider a universal flat market rental rate to all seniors who apply for public housing regardless of their income. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

HON. PAULIE CHINNA: I hear where the Member is coming from, and I thank her for her advocacy for the seniors throughout the Northwest Territories. We do need to consider that we do have families. We do have single parents. We do have people that are fighting addiction. We do have a low-income program that is adequately available to the people who are low-income earners. I would have to find a balance for that in looking at how we are going to work with the seniors and how are we going to work with the struggling parents and the struggling families, as well, so that our programs are received adequately. Right now, I would like to take a look at the core need income threshold and look at the comparisons and the needs that are required within the last report that was completed in 2015. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

QUESTION 503-19(2):
HOUSING SHORTAGE IN NUNAKPUT

MR. JACOBSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Today, I have questions for the housing Minister. Crisis in housing for Paulatuk: What's the status for the emergency shelter planned for Paulatuk? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Member for Nunakput. Minister responsible for Northwest Territories Housing Corporation.

HON. PAULIE CHINNA: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Looking at the emergency shelter for Paulatuk, I would have to revisit that initiative, and I would have to get a further update on if that was concluded for the community or what was the reason that we did not construct that facility. I would also have to follow-up with my colleague for the department of health, as well, if we are providing such as service. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. JACOBSON: I'm going to rephrase that question because it's not an emergency shelter. Housing has an emergency house if something goes wrong, somebody's house burns down or some emergency. Last year, I was told in the House that there is a unit, but that they were waiting to get it furnished. Is that unit available for the community now?

HON. PAULIE CHINNA: Thank you to the Member for rephrasing that question. Last year, the Housing Corporation did set aside a number of houses throughout the Northwest Territories to deal with COVID-19, and should we have an outbreak in the communities, these units were set aside for that use. I will have to follow-up with my department. Right now, it is a priority, and I'm looking at: Should we have an outbreak, I would still like to have those units available in the high Arctic communities should we end up having to use them in the future.

MR. JACOBSON: I think we have to have a unit for the community. I have people that haven't, been trying to get into housing for over a year now. I keep sending letters in to the Minister to no avail in regards to one individual in the community. If there's a house available for that, is he eligible to go into and to use that unit? Will people be able to go into that unit to stay warm because it's minus 40 or 50 below back home, and it's really needed.

HON. PAULIE CHINNA: I hear the Member's comments, as well, because we do have similar concerns brought throughout the Northwest Territories, but we do have a certain amount of units that are available. I'm not going to comment on the individual, but I do want to really express the importance of the pandemic that we are currently in and looking at these units and setting them aside. I will have to follow-up with the Member and furthermore provide more information as to what is available at the ground level in the specific community and also looking at the waitlist, as well, because we do have families that are in need of housing. We do have overcrowding, and I would have to follow-up with the Member.

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

MR. JACOBSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Will the Minister commit to working with ECE and the Housing Corporation because we are lack of housing in the community? Like I said before, the teachers are being -- one was evicted. She came home. She got a letter. She was evicted. Then, the next thing you know, we had to rush and try to find her a place in the community. The hamlet did that for her, but we need more houses for teachers, for professionals, to draw them in because if you don't have housing, you're not going to draw the quality of people in because you're worrying about stuff like that. That's the last thing they should be worrying about. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

HON. PAULIE CHINNA: I will be working with my colleagues from the department of education, as well, and looking at the significant need throughout the Northwest Territories for teachers. I just wanted to reiterate and clarify that we did not evict the teacher out of the unit. We did work with that individual, and we did provide options for the individual, as well. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Minister. Oral questions. Member for Deh Cho.

QUESTION 504-19(2):
TAR SANDS MONITORING

MR. BONNETROUGE: Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. I'm following up to my Member's statement regarding the high water levels and its potential impact on the tar sands tailings ponds upstream from us. Can the Minister enlighten the residents of the Northwest Territories as to the type of agreement the GNWT has with the Alberta government in water monitoring, especially the monitoring of the tar sands tailings ponds? Mahsi.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Member for Deh Cho. Minister of Environment and Natural Resources.

HON. SHANE THOMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The GNWT has a transboundary agreement with the Government of Alberta to ensure the ecological integrity of our shared waters is maintained. The Alberta-NWT and BC-NWT bilateral water agreements are the most comprehensive agreements of their kind. The agreements require the Government of Alberta to consult with the GNWT on any projects that could impact waters that enter the Northwest Territories, provide notification of changes to the monitoring sites, conduct ongoing monitoring, review the monitoring data, prepare annual reporting on commitments of the agreement, and include mechanisms for dispute resolution. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. BONNETROUGE: I thank the Minister for that. I note the department information is not readily forthcoming regarding issues of concern with the tar sands tailings ponds. Can the Minister explain why that would be, considering this all-important matter?

HON. SHANE THOMPSON: I thank the Member. The GNWT is confident, and when I say "GNWT," the department of ENR and myself are confident that the Alberta and NWT bilateral water management agreement remains the best tool to address transboundary concerns related to water management and to protect the interests of the Northwest Territories. Water quality results are available on the ENR site and are updated in a timely manner. Results of the monitoring are released in annual reports, which are required under our agreement, and the last annual report was tabled in the Legislative Assembly this past fall.

MR. BONNETROUGE: I thank the Minister for that, but we can't find that detailed information. Maybe my next question may dig something out. I have concern with the disclosure of any relevant information regarding any leakage from the tar sands tailings ponds. The biggest concern with the leakage is the high level of contaminants in the tailings ponds. There has been news that these contaminants may be attributed to a host of health problems. Most, if not all, of the news in this regard has been brushed off as a figment of people's imagination. I think we have heard lots of news in the past around the Fort Chip area. Does the department have any concerns with the contaminants in the tailings ponds and the possible effects on human health?

HON. SHANE THOMPSON: Both the government of Alberta and the federal government monitor the water quality in the oil sands regions, both upstream and downstream of the oil sands. The GNWT also conducts water quality monitoring on the Slave River at Fort Smith and has done so for many years. As confirmed in the recent release of the Commission for Environmental Cooperation report on the Alberta tailings ponds, the Athabasca River shows no evidence of tailings ponds input downstream.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Minister. Oral questions. Member for Deh Cho.

MR. BONNETROUGE: Mahsi for that. I am very leery about the monitoring, that agreement we have with the Alberta government in terms of that. I am not sure if we are privy to firsthand information. We are not on the site, per se. What I would like the department to do is to update the residents of the Northwest Territories on the contaminants stored in the tailings ponds and possible effects on human health. Can the Minister commit to providing that information widely? Mahsi.

HON. SHANE THOMPSON: The Department of Environment and Natural Resources assesses water quality and quantity, including the health of aquatic ecosystems. Unfortunately, the department does not assess the human risk. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

QUESTION 505-19(2):
HOME INSURANCE

MR. O'REILLY: Merci, Monsieur le President. My questions are for the Minister of Finance, who is responsible for the regulation of the insurance industry in the Northwest Territories. Section 270 of the Insurance Act requires that the superintendent of insurance prepare an annual report for the Minister. The last report available on the Department of Finance website is from 2013, seven years ago. Can the Minister tell us whether annual reports have been prepared since 2013 and why they have not been made public? Mahsi, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Member for Frame Lake. Minister of Finance.

HON. CAROLINE WAWZONEK: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I will have to look back to 2013, which is certainly long before my time, to speak to what may have happened in the entire course of that period. I can say that, with respect to the provisions where it says that the Minister may direct that the annual report be printed and published, prior to my opportunity to have this role, I can't speak to what may or may not have been directed. I can say that it is my intention to direct that that happen in the future. Thank you.

MR. O'REILLY: I thank the Minister for her commitment to get on that right away, that legal requirement. It's not clear to me that we take the regulation of the insurance industry very seriously when annual reports are not made public and the amount of information is very limited on the website. Can the Minister tell us what steps this government is taking to ensure that homeowners, school boards, and businesses can actually access affordable insurance?

HON. CAROLINE WAWZONEK: Just to be clear, the role of the department and the role, more specifically, of the superintendent of insurance certainly is to regulate, but it is not something that can get involved in the private market. The insurance superintendent doesn't change the market prices, doesn't influence in the market; they regulate the market. I would say it's not necessarily fair to suggest that we are not taking that seriously. I would also be cautious that the problems and

challenges being faced by homeowners, school boards, and businesses may well be different. I certainly agree, and the department is aware that we want to be conscious of those challenges, but we want to make sure that we are looking at the nature of the problem in each of those circumstances to truly understand what is at issue and not to try to put ourselves into a situation that is not ours to solve or one that we can solve.

I would note further one last comment, Mr. Speaker. It is possible to issue a complaint to the Office of the Superintendent of Insurance, which is something that certainly policyowners can consider doing if they are unable to resolve their matter with their insurance themselves.

MR. O'REILLY: That's great to get that from the Minister, but clearly there has been a failure of the private market. People can't get insurance, can't get affordable insurance. We're just going to stand there and watch? This government proclaims that homeownership is a critical part of addressing homelessness, yet residents can't find or obtain affordable insurance. We heard the Minister of housing earlier today talk about how they have to change programs because people can't get home insurance. What specifically has the Minister done to ensure that home insurance is not a barrier to homeownership?

HON. CAROLINE WAWZONEK: Again, the superintendent of insurance, their role is to ensure that the regulations are being followed, not to go in and create an insurance industry run or administered by a Crown corporation or otherwise by the Government of the Northwest Territories. My colleague already, from the Housing Corporation, has described the efforts that they are using to try to ensure that this is not a barrier. My colleague over at ECE is certainly working with school boards to ensure that, again, they are not facing barriers. There is certainly a lot of work happening in the departments that are relevant to the areas where people may be facing challenges for insurance. Aside from that, we are going to continue to ensure that the regulation is happening and that those reports are published, and that is the role that we have at the Department of Finance.

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

MR. O'REILLY: Merci, Monsieur le President. I appreciate the response. I want to thank the Minister for that, but I don't think it's good enough for us to just say that there's a problem. I've got a solution. I've pitched it before, so I'll try it again. In my Member's statement, I discussed how the Saskatchewan government, in 1944, set up its own Crown corporation to provide insurance because the private sector could not or would not provide

coverage. That corporation now operates in five provinces to provide the kind of coverage that our residents need. Will the Minister commit to having discussions with the Saskatchewan Government Insurance Corporation about potential coverage in the NWT, and will she share the outcome of those discussions with us publicly? Mahsi, Mr. Speaker.

HON. CAROLINE WAWZONEK: Again, I just want to ensure that we are looking at what the actual problem is and where the right solutions are, whether they are in the Housing Corporation, whether it's with ECE, or whether, in fact, it's with the superintendent of insurance with the Department of Finance. That said, with respect to solution-oriented approaches and talking about different ways of governments doing things, yes, I have no difficulty in saying that the Department of Finance can reach out to the Saskatchewan Government Insurance Program, investigate it, and see whether or not that's a tool that would benefit people in the Northwest Territories and the industry in the Northwest Territories. I will make that outreach and I will certainly bring those discussions and information back. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Minister. Oral questions. Member for Great Slave.

QUESTION 506-19(2):
SUPPORTS FOR MENTAL HEALTH IN SMALL
COMMUNITIES

MS. NOKLEBY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My questions are for the Minister of Health and Social Services. Could the Minister please explain or describe the COVID protocols and procedures that have been implemented to protect small communities from counsellors who may be travelling in to the Northwest Territories from the South? Are they being vaccinated before they enter the communities and, if not, will she make them a COVID priority group? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Member for Great Slave. Minister of Health and Social Services.

HON. JULIE GREEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We are vaccinating NWT residents as a priority group. We are not vaccinating non-residents because of the limited supply of vaccine available to us at this point. What we've had in place all along through the pandemic is that people who are going to work in isolated communities, really regardless of what job they are going to do, have to isolate for 14 days in one of the regional hubs and then move on, if they are welcome, in the small community, and there take the precautions that we all do, wash their hands, wear their mask, and so on and so forth.

I feel that the needs of mental health clients are being met in a number of ways by the GNWT, by

resident counsellors, through helplines, through apps, and so on and so forth, that provide people with options about how to access mental healthcare. I want to just finish this answer by giving out the phone number for the NWT Helpline. It's available 24/7. Anyone can call it about anything. It is confidential; people remain anonymous. Please put this on your Facebook: 1-800-661-0844. Thank you.

MS. NOKLEBY: I respectfully disagree with the Minister on her characterization of the supports the GNWT is providing for mental health. I am glad to hear the helpline is 24/7. There is a website somewhere that I came across the other day that said that it only operated from 7:00 to 11:00, so I'm really glad to hear that. My next question has to do with small communities. Are safe places being developed in small communities where victims can feel safe? Have they been vetted with a COVID lens? What is the department doing to protect vulnerable people in small communities where isolation may be causing more depression and is a factor?

HON. JULIE GREEN: I'm just going to go over some of the things that we have available to people in the communities. We now have child and youth care counsellors in all schools north of Yellowknife, so that includes many of the most isolated places in the NWT. We have the NWT Helpline, which I mentioned. We have land-based healing, which has had good uptake from Indigenous governments. We have counsellors in 19 communities who are resident, and in the other communities, they are flown in or driven in to provide care on a schedule of so many days per so many weeks. We also have the Strongest Families Institute, which is an assist for families with children aged three to 17, to assist them with questions that they may have there. We also have the Kids Helpline, which is specifically for youth to receive services. There is a great deal that is available to all residents of the NWT. If they find that anonymity is hard to achieve in their house, they are welcome to make an appointment at the healthcare centre and take the call there.

MS. NOKLEBY: Thanks for, again, listing all the resources you did yesterday. However, that didn't answer my question as to: Are there safe places in the Northwest Territories for victims to go to that are not in their abuser's home? However, I will follow up with the Minister on that one personally. My next question is: Are people in remote communities being asked to initiate the counselling documentation process from their communities when there is a known lack of resources to do so? How is the department facilitating the use of their services in small communities where the access to technology may be limited or language barriers exist?

HON. JULIE GREEN: Just first to the Member's other question. Of course, we do have family violence shelters, five of them in the NWT, and a 24/7 crisis line for people experiencing family violence. As you heard when the Minister of housing talked to the Member from Nunakput, freestanding extra places to go and take calls are in vanishingly short supply in small communities. If people are wanting to send documentation to counsellors or other entities, they can go to the government services offices that exist in most communities and they can send faxes or have scans made there in order to provide the necessary information for counselling services.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Minister. Final supplementary. Member for Great Slave.

MS. NOKLEBY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm not sure that the Minister actually listened to my statement today, so more of a comment that people, as stated, do not want to go to people in their communities and talk to them about their mental health supports so, if we are not facilitating the Health Canada counsellors to come through and help them, which is more anonymous, then I don't really understand how we can stop these people from falling through the cracks. Again, I'll just make more of a comment. I completely disagree with the Minister's characterization of her supports. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Member for Great Slave. I'll give the Minister an opportunity to respond, if she'd like.

HON. JULIE GREEN: The Department of Health and Social Services takes mental health issues extremely seriously. We spend \$17.5 million a year on mental health supports. We are looking at a range of offerings, which should not be readily dismissed. They are tailored to different kinds of issues and different kinds of communication styles. We have very dedicated counsellors working in 19 communities. We have barrier-free access. You can go in on a drop-in basis. You can go the same day for counselling. We are pretty confident that people are not falling through the cracks because Health Canada is not on the scene. We are the healthcare provider in the NWT, and we take that job seriously. Thank you.

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

QUESTION 507-19(2):

WOMEN IN TRADES AND UNIVERSAL CHILD CARE FOR AURORA COLLEGE STAFF

MS. CLEVELAND: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. On Wednesday, I was very excited to hear the Minister of Education, Culture and

Employment make reference to the take a child to work day, and the Minister said that the department is currently working on revamping the program. I'm wondering if the Minister can please speak to how they are revamping the program and if those changes will be available for November of this year. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Member for Kam Lake. Minister of Education, Culture and Employment.

HON. R.J. SIMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The take a child to work program is a great program. It has been offered for many years. It's very successful. Unfortunately, in this last year, due to COVID, it went online, and so it was not at all the same experience. It will be back in full force in the fall, and I can look into any potential changes and get back to the Member. Thank you.

MS. CLEVELAND: I welcome the opportunity to discuss take our kids to work day opportunities with the Minister. I know that there are a lot of businesses that would love to get involved and play a greater role in the day. My next question for the Minister is: Given that this government has a mandate priority of advancing universal childcare, I am wondering, since we need to start somewhere, if the Minister would be willing to provide universal childcare for full-time Aurora College students.

HON. R.J. SIMPSON: The Member is sort of jumping around with her questions, topic to topic, but that's okay. I get where she's coming from; it all ties together in the end. Right now, the government has a mandate to advance universal childcare, and that's what we are working on. We are going to be making some advances in determining just how we are going to do that, and we are going to be making those advances in the coming months.

As for right now, standing up here and saying universal childcare at Aurora College, I can't say that. I would love to be able to say it, but we're not there yet. The fact is, there are not enough spaces in places like Fort Smith for all of the students who would need childcare. As well, there are community learning centres throughout the territory and other campuses. We are not at that point yet. We need to build up the number of spaces. We need more trained childcare workers before we can go full on in universal childcare, but I whole-heartedly agree that that would be awesome.

MS. CLEVELAND: I am happy to provide some context of connection between my questions for the Minister. I am looking for different ways that we can think outside of the box in order to get more people involved in trades. I do feel that providing Aurora College students with universal childcare would be a great way for us to encourage more people to go back to school, because I know that childcare for

young children is a barrier for people. It was identified as a barrier for me to be sitting here, and that's why we have now a kitty that we can access for subsidies for childcare for people to become more involved in politics who have young kids. I am thankful for that, and I want other people to have the same opportunities.

Within the same breath, I understand that there are needs for infrastructure for childcare, but I also believe that there are other ways that that can be attained, and that could be attained, as well, through subsidies for existing childcare spaces. I am wondering if the Minister has an idea of what the cost would be associated with providing subsidies or universal childcare for Aurora College students.

HON. R.J. SIMPSON: No. I don't have those numbers now because part of those numbers would involve capital infrastructure costs, because it's hard to call something universal childcare if it's only a subsidy for the lucky few who can access it. We need more infrastructure. We need more trained individuals before we can say that we are providing universal childcare. I don't have those numbers.

That being said, the federal government has expressed an interest in some sort of a national universal childcare program. I will be meeting with the federal Minister next week to be discussing this to see exactly what that vision is. I have had a number of conversations with him already and expressed to him that this government and this Assembly are very interested in advancing this. It's in our mandate, and there is a lot of support for it. I really look forward to that and seeing how we can move forward for universal childcare, not just for the college, but for everyone.

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

MS. CLEVELAND: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I am very happy to hear about this conversation that will happen next week, and I will be sure to come and visit the Minister after that phone call. I would love to know what the cost would be. If the Minister or the department is prepared to look into that, I think it would be valuable information going forward, as we are in a budgeting exercise, and we will be doing the same for every year that we are privileged to be in this House.

Given the conversation that the Minister is having next week with the federal government, the Yukon government just announced yesterday that they are doing \$11 a day childcare, and they have an average cost of childcare on a daily basis of \$43. Here in the Northwest Territories, in Yellowknife, in my days of paying for childcare, it was about \$55 a

day. Speaking to other parents in places like the Beaufort-Delta, it can go upwards of \$70 a day for childcare. \$11 a day would be pretty amazing to have in the Northwest Territories. I am wondering: Can we be more like the Yukon? Thank you.

HON. R.J. SIMPSON: The Northwest Territories is unique. The Yukon is unique. I don't know if we are going to be more like the Yukon, but I think that we do share the goal of eventually providing some sort of universal childcare. The Yukon just announced this yesterday. We reached out to them immediately this morning. We don't really have any details on what exactly their plan is, how much it's going to cost, or anything like that, but we are going to have those conversations. Once we get that information, I want to give the Minister in the Yukon a call and see how things are rolling out, what led them to this, and any concerns like that. I also want to point out that the Yukon does not have a junior kindergarten program, so any of the four-year-olds who aren't in care have the opportunity here for at least some sort of childcare during the day, some sort of enriched environment.

This is an exciting time when it comes to this topic. I am open to hearing all of the ideas that come forward, and over the next few years, we might be able to make some big strides if we can get the support of the federal government and the Assembly. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

QUESTION 508-19(2):
UNITED NATIONS DECLARATIONS ON THE
RIGHTS OF INDIGENOUS PEOPLES

MR. JOHNSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Our mandate commits to a United Nations declaration terms of reference working group being created by summer 2020. My question for the Premier is: Have those terms of reference been created, and can they be released? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Yes, within the mandate, we did have timelines for this work. However, I learned quite quickly, being the Premier, that it is not appropriate for this government to push our agenda onto Indigenous governments. They backed me up quite quickly. What I can say, though, is that we have initial meetings. We are agreeing to meet after session is over again. We have had an initial meeting. There were questions that came up. Some of the Indigenous governments quoted article 37, which states that the concluded agreements and treaties must be honoured and respected. Within

that article, they asked for a separate table, and I honoured that request. They will be having a table with the modern treaty groups; there are five of them. Then we will also be having a larger group with all Indigenous governments on it, as well.

Although it might take a little bit of time, Mr. Speaker, about the terms of reference, what I can say is that I do try to listen. There was a previous Indigenous leader who said to me, "You might have to give them some ideas. You might have to push a bit." What we are committed to doing in March is that we will actually be bringing forward the BC legislation to them so that they can review that and see if that's where they want to go. We have had the first meeting with the modern treaty groups. At that meeting, they had talked about wanting to go through each section individually one-by-one.

Mr. Speaker, what I can say is that I do believe in self-determination. The United Nations declaration speaks about self-determination all through it. Respectfully, Mr. Speaker, I will take the time that the Indigenous governments need to define what this looks like for themselves. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. JOHNSON: I look forward to seeing the progress of that work, and I think that bringing forward what the other jurisdictions have done to the working group is a good first step, although I believe that working group is only half of this work. The other half of this work is looking at our own internal processes and looking at our own departments and the over 5,000 civil servants we have and directing those departments to change their processes to make sure that they are implementing the declaration and truly being a government living reconciliation. Each department was directed in their mandate letter to develop declaration priorities. Can I have an update on whether that work has been done and how that fits into the overall implementation plan?

HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE: Absolutely. Like I said earlier, there will be two groups of Indigenous governments, one with all of the Indigenous governments and one with the modern treaty Indigenous governments. We also are forming a GNWT working group that will encompass these departments, so that work is beginning, as well.

MR. JOHNSON: I am concerned about the timing of all of this. If we are waiting for the working group and the terms of reference in each department, here we sit in another session without a meaningful piece of legislation to actually implement this, without any significant legislation which has devolved powers or changed the system of laws. I believe that we are behind on our legislative agenda. Has any legislation been identified that will bring forward declaration changes?

HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE: The purpose of the Legislative Assembly is to develop legislation. However, the purpose of the Legislative Assembly is also to oversee programs and services throughout the government. It's bigger than just legislation.

I know that the honourable Member would love to have the legislation proposal now and get it done in this government. I would love to have this done. However, I feel, respectfully, Mr. Speaker, that that is a little bit colonistic in its statement. I have a commitment that I will work with the Indigenous governments. They shall define the process; they shall define the timing. I have said in this House that, in the first meeting after this session, I will be bringing forward the BC legislation to them to review, but I will not stand there and say that this needs to be done by a certain date. They will tell me. We will work together on it.

In Article 38, "states shall work in cooperation." There is a statement made that "what does consultation mean?" Article 38 says, "States in consultation and cooperation with Indigenous people shall take the appropriate measures, including legislative measures, to achieve the ends of this declaration." Again, if we are to honour what I believe is consultation and cooperation, then we will not push our agenda on them. We will work in cooperation together to define this.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Madam Premier. Final supplementary. Member for Yellowknife North.

MR. JOHNSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I still am concerned about the GNWT's own role in this. What I am envisioning is each department being directed to identify their legislation and gaps; each piece of legislation having clauses that allow self-government to happen; each department looking at service standards such that self-government can happen. I think that there is a lot of work to be done within our own government, and I am not seeing that work be done. I have not heard any updates from that. Mr. Speaker, what I am looking for is: Are the departments developing action plans for their own areas of mandate and how they would devolve those? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE: I am sure that departments would love to be able to take the pen and write it out and say, "This is what it shall be." However, again, I have stated earlier that that, in my opinion, would not be appropriate to do. I have heard from the first meeting with the modern treaties that they wanted to go through each article individually to define that. That may take time, Mr. Speaker, but out of respect, it is their process. This is United Nations Declaration for Indigenous Peoples is for Indigenous people, and they have asked me to hold back and go through each article.

There are articles about education, about healthcare; there are articles all over the place. Respectfully, Mr. Speaker, I would like to do this work in consultation and cooperation with the Indigenous governments, which is the intent of the declaration. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

QUESTION 509-19(2):
MENTAL HEALTH

MR. NORN: Marsi cho, Mr. Speaker. This is in line with my Member's statement about mental health, and I want to thank my colleague from Great Slave for answering some of the questions. I apologize if I am being redundant here. Back in my Member's statement, I mentioned a little bit about mental health and susceptibilities and whatnot. Within my next few questions, in front of my colleagues, I want to think about those people who are suffering from mental health maladies in our small communities. I know that, in places like Yellowknife, here in Yellowknife and a lot of larger centres, there are a lot of resources, but if you're in a place like Colville Lake or Ulukhaktok or Lutselk'e or Trout Lake, you can't just get up and talk to somebody. My first question to the Minister of Health is: Where can one go after hours to help those who are in mental health distress? Marsi cho.

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

HON. JULIE GREEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. If people are in distress, they should go to the health centre. The health centre is there for mental and physical health. They should contact the nurse on call and tell them that they are having a mental health crisis. Thank you.

MR. NORN: Marsi cho for the response. In my Member's statement, too, I want to keep it really simple out there for those who are listening, as well. Marsi cho for that. I know that there are still times where people are referred to mental health specialists, i.e., counsellor or psychologist, and I just wanted to see what some of the average wait times are once that ball gets rolling.

HON. JULIE GREEN: We have instituted, as of a year ago, a new way of offering community counselling, which involves no wait time. Instead of scheduling series of appointments for individuals, there are blocks of time that are unscheduled where people can make a same-day appointment or they can make a drop-in appointment. The waiting time for the Community Counselling Program is zero, but for specialized services, such as needing to see a psychiatrist, there may, in fact,

be a wait time for that. I can certainly find out what it is and let the Member know.

MR. NORN: Yes. That's a good bit of information. I look forward to hearing more back from the department on that. Just, again, switching it up a little bit, if you're in the communities, we don't have the resources that you have in larger centres, and I have a few more questions about the mental health first aid program that the department offers. Given the pandemic, is this program still being rolled out throughout the territory?

HON. JULIE GREEN: No. That program has been suspended because of the pandemic.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Minister. Oral questions. Member for Tu Nedhe-Wiilideh.

MR. NORN: Marsi cho, Mr. Speaker. That's really good to know. Just to close out here, when somebody gets cut or hurt or breaks a bone, the Salvation Army offers first aid. You can administer first aid. Same thing with mental health. It's just as serious. I think this is something that needs to be looked at. I think the department should look at this hard because, right now, like I said in my Member's statement, we are very susceptible, all of us, and to take a serious look at that. We need to get these programs rolling out to the grassroots level everywhere and address this issue. Marsi cho.

HON. JULIE GREEN: I want to emphasize again how seriously the department takes the need to provide a variety of mental health supports to all residents of the NWT. It's my understanding that, in the Member's riding, they don't have resident counsellors in Lutselk'e and Fort Resolution, but they do fly in on a schedule and provide in-person services. Between appointments, they can provide phone and virtual services. In cases where people don't have phones to do follow-up appointments, the department will also look at providing a cell phone for that purpose. Thank you.

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

QUESTION 510-19(2):
UNIVERSAL CHILDCARE

MR. O'REILLY: Merci, Monsieur le President. I want to follow up on my colleague from Kam Lake's questions about universal childcare, so I have some questions for the Minister of Education, Culture and Employment. I know that he is good at thinking fast on his feet. We already know what the costs are for setting up universal childcare from a 2014 study done by people at the University of Toronto. I am looking at the study right now, Mr. Speaker. Back then, it was predicted that it would be \$20 million a year to fund universal childcare across the NWT,

the same level as Quebec, and \$45 million a year if we were to do the same as Scandinavian countries. As a first step, would the Minister be prepared to have this report updated so that we have an idea as to the true cost of implementing universal childcare in the Northwest Territories? Mahsi, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Member for Frame Lake. Minister of Education, Culture and Employment.

HON. R.J. SIMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We are developing a strategy to advance toward universal childcare, and one of the things we have to do is figure out what we want to do and how much that would cost. There are different options, right now, for what universal childcare would cost. Do we stick with what we have now? Does the government play a larger role in terms of providing care, perhaps where there is no care? There are a lot of things, and so, while the paper was a good start, it doesn't cover all the different models. The numbers that the Member is looking for, we're working on all of those and we'll have those sometime. I can find out the timeline and be more precise with this, but the Member can be assured that we're doing this work. Thank you.

MR. O'REILLY: I want to thank the Minister for that commitment. Look, the work was already done in 2014. You can probably go back and ask them to refresh it. I think part of the problem here is that our government has not identified universal childcare as a high priority. We've got something as vague as advancing it in our mandate and in the priorities that we developed. This needs to be a much higher priority with us when we go to the federal government. We shouldn't be asking for \$800 million for a Slave Geological Province Road. What we should be doing is asking for 40 years of funding for universal childcare. Will this Minister commit to placing universal childcare at a high level when he goes to Ottawa, and the whole Cabinet? This needs to be a high priority when we go to Ottawa. He has a meeting next week, or this week, with the federal Minister responsible. Will he commit to making sure that this is a high priority for this government moving forward?

HON. R.J. SIMPSON: It's a high priority for me. I told the federal Minister sometimes it may be difficult to figure out where we lie as a government, given that you can't just say we're this party or that party and you can basically understand our platform. That's why I told him, "Let me assure you that we are fully committed to advancing universal childcare and it is a high priority." That work is already done.

MR. O'REILLY: I appreciate the response from the Minister, but if you go to the federal government, you need to have an ask. You need to have a plan

moving forward, a costed plan. I keep pushing my colleagues on the other side: When you go to the federal government, you have to have a specific ask. You have to have your act together. You have to have the money identified as to how to roll it out. We don't have that for universal childcare. It's something I pushed in the last Assembly, and I'm going to continue to push it in this Assembly. If the Minister is going to talk to the federal Minister responsible, you need to have a document, and you need to have the ask prepared. Can the Minister commit to get that ready in the next two months?

HON. R.J. SIMPSON: I want to assure the Member that everything he is saying is what we're doing. This is actually what we're working on. I wish I had a product I could pull out of my back pocket right now, but I don't. There have been endless reports on early learning, universal childcare, childcare needs across the territory. There has been engagement with childcare providers. There has been a lot of work done. Right now, the department is looking at all of that work, putting it all together, taking what they know from their interactions with early learning and childcare providers, putting it together with what we know from research from around the world in terms of early learning and childcare, and then coming up with a plan. We are going to have asks for the federal government. There is no doubt about it. I don't have a timeline, again. This isn't something I want to rush, so I can't say two months. I will let the Member know what sort of timeline we're working on.

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

MR. O'REILLY: Merci, Monsieur le President. I want to thank the Minister for that. You might detect a little bit of frustration on my part. I was here the last Assembly. We identified universal childcare as a priority in that Assembly. It was even in the mandate to do it and to prepare a costed plan, but Cabinet wouldn't do it. At midterm review, the majority of MLAs -- I was not outside with this -- changed the priorities, changed the mandate so that we wouldn't even get a costed plan. If we had done the work back then, we would have been ready with a specific ask.

I know that the Minister is talking to the federal government about this. This is great. I hope he is talking to the other parties, as well. We are going to be heading into a federal election probably within the next six months, and we need to have that ask ready. You need to work with the other parties. Is the Minister working with the other opposition parties to make sure that it's clear what our asks are with regard to universal childcare? Mahsi, Mr. Speaker.

HON. R.J. SIMPSON: I am not personally working with the opposition party, the critic or whoever that might be. However, our Premier is. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

QUESTION 511-19(2):
ALTERNATIVE VOTING METHODS FOR
COMMUNITIES

MR. JOHNSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In 2019, the NWT Association of Communities passed a resolution asking for permission to have alternative voting methods such as online voting or telephone voting. I note our own territorial election allows this to happen, so my question to the Minister of MACA is: Are we going to allow our communities the option of having online or telephone voting? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Member for Yellowknife North. Minister of Municipal and Community Affairs.

HON. PAULIE CHINNA: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and thank you to the Member for the question. This year, online voting in the elections was not identified as one of the working priorities with the Association of Communities. We will be working with the Fire Prevention Act, seniors, and property taxation. Online voting was not a discussion. It was not a topic that we elaborated on in any conversation. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. JOHNSON: I think there is some confusion here in the small amount of work it is to allow them municipalities to have online voting. It is simply a permissive clause. It's probably one or two sections in the legislation, and then they have to develop their own bylaws to do that. I recognize that the NWT has identified the Property Assessment Taxation Act, the Fire Prevention Act, and the Seniors and People with Disabilities Act for changes, but those are significant overhauls they've been asking for for years. What I am asking for is for MACA, which has failed to bring forward any legislation thus far, to draft a simple one- or two-clause piece of legislation that gives municipalities the options of having their elections online. Is the local Authorities Elections Act going to be brought forward in the life of this Assembly at all, such that I could possibly propose this change?

HON. PAULIE CHINNA: During the lifetime of this Assembly, no, this will not be brought forward. It was not identified as a priority throughout the Northwest Territories and within our smaller communities. However, that doesn't stop me from looking at the idea of the online voting. One of the things that flags concern for me is the

communication and if the communities actually have the capacity to carry this through. I have not received any further information to see what this would look like throughout the Northwest Territories.

MR. JOHNSON: If the Minister wants to look at what it looks like, we just had an election. In 2016, the Gwich'in had an online election, and then in 2019, they decided to add telephone voting because it was more accessible for their elders. There are already small communities with software in place using this for their elections. I would like to give those same communities the ability to run their community elections with online voting. The NWTAC passed a resolution asking for this. I don't know how much more they can identify a priority. They have an AGM; they pass resolutions and ask us to do things. Is the Minister willing to reach out to the NWTAC and see if they would support the introduction of this change, considering they have already asked for it?

HON. PAULIE CHINNA: Yes, the Department of Municipal and Community Affairs will engage in a conversation with the NWTAC to explore the opportunity for online voting. Also, I will have my department reach out to the Gwich'in, as well, to see how this online voting was perceived in the communities and if it was successful and how many residents they were actually able to reach out to.

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

MR. JOHNSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. MACA has a lot of legislative work to do. This is a small one. I recognize it's not as big a priority as the Fire Prevention Act, but considering that I don't see any MACA legislation coming forward in this Assembly or, I believe, the next year, I think a small, simple bill will be a win for this department, showing they can actually pass legislation. My question is: Is the Minister willing to direct her department to share some of the policy work that has been done in this area, perhaps a jurisdictional scan. I know Ontario lets the municipalities vote online. The Rules and Procedures Committee has done a thorough research on how online voting in our last election -- is the Minister willing to ask her department to compile some of that research and share it with committee? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

HON. PAULIE CHINNA: I will have my department follow up and see what that would look like having online voting within the Northwest Territories, but once again to the Member that this is not a priority of this government or the department. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Minister. Colleagues, our time for oral questions has expired. Item 9,

written questions. Item 10, returns to written questions. Item 11, replies to Commissioner's address. Item 12, petitions. Item 13, reports of committees on the review of bills. Item 14, reports of standing and special committees. Item 15, tabling of documents. Minister of Finance.

Tabling of Documents

TABLED DOCUMENT 293-19(2):
FOLLOW-UP LETTER FOR ORAL QUESTION
468-19(2): GOVERNMENT OF THE NORTHWEST
TERRITORIES AFFIRMATIVE ACTION POLICY

TABLED DOCUMENT 294-19(2):
FOLLOW-UP LETTER FOR ORAL QUESTION
472-19(2): GOVERNMENT OF THE NORTHWEST
TERRITORIES AFFIRMATIVE ACTION POLICY

HON. CAROLINE WAWZONEK: Mr. Speaker, I wish to table the following two documents: "Follow-up Letter for Oral Question 468-19(2): Government of the Northwest Territories Affirmative Action Policy;" and "Follow-up Letter for Oral Question 472-19(2): Government of the Northwest Territories Affirmative Action Policy." Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

TABLED DOCUMENT 295-19(2):
FOLLOW-UP LETTER FOR ORAL QUESTION
457-19(2): INTERPRETERS

HON. R.J. SIMPSON: Mr. Speaker, I wish to table the following document, "Follow-up Letter for Oral Question 457-19(2): Interpreters." Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Minister. Tabling of documents. Item 16, notices of motion. Item 17, motions. Member for Kam Lake.

Motions

MOTION 26-19(2):
APPOINTMENT OF LANGUAGES
COMMISSIONER,
CARRIED

MS. CLEVELAND: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. WHEREAS Subsection 15(1) of the Official Languages Act permits the appointment of a Languages Commissioner by the Commissioner of the Northwest Territories, after the approval of the appointment by resolution of the Legislative Assembly;

AND WHEREAS the Legislative Assembly considers the appointment of a Languages

Commissioner essential for ensuring recognition of the rights, status and privileges of each of the official languages and compliance with the spirit and intent of the Official Languages Act;

AND WHEREAS the current Languages Commissioner has retired;

AND WHEREAS pursuant to subsection 17(3) of the Official Languages Act, the Speaker, on the recommendation of the Board of Management, appointed Ms. Brenda Gauthier of Fort Smith, Acting Languages Commissioner on January 11, 2021;

AND WHEREAS the Legislative Assembly is of the opinion that the appointment of a Languages Commissioner should now be made;

NOW THEREFORE I MOVE, seconded by the honourable Member for Sahtu, that pursuant to Section 15 of the Official Languages Act of the Northwest Territories, that Ms. Brenda Gauthier of Fort Smith be appointed as Languages Commissioner for a term of four years;

AND FURTHER, that the appointment be effective February 5, 2021.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Member for Kam Lake. The motion is in order. To the motion?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Question.

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

---Carried

Motions. Item 18, notices of motion for first reading of bills. Item 19, first reading of bills. Item 20, second reading of bills. Item 21, 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), a Government of the Northwest Territories Response to Committee Report 3-19(2): Report on Long-Term Post-Pandemic Recovery - Recommendations to the GNWT; and Tabled Document 286-19(2), Main Estimates 2021-2022, with Member for Inuvik Twin Lakes in the chair.

Consideration in Committee of the Whole of Bills and Other Matters

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

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

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Mr. Norn. There is a motion on the floor and it is non-debatable. All those in favour? All those opposed? The motion is carried.

---Carried

I will now rise and report progress.

MR. SPEAKER: May I have the report of the Committee of the Whole, please. Member for Inuvik Twin Lakes.

Report of Committee of the Whole

MS. SEMMLER: Mr. Speaker, your committee has been considering 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), a Government of the Northwest Territories Response to Committee Report 3-19(2): Report on Long-Term Post-Pandemic Recovery - Recommendations to the GNWT; and Tabled Document 286-19(2), Main Estimates 2021-2022. I would like to report progress. Mr. Speaker, I move that the report of the Committee of the Whole be concurred with. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Member for Inuvik Twin Lakes. Do we have a seconder? Member for Great Slave. All those in favour? All those opposed? The motion is carried.

---Carried

Report of Committee of the Whole. Item 23, third reading of bills. Mr. Clerk, orders of the day.

Orders of the Day

CLERK OF THE HOUSE (Mr. Mercer): Orders of the day for Monday, February 8, 2021, at 1:30 p.m.:

1. Prayer

2. Ministers' Statements
3. Members' Statements
4. Returns to Oral Questions
5. Recognition of Visitors in the Gallery
6. Replies to Budget Address (Day 3 of 7)
7. Acknowledgements
8. Oral Questions
9. Written Questions
10. Returns to Written Questions
11. Replies to Commissioner's Address
12. Petitions
13. Reports of Committees on the Review of Bills
14. Reports of Standing and Special Committees
15. Tabling of Documents
16. Notices of Motion
17. Motions
18. Notices of Motion for First Reading of Bills
19. First Reading of Bills
20. Second Reading of Bills
21. 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
 - Tabled Document 286-19(2), Main Estimates 2021-2022
22. Report of Committee of the Whole

23. Third Reading of Bills

24. Orders of the Day

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Clerk. This House stands adjourned until Monday, February 8, 2021, at 1:30 p.m. Have a good weekend.

---ADJOURNMENT

The House adjourned at 11:45 a.m.