



NORTHWEST TERRITORIES  
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**Monday, November 29, 2021**

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**The Honourable Frederick Blake Jr, Speaker**

# Legislative Assembly of the Northwest Territories

## Members of the Legislative Assembly

### Speaker

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

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**Hon. Diane Archie**

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

**Mr. Ronald Bonnetrouge**

(Deh Cho)

**Ms. Caitlin Cleveland**

(Kam Lake)

**Hon. Paulie Chinna**

(Sahtu)  
*Minister responsible for the NWT Housing Corporation*  
*Minister responsible for Homelessness*  
*Minister responsible for the Public Utilities Board*  
*Minister responsible for the Workers' Safety and Compensation Commission*

**Hon. Caroline Cochrane**

(Range Lake)  
*Premier*  
*Minister of Executive and Indigenous Affairs*  
*Minister responsible for the COVID-19 Coordinating Secretariat*

**Hon. Julie Green**

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

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(Nunakput)

**Mr. Rylund Johnson**

(Yellowknife North)

**Ms. Frieda Martselos**

(Thebacha)

**Ms. Katrina Nokleby**

(Great Slave)

**Vacant**

(Tu Nedhe-Wiilideh)

**Mr. Kevin O'Reilly**

(Frame Lake)

**Ms. Lesa Semmler**

(Inuvik Twin Lakes)

**Mr. Rocky Simpson**

(Hay River South)

**Hon. R.J. Simpson**

(Hay River North)  
*Government House Leader*  
*Minister of Education, Culture & Employment*  
*Minister of Justice*

**Hon. Shane Thompson**

(Nahendeh)  
*Minister of Municipal and Community Affairs*  
*Minister of Environment and Natural Resources*  
*Minister of Lands*  
*Minister responsible for Youth*

**Hon. Caroline Wawzonek**

(Yellowknife South)  
*Minister of Finance*  
*Minister of Industry, Tourism and Investment, including responsibility for the Business Development and Investment Corporation*  
*Minister responsible for the Status of Women*

**Ms. Jane Weyallon-Armstrong**

(Monfwi)

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**YELLOWKNIFE, NORTHWEST TERRITORIES****Monday, November 29, 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. O'Reilly, Ms. Semmler, Hon. R.J. Simpson, Mr. Rocky Simpson, Hon. Shane Thompson, Hon. Caroline Wawzonek, Ms. Weyallon-Armstrong

The House met at 1:30 p.m.

**Prayer**

---Prayer

**SPEAKER (Hon. Frederick Blake Jr.):** Ministers' statements. Minister responsible for Finance.

**Ministers' Statements**

MINISTER'S STATEMENT 185-19(2):  
INDIGENOUS RECRUITMENT AND RETENTION  
FRAMEWORK AND ACTION PLAN

**HON. CAROLINE WAWZONEK:** Mr. Speaker, the Government of the Northwest Territories is committed to improving Indigenous representation in the public service, and ensuring Indigenous employees are genuinely included, celebrated, and given opportunities to succeed. We are committed to creating a public service that is welcoming, culturally competent, and free of discrimination; one that serves in a way that respects and includes the Indigenous peoples and communities of this territory.

Today, I am pleased to announce that the Department of Finance is launching the Indigenous Recruitment and Retention Framework and Action Plan, by developing business practices that include recruitment and retention strategies. The framework will empower departments to recognize the importance of Indigenous perspectives within their policies, programs, and services. The framework will encompass and support existing GNWT programs designed to recruit and retain Indigenous employees while also providing opportunities for innovation to address recruitment and employment barriers for Indigenous residents, applicants and employees. By providing the tools to develop detailed implementation plans, this framework will support departments as they incorporate these valuable Indigenous perspectives into their teams at all levels and result in a workforce that is representative of the people and the population it serves.

The action plan will take a whole-of-government approach where each department and agency will

work together and share the responsibility to reach the goals and action items to improve Indigenous peoples' success within the recruitment process and within the public service as a whole. Each department and agency will be required to create an Indigenous Employment Plan to address the objectives and set attainable benchmarks for success. The development of unique department-specific Indigenous Employment Plans allows departments to address barriers to employment, retention, and advancement of Indigenous people that are specific to their departments and communities.

Mr. Speaker, the Indigenous Recruitment and Retention Framework and Action Plan were developed collaboratively. Representatives from the Department of Finance worked with officials from Indigenous governments and utilized targeted internal engagement to hear firsthand what they identify as barriers to employment for Indigenous people.

The top barrier identified by Indigenous governments was the over inflation of job descriptions. We have listened to what we heard, Mr. Speaker, and our very first action item is to conduct a detailed review of all GNWT job descriptions.

We also heard that we need to ensure that we hold ourselves accountable to enact meaningful, attainable change throughout the public service. As I noted, each department will be required to complete department-specific Indigenous Employment Plans with specific Indigenous employment targets, and we will hold ourselves accountable by ensuring that those plans and targets are tied to deputy head and senior management performance appraisals.

Mr. Speaker, these are only two examples of the eleven action items we developed in collaboration with Indigenous governments. This collaborative approach ensures the framework and action plan will meet the concerns of Indigenous governments and the people we all serve. It will allow us to become more engaged, more responsive, more aware of the residents' needs, and provide flexibility in our responses and the development of programs and policies to ensure meaningful changes are

made within the public service and felt within our communities and by our employees.

Mr. Speaker, the Indigenous Recruitment and Retention Framework and Action Plan will improve Indigenous representation and ensure that the public service is diverse and inclusive. It supports continual improvement in our recruitment and retention practices and provides opportunities to celebrate our progress as we move forward in setting our sights on new levels of success in Indigenous representation. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

---Applause

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

MINISTER'S STATEMENT 186-19(2):  
PARTNERSHIP AND INNOVATION SUCCESS

**HON. PAULIE CHINNA:** Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to rise today to celebrate the award recently announced for the K'asho Got'ynê Housing Society in my home community of Fort Good Hope. The Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation Gold Roof Award for Knowledge to Action was presented to the dedicated team representing the K'asho Got'ynê Housing Society. This award recognizes the work the K'asho Got'ynê Housing Society has done in developing its own housing repair and maintenance program and includes a \$10,000 contribution to help the society continue its work.

Mr. Speaker, this is an example of how communities can take a leadership role in increasing housing in partnership with the Housing Corporation. It demonstrates the effectiveness of collaboration and capacity building in the efforts to tackle the housing crisis in the northern remote communities. The success of the K'asho Got'ynê and the Northwest Territories Housing Corporation is paving the way for the implementing of the strategic renewal.

Prior to this award, the Housing Corporation had been working in partnership with the K'asho Got'ine Housing Society on this repair program. Through the Housing Corporation's Community Housing Support Program, this will show we can do and we work in our community with partnership and respond together to the locally identified specific needs in a given community. This partnership began with a community housing plan, for which the Housing Corporation provided funding and it progressed on from there.

Mr. Speaker, when Premier Cochrane was Minister Responsible for the NWT Housing Corporation, she

attended a town hall meeting in Fort Good Hope where it was noted that many residents had trouble accessing Housing Corporation's repair programs. It was during that visit that the Housing Corporation staff proposed that the K'asho Got'ine Housing Society develop its own community repair program that would allow the K'asho Got'ine Housing Society to select program, participants, and provide training opportunities for building trades helpers and apprentices. The Government of the Northwest Territories heard the needs of the community and acted in partnership with the community to address those needs.

The NWT Housing Corporation is also working with the K'asho Got'ine Housing Society on a men's transitional housing initiative. The Men's Transitional Housing Initiative Program is a mandate and provides unique programming for men who are homeless or have insecure housing. Through a holistic approach, this is strongly rooted in the Dené and Metis culture. Given the award-winning track record of the Housing Corporation Society, I would not be surprised if I would be standing here again in the future if they may receive an additional award.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to use this opportunity to express our appreciation to the commitment and dedication of the K'asho Got'ine Housing Society and look forward in building our partnership to address housing needs for all Fort Good Hope residents. I would like to thank all Fort Good Hope residents and for your tireless work in providing a model for other communities. I would also like to thank the Housing Corporation staff for their dedication and their work into such a unique approach. Mahsi, Mr. Speaker.

---Applause

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

### Members' Statements

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON  
ACCESS TO TRADITIONALLY TANNED HIDES

**MR. ROCKY SIMPSON:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, this government needs to do more to help the artisans of the NWT in accessing traditional tanned hides.

Mr. Speaker, over the last several years I have met with numerous artisans who have voiced the same concern - that concern is the lack of access to traditional tanned hides which they require to make a variety of products. Many of us here are familiar with these products which include earrings,

slippers, crow boots, gauntlets, mitts, vests, jackets, gun cases, and more.

Mr. Speaker, when those who purchase Indigenous fashions that require hide and fur, they want the appearance; they want the touch; and, most importantly, they want the smell of the traditional tanned hide. What people may not know is the amount of work that goes into the traditional tanning of hides, such as moose and caribou.

Mr. Speaker, I have had a number of artisans explain to me the process of traditional tanning to me. There are up to 13 steps that include skinning, soaking, stretching, fleshing, scraping, thinning, braining, wringing, drying, softening, and smoking. This process can take up to 3 weeks consisting of many hours to complete.

Mr. Speaker, tanning requires access to raw material, special tools, patience, and a lot of hard work. The practice of tanning hides is a long tradition with Indigenous people. Mr. Speaker, this skill may be in jeopardy of being lost if this government, and Indigenous governments, do not provide the support to those few who have retained the knowledge that was passed on to them and who now want to pass it on to others.

Mr. Speaker, we have a Hide and Fur Program in place which was, in part, meant to support the need for artisans to have access to raw materials, such as hides and furs, at affordable prices. Either it does not have sufficient product, is not well advertised or, may be unaffordable for artisans. We need to do more in this area.

Mr. Speaker, I would challenge the Minister of Responsible for ITI, the Minister of Responsible for ECE, and the Minister responsible for ENR to collaborate and develop a standalone program that would provide financial compensation to those that are tanning their own hides and to those harvesters who bring the hides out after a successful harvest. I will have questions for one of the foregoing Ministers at the appropriate time. Thank you.

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

#### MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON TlichO ALL-SEASON ROAD PREPAREDNESS

**MR. O'REILLY:** Merci, Monsieur le President. As I understand it, the TlichO All-Season Road is supposed to be completed and opened tomorrow. It is clear that the road has been supported by various TlichO governments and that it will undoubtedly bring some benefits. However, there does not seem to be a coordinated approach from

this government to ensure those benefits are maximized and adverse impacts are managed.

I was also surprised to learn a few months ago that the road doesn't even go into the community of Whati and that extensive work costing a further \$9 million will be required on an access road. I'm not sure how that was overlooked in the planning of a development that will ultimately cost this government over \$400 million over the next 30 years. Like the Inuvik to Tuk Highway, the community at the end of the road does not appear to be adequately supported by this government.

There is also some question about this government's unfulfilled measures on the environmental assessment of the project. There are concerns about the adequacy of GNWT's adaptive management of the road's wildlife impacts.

A number of recently submitted plans, including the Interim Wek'eezhii Boreal Caribou Range Plan, a TlichO All-Season Road Wildlife Management and Monitoring Plan, and a permit application for boreal caribou and wolf monitoring, all remain unapproved.

A report on woodland caribou was recently released and it recommended that there be a limited or no resident harvest in the area around the TlichO All-Season Road and that further research is needed on the Indigenous harvest.

I continue to raise the potential need for sport fishing restrictions on Lac La Martre where there is already a small but successful fishing lodge. No Minister for GNWT seems to want to follow that up on that in any way.

There doesn't seem to be any funding in the GNWT capital budget for park or campground planning or business development for Whati to get better prepared for the road opening. You'd think we would have learned some lessons from the Inuvik to Tuk Highway, Mr. Speaker.

I have lots of questions around GNWT's preparedness and support for communities at the end of new roads. I'll put some of those to the Minister of Environment and Natural Resources later today. Merci, Mr. Speaker.

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

#### MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON TERRITORIAL POLICING SERVICES AGREEMENT

**MS. MARTSELOS:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, we are living in an age of heightened public awareness and interests in police accountability and transparency. And rightfully so,

because this is a matter of public safety. It is our duty as legislators to hold the government to account, and policing services falls within that purview. We must ensure that our justice system, specifically our territorial police services, are being run above board at all times. Therefore it is extremely important that our policing services have proper oversight, including financial accountability for public funds.

Mr. Speaker, policing in the NWT is carried out by the RCMP. The RCMP, however, is a federal police force and is guided by the NWT Territorial Police Service Agreement. That agreement was signed between the Government of Canada and the Government of the Northwest Territories on April 1st, 2012, and is set to last for 20 years, until March 31st, 2032.

Upon review of this agreement, I noticed some areas of concern that I find troubling and lacking. Firstly, Mr. Speaker, this agreement states each fiscal year the territories will pay to Canada 70 percent of the cost providing and maintaining the territorial police service. According to our 2021-2022 main estimates, policing services accounts for 36.1 percent of our total operating expenditures, amounting to \$48.2 million. What I find problematic, Mr. Speaker, is that there are no requirements for the RCMP to provide public financial statements of this expenditure. The RCMP commanding officer's obliged only to provide the NWT Justice Minister with a multi-year financial plan for the territorial police service. However, there is no mention of any financial accountability to the Legislative Assembly of this expenditure breakdown.

Mr. Speaker, I speak unanimous consent to conclude my statement.

---Unanimous consent granted

Furthermore, Mr. Speaker, there is a contract management committee within the Territorial Police Service Agreement and it is not accountable to any public body. It is not obliged to submit any public reports of its discussions, there no mechanism for legislative oversight or transparency. It would be nice to know what our public monies are being spent on in this area.

Lastly, Mr. Speaker, there is also the issue of jurisdiction of policing services in the NWT. Since the RCMP is a federal agency, its internal management and administration of police standards and procedures remain under the control of Canada. Thus, the Government of the Northwest Territories is very limited in authority over the RCMP. Our territorial Minister of Justice only has the authority to set objectives, priorities and goals of the territorial police service. This only furthers the

lack of transparency and accountability of the RCMP in the NWT.

I will have questions for the Minister of Justice later today. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

---Applause

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

#### MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON EDUCATION RENEWAL FRAMEWORK

**MR. BONNETROUGE:** Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, today I would like to speak to our education system and my concerns that we are not providing our youth with the tools needed to succeed in life.

Mr. Speaker, eight years ago, the Department of Education, Culture and Employment published the Education Renewal and Innovation Framework. It was a ten-year strategy guiding the department's activities until 2023. The intent was to radically change the NWT's junior kindergarten to grade 12 education system.

In 2020, the Auditor General of Canada published a report called Early Childhood to Grade 12 Education in the Northwest Territories, which gave the GNWT a failing grade on education in our schools. The audit found that the GNWT needs to.

- Better monitor the performance of the education system;
- There are problems with data collection and analysis including graduation rates;
- The GNWT needs to monitor the education authorities on their compliance of policies and accountability frameworks;
- The department needs to do more to meet students' needs; and .trades should be a focus in schools.

The Auditor General made 77 recommendations and the Department of ECE accepted them all, including providing additional supports to principals of small schools and teachers of multi grade classrooms, which are common in our small communities.

The department did a mid-term evaluation of the Education Renewal and Information Framework in 2018. The evaluation found that graduation rates are lower in smaller communities and that a considerable number of students in high school are not advancing to the next grade level.

In response to both the audit and internal evaluation, the department prepared an action plan to improve JK to 12 student outcomes in the NWT 2020-2021 to 2023-2024.

Mr. Speaker, now in November 2021 we are waiting for a proposal to modernize the Education Act. We are also waiting for

- The labor force analysis;
- The department's updated skills for success strategy; and,
- The transformation of Aurora to proceed to a polytechnic university.

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

---Unanimous consent granted

Mr. Speaker, we know what the problems are. We understand that many NWT residents do not have enough schooling to meet NWT job demand in the immediate future. The 19th Legislative Assembly mandate includes increasing student education outcomes to the same level as the rest of Canada. Mr. Speaker, I'm afraid we are out of time to reach this commitment. I will have questions for the Minister of Education, Culture and Employment at the appropriate time. Mahsi.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Members' statements. Member for Great Slave.

#### MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON HEALTHCARE AND NURSING CHALLENGES

**MS. NOKLEBY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, this session, I'd planned to speak to a range of issues from tourism and business relief funding to mental health supports for residential school survivors and those experiencing addiction. However, I've spent most my time lately consumed with the healthcare crisis at Stanton; a crisis that this Cabinet appears to be characterizing as unavoidable.

However, according to the Local 11 union president, the UNW has been raising this concern to the department for at least 18 months now; concern about the low morale of Stanton personnel who have been experiencing increasing rates of burnout for years.

When asked last week, the Minister of Health stated that no other wards at the hospital were facing a similar situation to that of the OBS unit, which suddenly closed last Monday. However, over the weekend everything I read and heard directly from the nurses themselves shows that this is just not the case and more shutdowns are imminent.

One way nurses feel unappreciated has been the lack of GNWT acknowledgement of how COVID has changed the way they practice. Changes that include.

- Increased safety protocols and PPE requirements;
- Additional personal and patient testing; and,
- Ever-changing travel and isolation rules that have required nurses to use their own leave after an exposure to COVID at work or after travel.

When the federal government provided money to the provinces and territories for COVID-related healthcare expenses, every other jurisdiction used that money to give frontline workers hazard pay or bonuses. BC and New Brunswick nurses got raises of \$4 per hour; in Ontario it was \$2 an hour; and in Alberta, Saskatchewan, Nova Scotia, and NFLD and Labrador, nurses received payments ranging from \$800 to \$2000. The Yukon, Nunavut, PEI, and Quebec offered retention or signing bonuses and increased nurses' pay. The NWT is the only province or territory in Canada where frontline staff have not received any pandemic or hazard pay. Our frontline workers deserve retroactive pandemic pay now.

NWT nurses' stress is not only due to the current COVID situation. For years, NWT nurses have been working in conditions not seen in southern hospitals including through the design, construction, and opening of our new hospital, which has experienced significant growing pains. Mr. Speaker, I seek unanimous consent to finish my statement.

---Unanimous consent granted

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Nurses here have additional duties like an expectation to train and orient locums as well as to provide instruction and training to students and brand new nurses. Formal training is often inadequate with inexperienced nursing staff performing specialized duties that would require formalized training in the south.

Mr. Speaker, this is not acceptable. Our residents deserve nurses that are adequately compensated and at the top of their game, happy to be at work, not beaten down by years of poor treatment and disrespect. I will have questions for Minister responsible for Human Resources at the appropriate time.

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

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON  
DEPARTMENT OF MUNICIPAL AND  
COMMUNITY AFFAIRS LEGISLATIVE  
PROGRESS

**MR. JOHNSON:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I think over time, we come to speak of different departments as if they were living and breathing persons with their own personalities and their quirks and their faults. I often talk about the Department of Lands still operating as if it was a department of the federal government and that devolution is not really completed.

Mr. Speaker, we talked about Justice as if it's a bunch of lawyers and they have this really small kind of world view and are very risk adverse. And Mr. Speaker, often when we talk about the Department of MACA, we talk about their inability to get legislation done. Mr. Speaker, this is a conversation I would like to end in this Assembly and future Assembly's going forward. And I think no one better than Minister Thompson is suited to do it.

I believe ENR, after taking over 12 years to get the Wildlife Act as finally developed the internal capacity to pass bills and work cooperatively with Indigenous governments. I even believe the Department of Lands will get its Public Land Act Regulations in force and is on its way. But I don't believe this of the Department of Municipal and Community Affairs, Mr. Speaker.

In any Legislative Assembly, the Department of Justice by far surpasses other departments in bringing forward bills. We know in this Assembly the Department of Justice, being full of lawyers, is good at getting legislation done. I would like to, one day, say that about the Department of Municipal and Community Affairs, Mr. Speaker.

I believe at the root of this, it is an underfunded department and under prioritized. We know that we need to do more about public safety and emergency response. We know that climate change will make these concerns even more relevant. The majority of infrastructure publicly held is owned by municipalities. We know we need to do more work on municipalities' infrastructure first before our own.

Mr. Speaker, I believe many of the holdups and fights we have having in this territory can be solved through MACA legislation. Whether you are dealing with a hamlet, a designated authority, a city, a town, or village, or a bunch of people living on public land somewhat illegally due to leases, that is all issues that can be solved through MACA legislation.

These are large conversations. They are related to self-government negotiations. There is decades of

work to be done here. There is decades of work to be done in building standards, in how we fund municipalities, and how the future of this territory works. I will have questions for the Minister of MACA if whether we can get MCACA on the right path to be a great department at passing legislation. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON  
TILCHO REGION HOUSING CRISIS

**MS. WEYALLON-ARMSTRONG:** Okay, thank you, Mr. Speaker. Today I'm going to be speaking about housing again. Housing crisis in Tlicho regions.

Mr. Speaker, I'm going to be talking about housing today because it is an important issue. Our community members in Tlicho region and all of NWT are facing a very serious problem. Many of our people do not have a basic need being met, which is housing.

Mr. Speaker, we all know that each person deserves a home, a home that keeps us safe, warm, and secure. Home is a place of love and family. It is the foundation of our well-being.

Mr. Speaker, we also know that having a home gives us a higher quality of life. In order to provide a high quality of life, each person in the community must have a housing available that is affordable to every income level.

Families without secure housing live with greater fear, stress and instability. This impacts the children, the youth, and youth in many ways. Some of the children and youth are unable to live with their own families. As a result, everyone is spread into different homes. Without a home, our people are having a hard time to provide for themselves and their family. This is unacceptable, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, many community members in the Tlicho region want to own their own homes but it is unaffordable because of high mortgage and high cost of living. Mr. Speaker, one of the ways to address the housing crisis in Tlicho region for the NWT Housing Corporation is to promote homeownership program. Mr. Speaker, I will have questions for the Minister responsible for the Housing Corporation. Mahsi.

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

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON  
HOUSING IN NUNAKPUT

**MR. JACOBSON:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, today I'm looking at housing and housing assistance while we're going through a housing crisis, too, in my riding of Nunakput. There are no market housing, Mr. Speaker, in the communities in Nunakput. All the Housing Corporation does not have enough houses to address the issues - we all know that. And even the public housing we do have is inadequate. There are houses, when the wind blows a certain way, that you have snow coming in, west wind through the doors in through the windows.

I think, Mr. Speaker, what we should be doing is making a -- I brought this up in June and I see that the Minister and her staff did allocate funds for the communities in my riding, but we need more. Mr. Speaker, we all need more. The money's sitting and what we should be doing is trying to access it. I think CMHC's part of our problem. I know they're the ones that funds us. I think my Minister's been really adamant in trying to do her best to get this stuff done but it's not but it's not being a priority of our government. The priority of this government, everybody should have a roof over their head and be able to not couch surf. Like right now, for instance it's minus 36 in Sachs Harbour right now. How hard it is to go and buy something? Not hard. Couldn't be hard because then you could just go buy those prefab units and go buy 20. Can't be that hard. Got enough staff there to give her a hand, and I know she's wanting to help because when I talk to her she's passionate about her job and she wants to do best for the people.

Mr. Speaker, I really think as a Regular Member this side of the House, I really think we should be really taking this as a priority on our behalf of our constituents. People are suffering. Not only that, the people that do have houses that did before the -- have lost their job or retirement or something with COVID-19 for instance in Tuk, you have water pumps going down, there's eight people in the family, they can't even afford a water pump so how do we help them? And like good job for Fort Good Hope, I'm really proud to hear that, of what they've and I'm going to be looking to start societies in all my communities I represent to work with the Minister and our government to get proper housing for the people we represent. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON  
IMPROVING GOVERNMENT OF THE  
NORTHWEST TERRITORIES PROCUREMENT  
PROCESSES

**MS. CLEVELAND:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, this sitting, as we work through the capital estimates, the GNWT tabled a procurement policy review. I support infrastructure spending and the economic development it brings. But for your territory to see the benefits of this capital budget, we need procurement that increases benefit retention and grows the NWT private sector through meaningful spending.

While I recognize the GNWT is preparing a response to this report, there are some simple procedural changes that could be implemented immediately to improve fairness and transparency in the procurement process today.

Businesses have concerns about communication and procedural fairness of how bids are administered, advertised, or requested, and how the government is evaluating value for dollar. Businesses feel they are being shut out of the opportunity to apply on bids and do not believe their BIP status is giving them the intended advantage.

Mr. Speaker, less than one percent of businesses are benefitting from their BIP status. BIP was recognized as ineffective on bids over \$1 million and that the total value for contract expenditures for BIP businesses is decreasing. The report supports some concerns from the businesses that I serve but one of the strongest points of change I see has nothing to do with changing a policy or reevaluating a bid system.

Mr. Speaker, it begins with a shift in focus. Procurement is viewed as a service to government. The role of this unit is to take the procurement needs from government departments, format them, put them out into the global market place, and then work with government departments to choose the bid, largely a process that ends in lowest dollar winners. But one easy fix is an evolution of procurement to industry facing service that communicates and consults with industry for it is relationships with business owners by spending time outside the office, works with vendors to regularly improve process, analyzes data to identify NWT industry gaps, and strives to bring procurement to NWT businesses.

Mr. Speaker, I believe there is great value in involving and connecting our disjointed and inconsistent procurement policies but I believe there is more to gain from a shift in the public service of procurement to focus on who they serve and that is the people and interests of the Northwest Territories. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

---Applause

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

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON  
INUVIK WARMING SHELTER FIRE

**MS. SEMMLER:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, on Friday evening, our Inuvik volunteer fire department responded to a fire at the temporary location for the Inuvik warming shelter in Veterans Way. All staff and residents got out safe but due to the damage, they were relocated to a new location - a new-old location I should say, on Berger Street. And as per the fire chief's public update, it was stated that it was an electrical issue.

Mr. Speaker, on Saturday night, they then responded to another second fire at the same location, and this ended in a total loss of the building.

Mr. Speaker, I want to take this time to thank the Inuvik fire department and all its volunteers who went out and fought this fire in the minus 30 temperatures. Your service to Inuvik is extremely valuable.

I also want to thank the Northwest Territories Power Corporation staff that restored the power to our residents as quick as they did. I would also like to make a note that my constituents were after the Minister of NWT Power Corp.

Mr. Speaker, the residents in this facility are our most vulnerable, especially during these winter months, and I'm thankful for the quick action on the Housing Department that got the residents into their temporary location right away. But, Mr. Speaker, moving our most vulnerable from an old vacant building to another is not a solution. We have been told that we are to receive a GNWT homeless strategy, yet we have not received this.

Mr. Speaker, in our territory we have many under housed residents in all of our communities. In the smaller communities, we tend not to know that they are there. However in our regional centres, and the capital, we see many residents that tend to move to access some of these important services they cannot get in their home community.

Mr. Speaker, this crisis is more than a shelter. It's the services and the support that these residents require, as well as the shelter, to be able to begin assisting our underhoused residents of the Northwest Territories. I will have questions for the Minister responsible for Homelessness and Housing Corporation. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON  
EULOGY FOR MIRANDA MARIE ISAIAH

**HON. SHANE THOMPSON** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, Miranda Marie Isaiah was born on November 6, 1979. Miranda was born and raised in Fort Simpson where she lived her whole life. She was an only child to the late Caroline Isaiah. Miranda was raised by her late grandparents Mary Rose and Charles Isaiah. Miranda had a very close relationship with her granny.

Miranda had the greatest sense of humour. Whenever you talked to her, you could guarantee she was going to make you laugh or tell you some crazy joke.

Miranda was a kind and giving person. She was always willing to give or share what she could with anyone. She would be seen driving around the community handing out meals and/or sandwiches to those that didn't have anything to eat. As well, she always had water available to give away. She always liked to share especially when she cooked meals. Nothing would go to waste.

During the flood, Miranda's amazingness showed through. She helped those needing help with the basics. Whether it was blankets, food, a helping shoulder or being there for people she would do what she could.

Miranda was a loving and caring mother to her three boys - Tanner, Nogha and Hudson. The boys were her pride and joy. There was nothing she wouldn't do for them. Miranda was a stay-at-home mother to ensure her children were looked after.

Mr. Speaker, Miranda was a strong and independent woman who was stubborn when she felt she was right, which was most of the time according to people that know her. She didn't like to ask or reach out for help from anyone. She would always find a way to make thing work out even if it was challenging times for her or her family.

Miranda was looking at going back to work at the long-term care facility once her boys were in school. She always spoke about her enjoyment working there and helping the Elders. As well, the Elders would really enjoy when it was her shift.

Family and friends would like to thank everybody for their kind words, comforting hands, donations, thoughts and prayers during this difficult time. In Miranda's fashion, they ask everyone to take care of each other and remember to cherish the time we

have with each other. Mr. Speaker, she will be sadly missed by her family and friends. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Member for Nahendeh. Our thoughts and prayers are with the family and the community. Members' statements. Returns to oral questions. Recognition of visitors in the gallery. Acknowledgements. Oral questions. Member for Thebacha.

### Oral Questions

#### ORAL QUESTION 822-19(2) TERRITORIAL POLICING SERVICES AGREEMENT

**MS. MARTSELOS:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, in the NWT Territorial Police Service Agreement, there is no mention of the need for the RCMP to provide the Legislative Assembly the financial statements of its yearly expenditures. Can the Minister explain why there is no public financial statements from the RCMP submitted to the Assembly? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**HON. R.J. SIMPSON:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The RCMP as the service provider in our agreement with Public Safety Canada provides so the financial accountability is to the federal government essentially. The responsibility for RCMP financial statements rests with the RCMP and the Government of Canada and is submitted as part of the public accounts of Canada. The RCMP expenditures are reported to the Legislative Assembly through the public accounts of the GNWT. Costs related to the RCMP fall under the policing services activity of the Department of Justice. Accountability for the Territorial Police Service Agreement, or TPSA, and costs incurred as part of our contract are provided by the RCMP through the department as part of that contract and actuals reviewed monthly between the ADM of Justice and the commanding officer. Then a financial account is provided to the department within three months of the end of the fiscal year. The agreement between ourselves and the RCMP contained almost 20 different reporting requirements that the RCMP provide us. These requirements are varying levels of details and are all part of the negotiation of the 20-year agreement. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MS. MARTSELOS:** Mr. Speaker, will the Minister commit to sharing the RCMP's multiyear financial plan for territorial police services with the Legislative Assembly? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**HON. R.J. SIMPSON:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. So the multiyear financial plan is a planning document

used in the contract is a forecast of potential upcoming financial implications under the Territorial Police Service Agreement. The document is a high-level first step to business planning to address the identified priorities. So after the multiyear financial planning process, business cases are prepared by the RCMP for the Department of Justice. Those business cases are reviewed to determine if an FMB submission is substantiated, then, if FMB approves the submission, the Members of this Assembly receive the estimates- or receive the adjustments in the main estimates. And we've seen that a number of times so far during this Assembly.

But I'm all about transparency, Mr. Speaker. And I can commit to looking into whether or not we have the support of Public Safety Canada and the RCMP, and the other jurisdictions who contract with the RCMP, to provide those documents. The department's going to look into whether other jurisdictions do this, and I'd be happy to share whatever we can. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MS. MARTSELOS:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, under Article 19.0 of the Territorial Police Service Agreement, whatever the territorial Justice Minister requests a third party inter -- independent review of the RCMP or its police services, that review must be paid -- must be paid for a hundred percent by the Government of the Northwest Territories. However, if no independent third party review is requested, then by default, all reviews are conducted by the RCMP itself. Mr. Speaker, does the Minister consider this arrangement fair, or will he commit to amending this section of the agreement? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**HON. R.J. SIMPSON:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. So article 19 also mentions several steps in determining the RCMP-directed reviews where contract partners, such as ourselves, have input into the work. So it would be a hundred percent funded review as sort of a last step if we don't get satisfaction through those other methods. So every fiscal year the contract management committee, made up of ADMs and policing from across the country, Public Safety Canada and some municipal representatives, may provide certain matters to be audited in the RCMP's operations, and there's a strategic advantage to this process as the reviews are nationally coordinated and we benefit from the influence of larger contract partners in the process.

The same process exists for directed reviews. The contract management committee is consulted and offer input into the planning process. Next, there is a process where the commanding officer and the GNWT can jointly agree on specific directed reviews to be conducted which would be covered in the agreement at a 70/30 cost share ratio. This is

done as an ongoing part of the contract management. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**MS. MARTSELOS:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The contract management committee within the Territorial Police Service Agreement consists of three representatives from the Government of the Northwest Territories, the federal Department of Safety, and the RCMP along with one associate member representing NWT municipalities. Can the Minister identify the individuals on this committee and how the selection process is done for who sits on it? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**HON. R.J. SIMPSON:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The contract management committee is a national level group that supports information sharing and collaboration among provinces and territories, Public Safety Canada, and the RCMP. The contract management committee, or CMC, is also the formal forum for Public Safety Canada to consult with contract holders for anything that is upcoming that will impact governance, cost, quality or capacity of the policing service, or an RCMP program. Typically, ADMs responsible for policing in each jurisdiction represent their organization on the committee. In our case, it is the ADM, solicitor general branch, as the position is responsible for the management of the Territorial Police Service Agreement. There are also some members of the CMC who represent the municipalities who are funding RCMP at a 90/10 cost share as opposed to our 70/30 to provided policing in their communities, and that's outside of the Northwest Territories. And that's why there is a reference to municipalities in the agreement.

There are also several working groups across the country that address matters related to the contract that report to CMC. Some of these groups focus on financial implications, capital assets, national programs, and all of them to support accountability and transparency between Public Safety Canada, the RCMP, and contract partners like ourselves. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

#### ORAL QUESTION 823-19(2):

##### ACCESS TO TRADITIONALLY TANNED HIDES

**MR. ROCKY SIMPSON:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my questions will be directed to the Minister responsible for ITI. Mr. Speaker, this government's talked about the need for a facility that would allow for the traditional tanning of hides. I have heard this discussion for the past 30 years, and NWT Indigenous artisans continue to find that

traditional tanned moose and caribou hides difficult to access. We've talked about tourism, along with collectors that want products made in the North with real northern material which artisans now find difficult to procure.

So I'd ask the Minister, Mr. Speaker, can the Minister tell this Assembly if there is a financial program that specifically targets with programs specific dollars those artisans that are involved in traditional tanning of hides? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Member for Hay River South. Minister responsible for Industry, Tourism and Investment.

**HON. CAROLINE WAWZONEK:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I'm also well aware of the problem. It's certainly not new. It's been raised to our offices as well.

At present, Mr. Speaker, there are arts council grants through the Department of ECE that can be certainly directed to all artisans in the territory. The Department of ITI provides supports for hide camps, tanning camps through -- generally through seed funding and funding that can go to the communities. So I anticipate that there could be more -- that the Member's looking for something more, but there are some creative ways that we can support those -- these projects for now. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. ROCKY SIMPSON:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, it's important, and we need to support and encourage those artisans who hold the traditional knowledge of tanning moose and caribou hides. These traditional tanned hides are a much sought after commodity here in the NWT. And this practice goes hand-in-hand with culture, arts, and tourism. So we need to provide a form of compensation for those tanning their own hides. We know it can take up to three weeks and many hours. And the artisan ends up either using the hide for themselves or selling it sometimes at a deflated price, and they deserve more.

So Mr. Speaker, will the Minister commit to having her department look at developing a program with specific dollars to encourage artisans to continue to and expand the traditional art of tanning moose and caribou hides? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**HON. CAROLINE WAWZONEK:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, it certainly is disheartening to think that after all that work, the hides would be sold at a deflated price. They are in high demand. I've certainly heard that is a barrier to some of our artisans as well.

At present, Mr. Speaker, in conjunction with my colleague from ECE, there is a review taking place,

this fiscal into next, around all of the arts funding programs, certainly wanting to ensure that we are understanding where our money is going and understanding if there are gaps that we should be filling. Of course, alongside that there is the much bigger review of the government renewal initiative to really take a look at all of what we are doing as a government and where we're supporting our -- the residents. So at this point, that -- it's through that process that we'll be able to consider whether or not we need to change the existing programs or look for new ones to better identify where to put government dollars. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. ROCKY SIMPSON:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, it is important for Indigenous artisans to have access to traditional tanned hides. And it is just as important that this knowledge be passed down to the younger generation. I would ask the Minister -- or sorry, artisans are willing to teach their children, grandchildren, extended family the art of traditional tanning of moose hide -- moose and caribou hides.

Mr. Speaker, will the Minister commit to work with the Minister of ECE to support the new development of a grant program beyond what is currently in place, one that has both a complementary grant and training program? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**HON. CAROLINE WAWZONEK:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, this again is timely to have this conversation in the House. It's timely to have these questions. ECE and ITI, of course, have released the arts strategy not long ago and are indeed, as I mentioned, undertaking a review of all of the programs and the funding associated to it. So in the course of that, we can certainly commit to working together to look at whether or not there is funding that's available that's perhaps not being utilized, whether there are programs that could be better advertised to those who need it, or if in fact, there's a gap and that there's programming that's not being best directed where it -- when there is actually a need. So we'll certainly commit to looking at it in this review process. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**MR. ROCKY SIMPSON:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I know that many of the artisans are actually bringing in hides from, like, Saskatchewan and Alberta because they don't have access to them here. So, you know, it's important that, you know, that they have access to tanned hides but also they need access to the raw hides as well. And this is where harvesters come in. It's important that we also provide incentive incentive to harvesters if we expect them to bring the hides out after a successful harvest. So, Mr. Speaker, will the

Minister commit to working with the Minister of ENR to work out a program that compensates harvesters for delivering the hides, moose or caribou hides, to ENR or directly to the artisan? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**HON. CAROLINE WAWZONEK:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm certainly happy to take up a conversation with another colleague. I know that ENR does have a lot of programming in place to support traditional harvesters in the communities and around the Northwest Territories. And the Department of ITI, of course, is responsible for the NWT fur program. So we'll certainly take it away and see if there's more that can be done with our own fur program and of course to confirm with my colleague what better response we have to this. The opportunity to have homegrown and home-sourced hides really is the ultimate solution, and of course I'm going to see if there's a way that we can get there. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

ORAL QUESTION 824-19(2):  
HOUSING IN NUNAKPUT

**MR. JACOBSON:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Today, Mr. Speaker, my Member's statement was on housing. And they really -- we need more housing. We need to be fixing the units that we do have. I just want to know if the Minister's willing to work with the local housing authority, and if not, soon to be our local housing societies because what I'm trying to do is I'm trying to -- we'll set up a society not only with elected officials but with local people that don't sit on no boards and they have a different -- different view on how to work with it. Is the Minister willing to do that, Mr. Speaker? Thank you.

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

**HON. PAULIE CHINNA:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. With the local housing authorities as the Minister responsible, I am interested in looking at unique and different innovative ideas. And if we're looking at what has happened in Fort Good Hope and if Nunakput is interested in doing something like that, I would like to bring the two organizations together and looking at possibilities. But I do commit to working with the Member's riding as well in trying to find strategies and different approaches on how we could work with housing in his communities. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. JACOBSON:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thank you, Minister, for that. You know, working -- I guess working on a housing strategy, I do have a housing

strategy being done, but I really like how Fort Good Hope did it and in regards to doing their society. I really think that something like that would do a lot better than some of the housing boards that we do have in place, because housing boards could give the units that they do have and allocate and stuff like that but a society could do much better on -- and being able to pick what they want to do. So if you have Ulukhaktok and Paulatuk want a new Elders facility so we're going to get the society to work together with the Minister which we had the Minister last week say that they want to work with us. So are they willing to do that; are we able to pick what we want to work with, with them to go forward? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**HON. PAULIE CHINNA:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. And thank you to the Member for the questions. I do want to highlight the community housing working plans that we do have. Paulatuk was actually one of the first communities to finalize theirs and through that initiative, they're able to identify their housing needs. And looking at the structure of how housing is wanting to be delivered in that riding, I'm interested to continue those conversations with the Member. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. JACOBSON:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. So the Minister's ready to work with the community. Paulatuk is -- she brought it up that Paulatuk is in need. We have young families with nowhere to go. We have overcrowding. We just don't have enough houses. How does it work? Do we take some out of our old stock, give them to residents that could handle it, and then get CMHC to come in and backfill in regards to take -- I guess give away and bring in new stuff. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**HON. PAULIE CHINNA:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to work with the Member's riding as well. And looking at the federal funding that is available that's there, we do have some successes throughout the Northwest Territories with communities allocating their own direct funding from the federal government and looking at putting houses on the ground. So I would like to commit to following up with the Member and with his community leadership and looking at those possibilities. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**MR. JACOBSON:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Yeah, that's been kind of one of our problems, is when they do get the federal funding gets into -- to the development corporation's hands, it's staying there too long. It's the same problem that we have here, that they can't spend the money fast enough and get materials in. So there's got to be a better way to do that, and I'm looking forward to work with the Minister to find a solution and being able to I guess

spend money on houses and providing service to the people that we represent. More of a comment; thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Member for Nunakput. Taken as a comment. Oral questions. Member for Frame Lake.

ORAL QUESTION 825-19(2):  
TLICHO ALL-SEASON ROAD PREPAREDNESS

**MR. O'REILLY:** Merci, Monsieur le President. My questions are about this government's lack of preparedness around the opening of the Tlicho All-Season Road. I'll mainly focus on the environmental side for now. So my questions are for the Minister of Environment and Natural Resources.

The legally binding measures from an environmental assessment project have not been completed, especially when it comes to the impact on woodland caribou. Can the Minister tell us how this will affect the proposed opening date of the road scheduled for tomorrow? Merci, Mr. Speaker.

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

**HON. SHANE THOMPSON:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, all the wildlife-related measures for the opening of the road have been completed. ENR has been working with the co-management partners to meet the measures from all- or the Tlicho All-Season Road environmental assessment that needed to be fulfilled prior to the road opening to the public.

In July, ENR provided input into Infrastructure's final habitat offset plan with boreal caribou which was submitted to the Wek'eezhii Renewable Resource Board.

In August, ENR submitted an interim Wek'eezhii boreal caribou range plan to the WRRB. Work on the full Wek'eezhii boreal caribou range plan will be assumed in 2022. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. O'REILLY:** Merci, Monsieur le President. I want to thank the Minister for that. Of course there's a number of things that are still not approved, and he didn't actually address my question about what effect that's going to have on the opening, which is tomorrow. So the effect, Mr. Speaker, I'll tell you, is nothing. This government hasn't completed its commitments.

I noted the recently released boreal caribou population and harvest models report from ENR that recommended a very limited or no resident harvest for the boreal caribou population around the Tlicho All-Season Road. What is the Minister going

to do about the new all season harvester access that the road represents and will harvest restrictions be introduced and when? Merci, Mr. Speaker.

**HON. SHANE THOMPSON:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the boreal caribou sustainable harvest assessment report was completed for ENR to identify sustainable harvest levels for boreal caribou in the southern NWT including the Wek'eezhii area. ENR is meeting with Indigenous governments and Indigenous organizations on the finding of this report. I must really stress we're meeting with Indigenous governments here and our organizations. The report concluded that the area around the road could support some harvest of boreal caribou and so far we have not seen indications that sustainable harvest levels are being exceeded. ENR has hired a renewable resource officer in Whati to increase a harvesting monitoring along the roads in accordance with measure 9-1. The GNWT is also providing financial support to the Tlicho government for the Indigenous harvesting monitoring program that will begin this winter. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. O'REILLY:** Merci, Monsieur le President. Thanks to the Minister for that. I'll just remind him again that the road is opening tomorrow. So it's great that there's meetings happening but the road opens tomorrow.

I fully understand that inland fisheries are federal jurisdiction but we obviously have a role to play. The sellers of sport fishing licenses, promotion of country food, harvesting and sustainable livelihoods. And the Minister also has a fish -- a wildlife and fish division under his department. So what, if anything, has the Minister done about the impacts of the new road access on the sport fishery in Lac La Martre and the sport fishing lodge already operating there? Merci, Mr. Speaker.

**HON. SHANE THOMPSON:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the Tlicho government and the federal Department of Fisheries and Ocean established a fisheries management working group to ensure any concerns with fisheries are brought forward and addressed.

Mr. Speaker, the Department of Infrastructure developed a fish and fish habitat protection plan with the Tlicho All-Season Road which considers measures and commitments made during the environmental assessment and incorporate input from the Department of Fisheries and Oceans. And we've reached out to the federal government, and we've had these conversations from our end as well. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**MR. O'REILLY:** Merci, Monsieur le President. I want to thank the Minister for that. I'd really be curious to know what's happening there, but I remain very concerned about the continuing failing of this government to adequately plan for new roads, let alone properly maintain the ones that we have.

Can the Minister tell us what lessons, if any, we've learned about the banishment of environmental impacts from the Inuvik to Tuk highway and how those were applied to the Tlicho All-Season Road? Merci, Mr. Speaker.

**HON. SHANE THOMPSON:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I can tell the Member right now we are working with the Indigenous government. We are working with the Tlicho government to get this road up and operational and making sure we do things properly. We just received a letter from the Tlicho government with some valid concerns, and I'm working with them on that.

Both projects took a cooperative approach by engaging with local governments, local Indigenous organizations, stakeholders, and the territorial and federal government to achieve significant local and regional benefits. Given the difference in geologic -- or geographical locations and ecosystems of the two projects and a technical design differs, the project -- environmental impact for the Inuvik-Tuk highway in the TASR are different. That wildlife management and monitoring plan for the Tlicho All-Season Road project considered the Inuvik to Tuk highway, wildlife, and wildlife habitat protected area, and the wildlife affected monitoring program. So we've taken and looked at the reports, looked at how we move forward and, most importantly, we work with our Indigenous governments to make sure we do it right. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

#### ORAL QUESTION 826-19(2): EDUCATIONAL RENEWAL FRAMEWORK

**MR. BONNETROUGE:** Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, supporting our youth is essential, particularly in high school starting from grades 7 or 8 when we start seeing students dropping out. My question to the Minister, what is the department doing to support students in high school grades 7 to 12 to stay in school? Mahsi.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Member for Deh Cho. Minister responsible for Education, Culture and Employment.

**HON. R.J. SIMPSON:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The Department of Education, Culture and Employment provides some broad strategic direction to education bodies. It provides funding to education bodies. But really it's the education bodies themselves, the DEAs and DEC's, who really deliver the education to students. And so I can talk about the supports that ECE provides, but really the -- obviously the majority of the supports are at that level. So ECE has the ministerial directive on inclusive schooling and that provides explicit funding for and direction to education bodies on supports for students in the territory so that students can be met where they are in their educational journey. ECE officials meet regularly with education body officials to try and coordinate efforts related to supporting students. Aside from the regular funding, there's been a number of initiatives under the Education Renewal Innovation Framework. So some examples of those are northern distance learning. We have that available in 19 small communities. And that's a way to provide small community students with access to teachers who are generally experts in their field, which is something that a lot of small communities don't have access to, and I think that having that level of support really helps students along in their studies.

ECE has partnered with elders, language, and curriculum experts to develop the Our Languages curriculum which recognizes the responsibility of schools to support culture and language. It helps foster that sense of community.

We have the career and education advisors which is not rolling out as fast as I would like, but nothing really is in the days of COVID, but those positions are intended to actually help this exact range of students that the Member's talking about to determine what courses they need to get where they want and help them determine what they want to do in life.

There's a number of other things, and I could talk for quite a while on this, Mr. Speaker, but I'll leave it at that for now. Thank you.

**MR. BONNETROUGE:** Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. And mahsi to the Minister for that answer. Can the Minister explain what supports are available for older students who have not completed high school, nor have the grade level to go on to college or university but wish do so. Mahsi.

**HON. R.J. SIMPSON:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. So students in the territory have access to formal JK to 12 up until the age of 21, and there are schools that offer high school courses to older students as well when space is available, so not during regular hours, and there's a number of these throughout the territory, these programs. Aurora College works

with students who want to pursue post-secondary or bring up their training to get into post-secondary. There's the adult literacy and basic education program. It includes six levels of study ranging from basic literacy to course work at the grade 12 level. So courses in this program enable participants to learn or relearn the skills that they need to attain their educational or professional goals. College also offers the occupations and college access program and university and college access program, better known as OCAP and UCAP. These programs provide accommodation of prerequisite and prep courses to enable students to enter Aurora College post-secondary programs.

So those are a few of the things that we're doing. And of course, the college has the community learning centres in most communities, and I hope to see those in all communities some day soon. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. BONNETROUGE:** Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. And mahsi to the Minister for that. Some of my questions might be repetitive.

Mr. Speaker, there are many former students, many have dropped out or have not attained the required grade 12 grade-level staying in our communities with no hope for a future in the work force. How would the Minister explain the various ECE initiatives to our high school students to show how they help improve their school success. Mahsi.

**HON. R.J. SIMPSON:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. And I would not say that they have no future. I think there is a future for everyone. There's Members in this Assembly who dropped out of high school and went back and, you know, accomplished quite a bit with their lives. So I would never say that the student has no future.

Right now, this Assembly has prioritized education to the greatest degree, I think we've seen, in quite a while. So there's a lot of efforts to going into assisting students right from before they enter school in their early childhood through the JK to 12 system and then once they're out. Even if they don't graduate that system, you know, through the improvement and expansion of Aurora College programs, through renewing our skills for success initiative. But it really is the entire community that needs to get behind improving educational outcomes. And so in addition to the individual programs that we do, I always try to speak with community members and let them know that, you know, we need their help as well. We can't do this alone. If kids aren't in school, then they're not going to learn. It doesn't matter what we do. So we really need to ensure that the territory values education the same way that we here in the House do, and so we do that work as well. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**MR. BONNETROUGE:** Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, can the Minister explain how the department's significant initiatives are linked to each other in order to improve student grade levels and outcomes? I'm thinking of the department's renewal strategy, the proposed changes to the Education Act, the new Skills for Success Strategic Framework that the department is preparing, and even the Aurora College transformation. Mahsi.

**HON. R.J. SIMPSON:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. So the Member has asked about the biggest things that I'm undertaking -- the department's undertaking this term so I will keep my answer short even though I could definitely talk about this for quite a while. But I want to point out that this Assembly has prioritized improving student outcome to the same level as the rest of Canada. And I just want to note that that's not -- that's no small task. The Canadian education system is among the best in the world, is universally respected. So what we are tasked with doing here is ensuring that our students have the best educational outcomes in the world essentially. And so it's not something that we take lightly, and it's not something that can be done alone.

I will start with one of the biggest initiatives that we're undertaking, and that is the move towards a system of universal child care. And there's no silver bullet for improving educational outcomes, but investments in early learning and child care are as close as we can get to a silver bullet. And so over the coming years, along with federal government, we're going to making significant investments in that area. And not just opening up child care spaces but ensuring there is a high quality enriched environment for youth to participate in so that they are ready when they get into school to participate to the greatest degree, and they're not falling behind right off the bat.

In the junior kindergarten to grade 12 system, we are renewing the curriculum because we need to make sure that students are prepared for the real world once they get out. And we need to make sure that we have a curriculum that students enjoy and they see as being beneficial to them. We need to get kids into school, and I think curriculum's one of the biggest ways that we can do that.

The modernization of the Education Act is another major initiative. There are a number of things in there that we need to do probably sooner than later, and overall the entire modernization will probably take a little longer but that will allow us to ensure that we have that community buy-in so that people do see the system as reflective of themselves and they want to participate in that.

The Skills 4 Success Strategy, this is a strategy that's half over -- we're about halfway through in ten-year strategy and so we've looked at what we've done over the past number of years, and what we need to going forward. Some of the things we can continue to do but others we know that there's been some gaps, and we need to fill those gaps. For example, in small communities there are people who would like to become apprentices but they don't have that opportunity because there's no one to apprentice under. And so we need to help provide them with those opportunities.

So we are revamping the system to encourage students to go to school, to make them want to go to school, and to try and fill those gaps that they're falling through right now and provide them with opportunities that they don't currently have. It's no small task, Mr. Speaker, but I appreciate the Member's support of improving the education system as well as that of the entire Assembly.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

ORAL QUESTION 827-19(2):  
HEALTHCARE AND NURSING CHALLENGES

**MS. NOKLEBY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my questions are for the Minister responsible for HR.

Mr. Speaker, as I mentioned in my statement, it's apparent that the issues at Stanton that are leading to ward closures long predate COVID despite it being used constantly as an excuse. From an HR perspective, how does the Minister plan to properly investigate, characterize, and address the poor morale situation at Stanton that existed prior to COVID in order to address the long-standing issues at the hospital? Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Member for Great Slave. Minister responsible for HR.

**HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE:** Stanton recruitment is for the Minister of Health and Social Services. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you. Member for Great Slave.

**MS. NOKLEBY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I mentioned that I'm interested from an HR perspective. HR has tools that are available to them that include workplace investigation, etcetera. I do believe that these questions can be answered by the Minister of HR, and she actually answers my questions so I'd like to hear from her. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Member for Great Slave. It's actually up to the Premier to choose which Minister should answer. So Minister responsible for Health and Social Services.

**HON. JULIE GREEN:** Yes, thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I want to start by saying that I recognize the importance of morale and solid organizational culture. We've just been through a very intense period of that in this building. And of course, it happens in other places as well. But the end result is that we want to build a strong and satisfied public service. So there are a variety of tools available to us, including employment engagement and satisfaction surveys. I talked about those last week with my colleague from Kam Lake. There are surveys attached to the accreditation, and there is currently a survey going on by the professional organization of nurses.

The department or the NTHSSA recently did an exit survey with nurses that left their positions between January and August of this year. And there are a couple of key findings.

One is that their satisfaction is not tied to compensation. That was not one of the top three issues they identified. The top three issues were that they left for personal reasons, which included things like the needs of their families and moving to accompany a partner to a new position.

They also identified dissatisfaction with management, including the level of support they received, turnover in management and staff, and the orientation that's provided; and,

Third, the consideration that the workplace is unsafe because of staff shortages. So this speaks to the understaffing issue that we have heard about.

So there are existing labor management processes and relationships in place to deal with these challenges, and it is critical that the UNW take part in these conversations. And as a matter of fact, we had a good preliminary meeting with UNW, including the president for the local at the hospital on the weekend, that included both myself and the Minister and our senior officials.

As the Member for Great Slave may know, the collective agreement provides for joint consultation committees who identify and develop joint plans of action to respond to pressing issues that become morale issues and that committee at the hospital is in place and meets regularly. Thank you.

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

**MS. NOKLEBY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Can I have some clarification of whether or not I can go

back to the Minister of Finance responsible for HR. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Member for Great Slave. We continue to go back to the Minister of Health and Social Services unless the Premier designates another Minister. It's up to the Premier to delegate which Minister.

**MS. NOKLEBY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I'd like to ask the Minister of Finance, as I mentioned in my statement the Northwest Territories is the only jurisdiction in Canada that did not use COVID to compensate our healthcare workers for the increased hazard and workload that they've been dealing with. Will the Minister, with her Finance hat on, comment or commit to finding money to provide Northwest Territories frontline workers with retroactive hazard or pandemic pay? Is there any indication that more money is coming from the federal government for COVID? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Member for Great Slave. As I mentioned, we continue to go back to the Minister responsible for Health and Social Services unless the Premier delegates another Minister. Minister responsible for Health and Social Services.

**HON. JULIE GREEN:** Yes, thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the NWT Health and Social Services Authority and the Department of Finance are working together to review options through the labour market adjustment process which would deal with some of our pressing staffing concerns among nurses. We have no indication that additional money is coming from the federal government. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Minister. Colleagues, before I continue, I just want to remind both sides, Members and Cabinet, please keep your preambles short and try to keep the questions short because we still have four people after this line of questions, and the clock is running out, so. Member for Great Slave.

**MS. NOKLEBY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I'll play this game. Will the Minister of Health like to revamp her statement from last week saying that there are no ward closures or other ward closures coming? It has been my understanding from several nurses, the union, etcetera, that that is not the truth. Would the Minister like to revamp that statement about further ward closures. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Minister for Health and Social Services.

**HON. JULIE GREEN:** Yes, thank you. I'll just start by correcting something that the Member said in

her statement. The obstetrics ward is open at this time, and it will remain open until December 10th. There was obviously a group of women who were too far along in their pregnancies to be moved to another location to give birth. So the obstetrics unit is open.

I met with leadership of the hospital and the health authority yesterday. I asked that question. I was told that at the hospital, there are no unit closures foreseen at this time.

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

**MS. NOKLEBY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I'm confused then, because when I look in the paper all I see are advertisements for ER and ICU nurses. So can the Minister speak to what's going to happen when those positions aren't filled and those wards have to close down. Thank you.

**HON. JULIE GREEN:** Yes, thank you. I'm very pleased that the Member has taken note of our recruitment efforts. And those are ongoing of course. We want to make sure that we have the full component of staff. And as I said earlier, we are not anticipating any more closures at the hospital. We have, through a variety of people foregoing holidays, working extra shifts, locums, and so on, we have enough staff to provide the excellent services that residents are used to. Thank you.

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

ORAL QUESTION 828-19(2):  
INUVIK WARMING SHELTER FIRE

**MS. SEMMLER:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, since the Housing Corporation has assumed the responsibility of both the homeless shelter and the warming shelter in Inuvik, what short-term measures have been put in place to ensure that those who are using the warming shelter have been taken care of? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Member for Inuvik Twin Lakes. Minister responsible for Homelessness.

**HON. PAULIE CHINNA:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. And I would just like to express my sympathy to the Member's riding as well too with the recent fire in her community, and also thank you to all of the Inuvik fire departments, the RCMP, the Housing Corporation, and all that have attended and tried to work with this tragedy in her riding.

Right now, our short-term plans, we are working with the Department of Health right now, and we have acquired a temporary shelter right now in

Inuvik and we are looking at a possible government building. We haven't finalized those agreements yet. The other thing is that we are looking at the possibilities of federal units in the community as well too and just acknowledging that we do have market housing units that are being built for the RCMP. So I'm questioning if those units may be available to the Housing Corporation. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MS. SEMMLER:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. And as I mentioned in my Member's statement, you know, moving our most vulnerable from empty building to empty building to empty building is not a solution. So could the Minister elaborate on what are some of the longer term plans for the Inuvik warming shelter and its residents in my community? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**HON. PAULIE CHINNA:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. And as this is unfolding in a community right now, we are working with the Indigenous groups. We have just established a governance committee in the Member's riding. Right now, we are just looking for a building to get started on in making sure that we could find a more long-term solution, and I will update the Member as all of the information starts to come into my office. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MS. SEMMLER:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. You know, Mr. Speaker, I've asked this question a couple of times I think. I've emailed the Minister, and it wasn't just this government, it was the last government that promised us a homelessness strategy. When are we expected to see that strategy? And I'm hoping to hear an answer and a date. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**HON. PAULIE CHINNA:** Mr. Speaker, during our February sitting. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**MS. SEMMLER:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and this may be more of a comment. I just want to thank the department for their quick action, like I said and, you know, and one of the things is that the department has taken on is assumed all the staff within the -- my community. So maybe it is a question as to what the long-term plan for this is, if she can elaborate. If not, I'd like an answer if I can get it in writing. Thanks.

**HON. PAULIE CHINNA:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I will follow up with the Member. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

ORAL QUESTION 829-19(2):  
DEPARTMENT OF MUNICIPAL AND  
COMMUNITY AFFAIRS LEGISLATIVE  
PROGRESS

**MR. JOHNSON:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My first question for the Minister of Municipal and Community Affairs is does the department have a backlog of legislation?

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

**HON. SHANE THOMPSON:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Never a backlog; we've always got work to do. So MACA is responsible for 21 statutes and their associated regulations. And some of it needs to be examined to see if changes are required. MACA will be selecting one taking on and prioritizing legislative initiatives. The department needs to balance the age of legislation, its complexity, the nature, and an extent of changes required, whether or not or stakeholders are experiencing issues with its administration. MACA must also consider the capacity of stakeholders to support the legislative development, the NWTAC and LGANT have both cautioned about the capacity to participate in multiple initiatives at this time. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. JOHNSON:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I thought I threw MACA a softball 'yes' there. I note the Minister said that the department is responsible for 21 Acts. That's -- ENR has nine and Lands has three. That's almost twice as many as the other departments. And I guess my question is how many pieces of legislation did MACA intend to bring forward in this Assembly and how many realistically are we going to see? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**HON. SHANE THOMPSON:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I gave him his 'yes' last week so he's done for the yeses. So besides the joking aside there. So MACA initiated -- when were first started, we were looking at three legislations. We brought forward Property Assessment and Taxation, the Fire Prevention Act, and the Senior Citizens Disability and Personal Property Tax Relief Act. Unfortunately, COVID hit, floods hit, flood recovery hit, and so we realistically looked at what can we achieve at this point in time. So what we said is the Senior Citizen and Disability Property Tax Relief will wait until the 20<sup>th</sup> Assembly. But we're doing the necessary work to get it going there.

Also MACA is providing advanced work with this Assembly to bring a municipal -- municipalities under the assess -- to Access to Information and Protection of Privacy Act. However, I can tell the Member I just had a meeting with the deputy

minister and ADM this morning, and we are looking at ways to move forward. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. JOHNSON:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. You know what, I'm hopeful we're going to see the Property Assessment and Taxation Act. The MLA from Frame Lake often remarks that when he was on council in 1997, he asked for that act to be brought forward. And a lot has happened in the intervening 24 years except amendments to the Property Assessment and Taxation Act.

Mr. Speaker, presently the on-the-land implementation unit has nine funded staff to bring one act in -- into force. The on-the-land policy shop there is actually the largest policy shop in the GNWT for one act, yet MACA with 21 acts does not have nine policy staff. So is the Minister willing to look what his other departments have done and maybe bring forward a similar unit to catch up MACA on their backlog of legislation? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**HON. SHANE THOMPSON:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The Member talks about 1997 and all the backlog of the way things developed. In other departments, I've got 40 and 50 years of backlog so I am working on that there.

So MACA, like what most other departments, does have a policy unit. Unfortunately, some of these positions haven't been filled to date. We have been having some recruitment challenges. However, I can advise the Member and this House here that we're looking at other alternatives and other ways of dealing with it. And like I said, I just had a meeting with the deputy minister and ADM on this exact issue, and we're trying to come up with a creative solution. And once we have the solution, we will reach out to committee to expand on it. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**MR. JOHNSON:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Yeah, I think there is some creative solutions, and perhaps some of them are in the hands of the Premier with some corporate restructuring and looking at making sure all policy shops around each department are created equally.

I guess my question is in the previous Assembly, the way MACA did get some work done with the lotteries was to go out and hire a contractor. If they can't get it done in-house, sometimes they just got to hire someone to do some of this work. Is that an option that the department is exploring?

**HON. SHANE THOMPSON:** Man, I hate to do this - yes, we're looking at alternative option -- all options available to us. So -- and that is one of them that we have discussed this morning. So,

man, the MLA for Yellowknife North has got two yeses out of me so I think I'm done. I don't want to talk -- say yeses anymore, Mr. Speaker.

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

ORAL QUESTION 830-19(2):  
IMPROVING GOVERNMENT OF THE  
NORTHWEST TERRITORIES PROCUREMENT  
PROCESS

**MS. CLEVELAND:** Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I think there's one more person after me. So I'd like to request a really quick speed date with the Minister of ITI.

Mr. Speaker, I'm wondering if the Minister is willing to commit to consolidating their procurement policies under one shop and if she will also commit to a shift in focus from a service to government for procurement to service to NWT businesses. Thank you.

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

**HON. CAROLINE WAWZONEK:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, there are two different things I'm being asked to commit to.

With respect to bringing things under one shop, that was one of the items that was recommended in the review. It is something I certainly have spoken about the importance of. But as to how that will unfold, I am still going to abide by the process that we are in the middle of, which includes a defined process of engagement with Indigenous governments. So I'm not going to make any formal commitments other than to refer back to things I've already said in that regard.

And as to the philosophy underlying it and the commitments thereof, again Mr. Speaker, it's what is the purpose and the objective of procurement. Bringing it under one shop would allow us to have a clear purpose and principles of objectives attached to procurement.

So that may well come to pass, Mr. Speaker. And I hope that we all stay tuned as the process unfolds. I think the process is a good one. It's been good so far. I'm convinced it'll be good going forward. Thank you.

**MS. CLEVELAND:** Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I'm wondering if the Minister sees this as an incremental process where we can see implementation of change as they go, or does the Minister anticipate this happening in one large change at the very end once all of the consultation engagement is done, and can the Minister speak to that process. Thank you.

**HON. CAROLINE WAWZONEK:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, it's always been my intention and vision, and I've said this before, to make changes as we can. And when we saw that there were changes that were implemented with respect to the contracting terms over the last year to see what that might do, and we are already working on vendor performance management. So there's things underway already.

As far as what the next date for the next changes might be, I -- my hope is that early 2022 some small things could start to be impacted. Again, I'm mindful that as this process has unfolded, a complementary process working with Indigenous governments at the Modern Treaties table and now also at the Council of Leaders around Indigenous procurement has evolved. So I want to be respectful of that; I want to be mindful of that before we make too many changes too quickly that might impact or impede on those discussions. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MS. CLEVELAND:** Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. And thank you to the Minister for that. I'm wondering if the Minister can provide some clarification on how we -- how we got here and how we intend to not get here again. Times change. Needs of communities and needs of the government, needs of the people of the Northwest Territories evolve, and so does the Minister see procurement as a living process and, if so, how does the Minister intend to ensure that our policies and processes stay current from here on in? Thank you.

**HON. CAROLINE WAWZONEK:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, that's a big question, and I'm trying to be brief, but it's an important one and I'm happy to have a chance to speak to it very, very briefly. But there needs to be a balance between being flexible and responsive and providing certainty to the business community. The business community needs to know what they're dealing with when they're making a bid. At the same time, things do change. COVID has showed us that things do change.

So it's certainly been my view in this role that we can have certainty and have clear processes, transparent processes, but also make it clear that we will make changes when we need to and when it's pointed out to us that they are required. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Minister. Before we continue, I think the speed date has got the interpreters in overdrive here. So just slow down a little bit, and we'll get through this. Member for Kam Lake.

**MS. CLEVELAND:** Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I'm trying to make sure that my colleague from Monfwi has time to ask questions.

Mr. Speaker, the next commitment I'm looking for from the Minister is a better evaluation and picture of the landscape of procurement so that we know that the government is being held accountable and businesses have a clear indication of what is happening with GNWT procurement. I'm very thankful, first of all, to the Minister of Finance actually, with her other hat on, who did produce an infographic of what procurement looks in the Northwest Territories. But what businesses want to be able to see is more data and more data being analyzed as to how the government is actually spending public money in the Northwest Territories. And I'm wondering if the Minister is willing to commit to an annual report card of the sorts. Thank you.

**HON. CAROLINE WAWZONEK:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, if I'm not mistaken, that infographic grew out of a series of questions here in the House maybe this time last year. I've also had positive responses to it. If we can improve it, I'm committed to doing that. So let me start by saying perhaps I'll check in with my colleague to see what gaps she sees, and we can continue to improve the report card that we have. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

ORAL QUESTION 831-19(2):  
TLICHO REGION HOUSING

**MS. WEYALLON-ARMSTRONG:** Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. [Translation] Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I will be questioning the Housing Minister. She had mentioned that we will be receiving ten houses. What kinds of houses are we expecting? And also are we also going to have houses for homeownership? Mahsi.

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

**HON. PAULIE CHINNA:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I can provide those further details to the Member. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MS. WEYALLON-ARMSTRONG:** [Translation] Also we'd like to know which locations these housing are going to. We know that there's a lot of shortage of housing in the communities. They did allocate ten houses. I'm sure it's not only from Behchoko. Whati, Gameti, Wekweeti also need -- are in need of housing. I'd like to know the locations and also what kind of houses, how big of

a house are they getting? Are they getting prefab or trailers? What type of housing is it? Thank you.

**HON. PAULIE CHINNA:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The Member is correct, we have units going into the Member's riding but they're not only specific to Behchoko. They're throughout the surrounding communities as well too. But with those specific details of the size of the units, what type of units, land tenure, I will follow up with the Member. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MS. WEYALLON-ARMSTRONG:** I said all the four communities needs housing. And I want -- we would like to know where, because the Tlicho region would like to know if they're going to be getting a house, Whati, Gameti, or Wekweeti as well. And does the Minister have a plan in place to increase the number of houses in Tlicho region for homeownership program? Thank you.

**HON. PAULIE CHINNA:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Right now, we have all of the single family housing units, public housing units that are up for sale right now. We have been corresponding and working with those tenants that may be interested in acquiring homeownership for their units. And right now, specifically, we don't have any new homeownership units going into the communities. What we are building are duplexes, three - fourplexes into the smaller communities. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**MS. WEYALLON-ARMSTRONG:** Thank you. Okay, I'll do it in English, okay. Minister said that -- the Minister said they had -- she has an agreement in place with Tlicho government, with the working group. So can the Minister update and when was the last time she -- they met with Tlicho government working group? Thank you.

**HON. PAULIE CHINNA:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We are working towards an MOU with the Tlicho working group. I'm not too sure on the specific date that we have met last. But we do also have our engagements with the Indigenous groups as well, the Council of Leaders. So we actually just met with them, I want to say, two weeks ago. But then I will follow up with the Member on a specific date of when we had last met with the Tlicho solely. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Minister. Colleagues, our time for oral questions has expired. Written questions. Returns to written questions. Replies to Commissioner's address. Petitions. Reports of committees on the review of bills. Reports of standing and special committees. Tabling of

documents. Minister responsible for Education, Culture and Employment.

### Tabling of Documents

TABLED DOCUMENT 494-19(2):  
AURORA COLLEGE CORPORATE PLAN  
2021/2022

TABLED DOCUMENT 495-19(2):  
REVISED AURORA COLLEGE CAPITAL BUDGET  
2021/2022

TABLED DOCUMENT 496-19(2):  
2020-2021 ANNUAL REPORT ON OFFICIAL  
LANGUAGES

**HON. R.J. SIMPSON:** Mr. Speaker, I wish to table the following three documents: Aurora College Corporate Plan 2021/2022; Revised Aurora College Capital Budget 2021/2022; and, 2020-2021 Annual Report on Official Languages. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

TABLED DOCUMENT 497-19(2):  
GOVERNMENT OF THE NORTHWEST  
TERRITORIES INDIGENOUS RECRUITMENT  
AND RETENTION ACTION PLAN: A WHOLE-OF-  
GOVERNMENT APPROACH

TABLED DOCUMENT 498-19(2):  
GOVERNMENT OF THE NORTHWEST  
TERRITORIES INDIGENOUS RECRUITMENT  
AND RETENTION FRAMEWORK: A WHOLE-OF-  
GOVERNMENT APPROACH

TABLED DOCUMENT 499-19(2):  
INTERIM PUBLIC ACCOUNTS FOR THE GNWT  
FOR THE YEAR ENDED MARCH 31ST, 2021

**HON. CAROLINE WAWZONEK:** Mr. Speaker, I wish to table the following three documents: The GNWT's Indigenous Recruitment and Retention Action Plan; The GNWT's Indigenous Recruitment and Retention Framework; and, The Interim Public Accounts for the GNWT for the year ended March 31st, 2021. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Minister. Tabling of documents. Minister responsible for Infrastructure.

TABLED DOCUMENT 500-19(2):  
COMMUNITY ACCESS PROGRAM 2020-2021  
RESULTS REPORT

**HON. DIANE ARCHIE:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I wish to table the following document:

Community Access Program 2020-2021 Results Report. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

TABLED DOCUMENT 501-19(2):  
ROYALTIES PAID TO GNWT FROM THE  
EXTRACTIVE SECTOR TRANSPARENCY  
MEASURES ACT REPORTS VERSUS  
ROYALTIES RECEIVED FROM THE GNWT  
PUBLIC ACCOUNTS 2016-2021

TABLED DOCUMENT 502-19(2):  
ROYALTIES PAID TO GNWT FROM THE  
EXTRACTIVE SECTOR TRANSPARENCY  
MEASURES ACT REPORTS VERSUS  
ROYALTIES RECEIVED FROM THE GNWT  
PUBLIC ACCOUNTS 2016-2021

TABLED DOCUMENT 503-19(2):  
OBSERVATIONS ON THE REDACTED  
SUMMARIES OF THE MEETINGS OF THE  
GNWT-NWT AND NUNAVUT CHAMBER OF  
MINES COVID-19 RECOVERY WORKING  
GROUP

**MR. O'REILLY:** Merci, Monsieur le President. I wish to table the following three documents entitled: Royalties Paid to GNWT from the Extractive Sector Transparency Measures Act Reports versus Royalties Received from the GNWT Public Accounts 2016-2021; and, Redacted Summaries of the Meetings of the GNWT-NWT and Nunavut Chamber of Mines COVID-19 Recovery Working Group 2020-2021; and, last one, Mr. Speaker, Observations on the Redacted Summaries of the Meetings of the GNWT-NWT and Nunavut Chamber of Mines COVID-19 Recovery Working Group. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

TABLED DOCUMENT 504-19(2):  
THE NORTHWEST TERRITORIES TERRITORIAL  
POLICE SERVICE AGREEMENT, APRIL 1, 2012

**MS. MARTSELOS:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I wish to table the Northwest Territories Territorial Police Service Agreement, April 1, 2012. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

TABLED DOCUMENT 505-19(2):  
SUMMARY OF MEMBERS ABSENCES FOR THE  
PERIOD MAY 27TH, 2021 TO NOVEMBER 21ST,  
2021

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Member for Thebacha. Tabling of documents. Colleagues, pursuant to section 5 of the Indemnities Allowances and

Expense Regulations of the Legislative Assembly and Executive Council Act, I wish to table the summary of Members absences for the period May 27th, 2021 to November 21st, 2021. Thank you.

Tabling of documents. Notices of motion. Motions. Notices of motion for the first reading of bills. First reading of bills. Second reading of bills.

Consideration in Committee of the Whole of bills and other matters. Bill 23, 24, 29, 30, 31, 32, 33, 36; Tabled Document 137-19(2); Tabled Document 438-19(2); Tabled Document 439-19(2); Tabled Document 466-19(2). By the authority given to me as Speaker by Motion 1-19(2), I hereby authorize the House the sit beyond the daily hours of adjournment to consider the business before the House with Member for Inuvik Twin Lakes in the chair.

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

**CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler):** I now call Committee of the Whole to order. What is the wish of committee? Member for Frame Lake.

**MR. O'REILLY:** Madam Chair, committee wishes to consider Tabled Document 437-19(2), Capital Estimates, 2022-2023, with Municipal and Community Affairs, Legislative Assembly, Justice, Northwest Territories Housing Corporation, Infrastructure; and Bill 36, an Act to Amend the Territorial Justice Act. Thank you, Madam Chair.

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

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler):** Thank you, committee. We will take a short recess and begin with the first item.

---SHORT RECESS

**CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler):** I now call Committee of the Whole back to order. Committee, we have agreed to consider Tabled Document 437-19(2), Capital Estimates, 2022-2023, and we will now return to the Department of Municipal and Community Affairs. On page 65, regional operations with information items on page 66. We have questions, comments?

Oh, sorry. Minister, did you wish to bring witnesses? Thank you. Sergeant-at-Arms, please escort the witness into the Chamber.

**CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler):** Minister, please introduce your witness.

**HON. SHANE THOMPSON:** Thank you, Madam Chair. On my right is Deputy Minister Laura Gareau. Thank you.

**CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler):** Do Members have any questions, comments under the regional operations? Seeing none, Municipal and Community Affairs, regional operations, infrastructure investments, \$29,150,000. Does committee agree?

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler):** Thank you, Members. Please return now to the departmental summary found on page 64. Municipal and Community Affairs 2022-2023, capital estimates, \$29,150,000. Does committee agree?

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler):** Does committee agree that consideration of the Department of Municipal and Community Affairs is not complete?

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler):** Thank you, committee, and thank you, Minister. Sergeant-at-Arms, please escort the witness from the Chamber.

**CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler):** All right. Committee, we will now consider the Legislative Assembly. Does the Speaker wish to introduce his witnesses, or will the Speaker introduce his witnesses?

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Madam Chair. With me today is Tim Mercer, Clerk of the Legislative Assembly. Also Brian Thagard, Sergeant-at-Arms.

**CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler):** Thank you. The committee has agreed to forego general comment. Has the committee agreed to proceed to the detail contained in the tabled document?

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler):** Committee, the Legislative Assembly begins on page 7, and we'll defer the Legislative Assembly totals and review by review the estimates by activity summary beginning on page 8 with the Office of the Clerk with information items on page 9. Questions? Member for Great Slave.

**MS. NOKLEBY:** Thank you, Madam Chair. Madam Chair, I notice that the additional funds here are for the installation of the pedestrian walkway adjacent to the incoming road to the Assembly. Given that the ingress and egress roads of the Assembly have some geotechnical issues, I'm wondering if the Assembly has thought of perhaps expanding this

and doing an entire route way fix-up in the coming year. Thank you, Madam Chair.

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

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Madam Chair. That's stage 4 of our plans but this is stage 1. Maybe I'll just turn to the Sergeant-at-Arms to give the -- a little more information on that. Thank you.

**CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler):** Thank you. Mr. Thaggard.

**MR. THAGARD:** Thank you, Madam Chair. So yes, these funds were required to address safety concerns so we wanted to put a focus on bringing folks safely up to the Legislative Assembly from the intersection -- or the entranceway to the capitol site up by Highway 4. We have ongoing O and M funds that we use each year for the roadway and, as the Member's commented previously, there's -- there are some areas of concern with the roadway. But this project is specifically to deal with the safety of moving pedestrians around the capitol site.

**CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler):** Thank you. Member for Great Slave.

**MS. NOKLEBY:** Thank you, Madam Chair. Madam Chair, I'm probably going to steal the Member for Hay River South's question by asking whether or not the Assembly has considered just widening the roadway to include a sidewalk versus creating a separate path. Thank you, Madam Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler):** Thank you. Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Madam Chair. Actually that'll actually cost more to widen the highway -- or the road because we'd have to widen it plus -- plus the sloping and cost for material will be a lot more, and also it's still a bit of a safety concern because you'll only see the lineage during the summer and in the winter, we'll still have that issue of safety. Thank you.

**CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler):** Thank you. Are there any further questions, comments? Member for Frame Lake.

**MR. O'REILLY:** Thanks, Madam Chair. Look, as a dedicated pedestrian/cyclist, even in the winter sometimes, I usually come in from the other end from where I live in Frame Lake. But I've had occasion to walk along that road many times. I've even complained a few times to our staff about how unsafe it is walking along there, particularly when there was construction going on in front of the Assembly when we had the water break and so on. So I do support this expenditure to make sure that we have a safe entrance for pedestrians. And I

presume, though, one question, if I could, that this pathway's going to be wide enough for pedestrians and cyclists? Thanks, Madam Chair.

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

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Madam Chair. It'll actually be the same width of the other walkway which is roughly six feet. So it'll be the exact same. Thank you.

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

**MR. O'REILLY:** Yeah, thanks for that response, and yeah, I support this, as a dedicated pedestrian/cyclist. Thanks, Madam Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler):** Thank you. Are there any further questions, comments? Member for Yellowknife North.

**MR. JOHNSON:** Thank you, Madam Chair. I know in this last year we ripped up the road that kind of connects our services to the rest of this city and during that there was some engineering work about possibility of working with the museum and the Department of National Defence and RCMP and the city about some sort of district heating system. I note that that's probably now passed since we completed that work. But can I just get an update on whether that is feasible or whether that is in the future Assembly capital plan? Thank you.

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

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Madam Chair. I'll just maybe turn this to Sergeant-at-Arms. Thank you.

**CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler):** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Thaggard.

**MR. THAGARD:** Thank you, Madam Chair. So a number of years ago when we were looking at that district heating program that the city was proposing, I believe the Department of Infrastructure did a feasibility study for the Legislative Assembly and the Prince of Wales Northern Heritage Centre because of them being removed from -- from where the location was considered uptown. And it turned out it wasn't feasible to address that with the building and in fact, I think, based on that, I believe that that -- the initial project has been -- has not got any traction and moved forward. Thank you, Madam Chair.

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

**MR. JOHNSON:** Thank you, Madam Chair. I guess I have some reservations about this line item. You know, on one hand I am a huge fan of pedestrian

infrastructure, and I think the more we can do to encourage people to walk and cycle the better. On the other hand, I -- this is, you know, a few hundred meters of trail for \$400,000. I'm struggling to see it as a bit of a priority. I'd like to hear from the Speaker about is this just the reality of what a trail costs to construct these days, \$400,000, or do we have some reasoning how we got to such a high number? Thank you.

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

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Madam Chair. Just to break it down,

- The materials alone is \$75,000;
- Installation is another \$75,000;
- Tree removal is \$40,000;
- Signage, \$15,000;
- Contingency, I want to say, \$41,000;
- Design is \$35,000; and,
- GC 20 percent, \$49,000.

So that's our breakdown of the costs.

The other thing we have to look at is, you know, let's say if something happened to a pedestrian, then the lawsuits that we could foresee would be probably in the same area. So that's something we're trying to limit. And so I just thought I'd add that thinking. Thank you.

**CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler):** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Any further questions, comments? Member for Hay River South.

**MR. ROCKY SIMPSON:** Thank you, Madam Chair. So if I'm understanding correctly, this project is basically for safety reasons, is that right? Thank you.

**CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler):** Thank you. Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Madam Chair, that is correct.

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

**MR. ROCKY SIMPSON:** Thank you, Madam Chair. Yeah, I guess, you know, it is \$400,000 and I would ask if there was any consideration, you know, to using signage that says, you know, this isn't -- no pedestrian, you know, foot traffic allowed on that road and direct them to the new -- or redone path there that's over to the west. Thank you, Madam Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler):** Thank you. Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you. Maybe I'll just turn this to Sergeant-at-Arms. Thank you.

**CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler):** Thank you. Mr. Thagard.

**MR. THAGARD:** Thank you, Madam Chair. Yes, we've included funds for signage to direct folks to the pathway and off the roadway. Thank you, Madam Chair.

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

**MR. ROCKY SIMPSON:** Thank you, Madam Chair. I guess what I was getting at was that was instead of building a new pathway is to direct them to the existing pathway on that side. Thank you, Madam Chair.

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

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Madam Chair. Since the installation of the pedestrian walkway from the main entrance for the capitol area Highway 4, the Legislative Assembly started planning since then to make an adjacent trail that maybe the Sergeant-at-Arms wants to add anything. Thank you.

**CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler):** Thank you. Mr. Thagard.

**MR. THAGARD:** Thank you, Madam Chair. So the safety issue was exacerbated by the crosswalk that was put in because of the development across Highway 4. So it was created to address the safety concern of people crossing the highway to get over to the site, the capitol area, the roadway system for the Legislative Assembly and the museum. However, all it did was bring people over from -- it addressed one safety concern, and then it created another one. So we bring them across the roadway safely, get them onto the capitol area site, and then we are still putting them on a roadway, moving them around the site on a roadway, which was not ideal. I mean, so we're just kind of now addressing that secondary concern that has resulted because of that. So signage directing them to the existing trail system is certainly an option. It would take them a long way around and they'd have to make their way down and around to connect with that trail and then make their way up to the Legislative Assembly.

We've noticed over the years that people generally will take the shortest route possible to get where they're going. So nine times out of ten, they're not going to go that way. In our experience, they're just

going to come up that roadway as they are now. And of course, in the winter time that safety concern gets even worse with the accumulation of snow on the side of the roads, it gets a little bit narrower, and it's just a concern that we'd like to address to bring people to the building safely. Thank you, Madam Chair.

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

**MR. ROCKY SIMPSON:** Thank you, Madam Chair. You know, I see where you're going with this, and like I walk it pretty often. I'll always take the roadway, well wintertime, the shortcut, short way. Summertime, the longer way. But the other thing I guess is if there is a new trail, and maybe I missed it, but will there be lighting on the new trail as well? Thank you, Madam Chair.

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

**MR. SPEAKER:** Yes, Madam Chair, there will be, yes.

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

**MR. ROCKY SIMPSON:** Thank you, Madam Chair. And I guess last question is we still have the roadway going towards the museum, and I don't think there is a walkway; you have to walk on the road. Is that going to be -- is that further down the road where there will be a walkway going along there as well? Thank you, Madam Chair.

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

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Madam Chair. Yes, that's stage two. Thank you.

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

**MR. ROCKY SIMPSON:** Thank you. No further questions.

**CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler):** Member for Hay River North.

**HON. R.J. SIMPSON:** Thank you, Madam Chair. A number of my questions have already been answered so I'll probably keep this pretty short. So the stretch of road we're talking about, there was comments about the safety concerns. How many incidents have occurred on that road where perhaps someone was struck by a vehicle or there was some sort of collision or near misses, if we know of that, in the past, I guess, 25 years that the Assembly has been here? Thank you.

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

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Madam Chair. For that detail, I'll go to Sergeant-at-Arms. Thank you.

**CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler):** Thank you. Mr. Thagard.

**MR. THAGARD:** Thank you, Madam Chair. Luckily to this date that I'm aware of, there have been no vehicular and pedestrian collisions along that route. The traffic down that roadway pedestrian-wise obviously wasn't as significant as it is now. So we're concerned that it's just a matter of time that something's going to happen, and we just want to address that before we get into a situation where something has happened.

We've had a number of complaints from folks walking down there, former Members included, that it is a safety concern, and they're not comfortable or they weren't comfortable and they were concerned for their safety so that helped drive this project as well. Thank you, Madam Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler):** Thank you, Mr. Thagard. Member for Hay River North.

**HON. R.J. SIMPSON:** Thank you. The other route that was mentioned by the other Member from Hay River was from I guess the existing trail towards the Prince of Wales Heritage Centre. There is no walkway there either. Why was this route chosen over that route? And the reason I ask is because the Prince of Wales Northern Heritage Centre is a public building and, you know, generally, in normal times, we're also open to the public here at the Assembly. But I imagine they get more visitors, more foot traffic than we get here. And I know that the Assembly is responsible for the -- it's capitol area, I believe. And I wonder if that path would get more use than the path that is being proposed. Is there -- is there any information about whether or not that might be an accurate statement? Thank you.

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

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Madam Chair. Actually most people that use this trail are actually doing the loop. So the whole roundabout, if you will, pretty much the same but a lot of people when they're talking to work usually come either -- whether it's from Highway No. 4 or most of us have to travel -- walk by the old tourism centre, the -- but maybe I'll just turn that to Sergeant-at-Arms if he has anything to add. Thank you.

**CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler):** Thank you. Mr. Thagard.

**MR. THAGARD:** Thank you, Madam Chair. Great question. So we did look at priorities and areas of concern. And the reason I think that we went with this being phase one to the Legislative Assembly is the access road from Highway No. 4 to the Prince of Wales Northern Heritage Centre is a two-way road, which is wider inherently than the road coming up to the Legislative Assembly. So while it is still a safety concern, it presents a little bit less of a risk scenario than the roadway leading up to the Legislative Assembly building. Thank you, Madam Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler):** Thank you. Member for Hay River North.

**HON. R.J. SIMPSON:** Thank you, Madam Chair. So I just did a quick sort of calculation here on Google Maps of what I think the new path right look like, and it looks like it's probably under or somewhere around 200 meters. So we're looking at a couple thousand dollars a meter. I find it difficult, I guess, to support something like this just given that we have a lot of competing needs in the territory, and this is a very short trail to the Legislative Assembly. And I walk that street often. I've been here six years. I've walked it in winter, I've walked it in the summer, and I know that I'm walking on a road and if I was really that concerned, I would walk on the path. So there is sort of a sense of personal responsibility there as well to not just walk on the road. So I'm having some trouble supporting this item here.

I understand there was also a path parallel to the road that existed prior and may still exist in some fashion. I have to admit I've never seen it. So is there some sort of existing path there that perhaps could be revitalized for less of a cost? Thank you.

**CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler):** Thank you, Member for Hay River North. Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Madam Chair. Actually, that's the route that this pathway will follow, just to save some costs and it's all about safety, as the Minister of Education, Culture and Employment should know that, you know, we have to look after our employees as well, and most of them which actually walk to work and there's not much traffic at 6 a.m. when you're walking to work here at the Ledge, so. But, you know, it's all about safety and, you know, if Members don't agree with it then, you know, it's up to them to support it or take it out. Thank you.

**CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler):** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Member for Hay River North.

**HON. R.J. SIMPSON:** Thank you. And I did consider that I don't see a lot of traffic there maybe because of the hours that I do walk that path. Yeah.

I have no further questions but I do want to state that I do have serious reservations about this item. Thank you, Madam Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler):** Thank you. Are there any further questions, comments to this? I'm seeing none. Legislative Assembly, office of the clerk, infrastructure investments, \$400,000, does committee agree?

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler):** Thank you, Members. Please return now to the Legislative Assembly summary found on page 7. Legislative Assembly, 2022-2023 Capital Estimates, \$400,000. Does committee agree?

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler):** Does committee agree that consideration of the Legislative Assembly is now complete?

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler):** Thank you, committee. Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Sergeant-at-Arms, please escort the witnesses from the Chamber.

Committee, we're going to take just a short couple minute break for the Minister of Justice to have his witnesses. Thank you.

---Recess

**CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler):** All right. I'll call Committee of the Whole back to order. Committee, we will now consider the Department of Justice. Does the Minister of Justice wish to bring witnesses into the Chamber?

**HON. R.J. SIMPSON:** Yes, I do. Thank you.

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

**CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler):** Minister, would you please introduce your witnesses.

**HON. R.J. SIMPSON:** Thank you, Madam Chair. We have Ms. Charlene Dolittle, deputy minister, and Mr. James Bancroft, director of corporate services.

**CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler):** Thank you. Welcome. The committee has agreed to forego general comments. Does the committee agree to proceed to the detail in the tabled document?

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler):** Committee, the Department of Justice begins on page 55. We will defer the departmental totals and review the estimates by activity summary beginning on page 56 with Corrections and information items on page 57. Questions? Member for Yellowknife North.

**MR. JOHNSON:** Thank you, Madam Chair. I guess I don't have a lot of issue with what is being proposed here, but I do have some general questions about the state of our Corrections infrastructure and see whether I can keep this within scope.

Specifically at North Slave, I note that the youth facility has very, very low "attendance" I think is not quite the right word. We don't put a lot of youth in jail anymore and we have a beautiful facility over there. I'm just wondering if the department is looking at reusing that or can share some insights on that. Thank you.

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

**HON. R.J. SIMPSON:** Thank you, Madam Chair. So we need a facility to hold youth. Whether that is the current facility or we build a new facility, we do need somewhere. It's not really feasible to send youth away to Whitehorse or Edmonton. And I think we all know that the cost of constructing something new is a big upfront cost, and so our option would be to construct something new and then try and do something with this current facility that already exists and is pretty difficult to repurpose or to keep the facility as is.

So that's a long way to say that I wish there was an easy solution where we could say, yes, we have zero to two offenders in that unit at any given time, and we don't need that much space and we can do something else. But it's not an easy solution. Perhaps I can see if deputy minister wants to add anything to that. Thank you.

**CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler):** Thank you. Deputy Minister Doolittle.

**MS. DOOLITTLE:** Thank you, Madam Chair. Yes, the Member's correct, our numbers are low there, and I think that's a really good thing. The Youth Criminal Justice Act did bring in significant reforms in 2003 but, however, we still have to have, as the Minister mentioned, a place to -- when secure custody or open custody is ordered for youth, we need to have a place to have that. So we need both sides of the facility to do that, and it can't be sort of an open youth facility. Also, we cannot mix adults and youth and so that's another concern, we need to have adequate space for that as well. And as we do have new youth coming to our facility, there's also isolation terms as well when we bring people

into our facility. So this space, especially during current COVID times, we do need the space at this moment. But the department is always looking at our numbers for youth and adults, and we'll try to use the facilities in the most efficient ways. Thank you, Madam Chair.

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

**MR. JOHNSON:** Thank you, Madam Chair. Yeah, and I guess, you know, I've -- when there's one youth inmate in there, it's almost -- like, I know it's a nice facility but it's almost a backwards way of being in solitary confinement in a giant facility. And you know, we're certainly not going to offer very elaborate programming for one to two offenders. Can I just get the Minister to elaborate on that point, that it's not feasible to send them to Whitehorse or Edmonton. Thank you.

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

**HON. R.J. SIMPSON:** Thank you, and I wouldn't characterize it as solitary confinement in any way. There's often teachers in the facility to instruct students, or the -- I guess, yeah, they would be students, as if they were in school. There's, you know, guards who I know that they build relationships with. They might sit down and play a game of chess. So it's not like a solitary confinement situation. Perhaps the deputy minister can provide some more of what the Member's really looking for. Thank you.

**CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler):** Thank you. Deputy Minister Doolittle.

**MS. DOOLITTLE:** Thank you Madam Chair. And I would certainly suggest that it wouldn't be ideal to remove youth from their communities from the Northwest Territories and send them to, you know, perhaps not just the Yukon but BC, Alberta too. So that's certainly not ideal and probably not in line with the reforms of the 2003 legislation. And as the Minister mentioned, there is significant programming in the youth facility as well. They're looking at new program and to sort of focus on criminogenic behavior as well. So this is something new, but they -- we do have a contract with ECE to provide educational programming. We try to do some on-the-land programming as well with the youth and other training as well and we can certainly, if the Minister would like us to, provide programs that are available to youth in our facilities. Thank you, Madam Chair.

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

**MR. JOHNSON:** Yeah, thank you, Madam Chair. I guess perhaps I'll have some more questions

during the operations budget on the programming. Can the Minister give us an update of the current capacity of our correctional facilities and whether that's in percentage or number of spaces that are being used. I'll note, you know, we're a very small jurisdiction, and we have three prisons or, you know, five, I guess, if you count women's and youth, depending exactly how you count the facilities. How full are they, and just some justification for having so many prisons in such [Audio] territory. Thank you, Madam Chair.

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

**HON. R.J. SIMPSON:** Thank you, Madam Chair. And I have the updated numbers somewhere here. I can look them up.

- So at NSCC, we have a capacity of 148, and we have 55 inmates;
- SMCC, capacity of 36, and we have six inmates;
- Fort Smith Correctional Centre, female, our capacity is 23 and we have four inmates; and,
- The male facility in Fort Smith, with a capacity of 21, we have eight.

For a total of 73. And at the youth facility, we have a capacity for 25, and we have one. So we have 74 inmates, a total capacity of 253. So very, very low capacity, which I would argue is a good thing. Thank you, Madam Chair.

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

**MR. JOHNSON:** Thank you, Madam Chair. Yeah, I think we are all happy to see that both crime rates and incarceration have been going down in a rather predictable rate, which is why we have such low capacity in our prisons. But I guess at one point, I think we have to re-evaluate, you know, running a bunch of facilities with very low numbers, and even whether it's beneficial to inmates to have four, you know, members in a 23-person facility, whether it's better to have larger populations where there's an economy of scale for delivering programming -- programs. Is the department doing that work, to re-evaluate whether we need all of this correctional space? Thank you.

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

**HON. R.J. SIMPSON:** Thank you, Madam Chair. So we have the female correctional facility, and we can't combine that with the male facility. We have the youth facility, and we can't combine that with the adult facility. At SMCC, we have begun the

therapeutic model which is a different type of approach to corrections, and so that is unique. And then we have the two other male facilities, NSCC and the Fort Smith Correctional Centre. Perhaps I can pass it to the deputy minister, firstly, just to talk about that a little more. Thank you.

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

**MS. DOOLITTLE:** Thank you, Madam Chair. And, yes, the department is watching this. Certainly since COVID started early 2020, our numbers began to decrease and, as the Minister mentioned earlier, they have stayed quite low and the department is tracking this but I would suggest that not enough time has passed to analyze this in detail and provide any clear answers. We are reviewing this and, again, trying to manage our facilities in the most efficient way. We need to manage our lows as our highs. It would be unfortunate to close something and then find out, you know, in the near future that we do need these facilities. But it is something on the department's radar.

We did manage to close a pod at NSCC temporarily earlier this year, and there may be some savings, but, again, these are things that are very hard to consider with the infrastructure and the other resources that are used. But there have been some cleaning done, some maintenance issues have been addressed as well, but we do need the budget to do any sort of larger overhauls. But it is something the department is looking at. Thank you, Madam Chair.

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

**MR. JOHNSON:** Thank you, Madam Chair. When North Slave Correctional was built, I believe they call it a smudging room, but it was a room with kind of a healing circle in it, and then the Office of the Fire Marshal said that despite the architects and engineers signing off, that we were not allowed to use it. And I believe there was some capital money spent to perhaps get it open again. Can I just have an update on that? Thank you.

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

**HON. R.J. SIMPSON:** Thank you. That work has been done, and I believe the final inspection is on December 3rd. Thank you.

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

**MS. CLEVELAND:** Thank you very much, Madam Chair. I am very happy that the Member for Yellowknife North started off with the smudge room question because that takes it off my list.

I'm going to start with the three transfer van replacements for NSCC. I'm just wondering why there is a need for three 15-passenger vans when there are 55 inmates at the facility. Thank you.

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

**HON. R.J. SIMPSON:** Thank you, Madam Chair. I will point out that we are replacing a significant amount of the fleet of the Department of Justice in this budget. We actually used the vehicles quite a bit longer than I think is suggested by the Department of Infrastructure. But that is because we are aware of the financial situation. I can go to Mr. Bankcroft for some details on why we're replacing three. Thank you.

**CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler):** Thank you. Mr. Bankcroft.

**MR. BANCROFT:** Thank you, Madam Chair. We'll be replacing three transfer vans from North Slave Correctional Centre. The oldest of those units is actually from 1999. And the second oldest was from 2008. And the third oldest is from 2011.

Although our populations may be low, these transfer vans are required to meet a multitude of mandated operations such as court appearances and offender transports. And the need for three of them is because we have such a large territory, and to be able to transfer inmates from the North Slave region to the South Slave region, we always need to be able to respond to the needs of the courts and having offenders appear before them. Thank you, Madam Chair.

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

**MS. CLEVELAND:** Thank you very much, Madam Chair. I guess I'm wondering if this is a straight transfer to transfer or replacement, sorry, to replacement of a 15-passenger van or if looking at the reduced number of inmates because of the new -- or the new act, if there is a need for less vehicle and then a potential savings down the road, or if it is an actual need for that quantity of vehicle. If the Minister can speak to that, please.

**CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler):** Thank you. Member for -- or sorry -- Minister of Justice.

**HON. R.J. SIMPSON:** Thank you. Perhaps I can pass that on to the deputy minister. First, I just want to comment that I'm aware that we have lower numbers right now and I've looked into what we can -- what sort of savings we can expect, if any, understanding that there's often a lot of fixed costs and you don't save a lot if the numbers fluctuate a little bit. But I -- this is an area where perhaps we will have some savings in the future. But as it

stands, these vans presently do need to be replaced. But I can ask the deputy minister for some more information. Thank you.

**CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler):** Thank you. Deputy Minister Doolittle.

**MS. DOOLITTLE:** Thank you, Madam Chair. And while the trends are low right now with passengers, we can't predict what that will be and we haven't had enough time to analyze that so what was deemed necessary was the replacement of these three vehicles with that capacity count. So that is what the department is doing. Thank you, Madam Chair.

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

**MS. CLEVELAND:** Thank you very much, Madam Chair. I just wanted to come back to the conversation around the youth correctional centre and the space that exists there when we typically have, you know, two or three -- thankfully, two or three youth in the facility. I'm wondering if the department has at all looked into -- because there is a setup where youth can stay at the facility and then leave to go to school or have kind of a -- I'm sorry, I don't know the proper term but where they are able to leave and come back, if the department has at all look into a situation where youth who are -- have served their time are able to kind of have a transition period where they can still live at the facility so that it almost operates as kind of a housing option for youth to kind of end the cycle while youth reestablish themselves in school or within the work force and be able to gain the supports of the staff at the correctional centre. I know that some youth have really connected with the staff out there, and kudos to them on a job well done with the youth. But I'm wondering if that is an option that Justice has looked into. Thank you.

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

**HON. R.J. SIMPSON:** Thank you. I would like to hand this over to the deputy minister. Thank you.

**CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler):** Thank you. Deputy Minister Doolittle.

**MS. DOOLITTLE:** Thank you, Madam Chair. Yes, this is something that we do look at. The court does orders regarding the youth and the appropriate sentence and deterrence. However, we do try to work with our community and the city -- in Yellowknife for programming that may be accessible to youth; however, we would have to take a look and see what the risks are and if that is appropriate and suitable and if it's better served to do that within the facility. Thank you, Madam Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler):** Thank you. Are there any further questions, comments to this section? Member for Hay River South.

**MR. ROCKY SIMPSON:** Thank you, Madam Chair. I guess I'm just curious as to the two vehicles, there's one going into Fort Liard and one going into Fort Simpson? So I'm just puzzled as to why those communities are receiving one or do we have a facility in those communities. Thank you, Madam Chair.

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

**HON. R.J. SIMPSON:** Thank you. We don't have correctional facilities but we do have probation officers in those communities who travel. Thank you.

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

**MR. ROCKY SIMPSON:** Thank you, Madam Chair. I guess I just want to go to I guess the facilities and, you know, looking at what we have in Hay River it's turned into a therapeutic model, and there was a number of renovations that went on over the years. And I don't see anything in here. So I just ask if those renovations are now completed, or are we expecting some additional ones in the near future? Thank you.

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

**HON. R.J. SIMPSON:** Thank you, Madam Chair. I believe that the renovations are completed. If not, they are substantially completed and there might be a few little things here and there but I can get confirmation that they're completed? Yes, they're completed. Thank you.

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

**MR. ROCKY SIMPSON:** Thank you, Madam Chair. I just -- I guess we're talking about -- the Minister mentioned about bed usage and the difference I guess the -- between how many beds we have and how many are actually being used. Have we seen a consistent decline over years in bed usage, or does it fluctuate quite a bit? Thank you, Madam Chair.

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

**HON. R.J. SIMPSON:** Thank you, Madam Chair. I will have to pass this one off, but I'll say that the current numbers are reflective to, I think, a great extent of the COVID-19 situation and the fact that, you know, both corrections, and the courts especially, made the conscious effort to try and reduce the number of inmates. Whether or not

those numbers go back up is yet to be seen, but I think that we have seen the numbers stay low and we haven't seen any sort of repercussions in the communities. So I think it's promising and, hopefully, we can keep these numbers down and people don't see a need to keep people incarcerated if it's not necessarily required. But I can ask the deputy minister to provide some more information about year over year trends. Thank you.

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

**MS. DOOLITTLE:** Thank you, Madam Chair. And unfortunately, I do not have that detail with me today. The Minister did talk about how the trends are low, and I would say they're historically low and this has been since COVID. They haven't been on a straight decline. There have been, over the past year and a half, a few increases and then down again. But this is something we can certainly take a look at providing if the Minister would like us to do that.

And another thing the Minister mentioned, COVID has possibly made the numbers decrease, but I would also suggest that all the social supports, certainly in the city of Yellowknife, have also added to this. I mean, we haven't had deep analysis into this but it is something that seems to be suggested from those on the front lines and doing the work that this is something that is helping keep our numbers down low within the correctional facilities and perhaps the justice system. Thank you, Madam Chair.

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

**MR. ROCKY SIMPSON:** Thank you, Madam Chair. And I guess I'm concerned, too, about the bed usage because, you know, if we've got, you know, buildings that are, you know, two inmates in, you know, I'm glad to hear that we don't really have any inmates in them, that's kind of what we're -- what we're shooting for, but at the same time, you know -- you know, there might be better use for those buildings that, you know, we could be training and, you know, helping people in another way.

So in saying that, you know, looking at the decline, looking at the the bed usage and that, has the department been looking or is there any planning to maybe to retire some of those buildings or again to use them for something else in any of the communities? Thank you, Madam Chair.

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

**HON. R.J. SIMPSON:** Thank you, Madam Chair. There isn't a plan to retire any of the buildings. You know, I do look at these low numbers, and I look

that we have some facilities where prisoners could be housed in either one, and perhaps there's opportunities to repurpose some of those facilities. We already have a budget associated with them. We have facilities themselves. But there is nothing in the works. But this is a relatively new phenomenon, these low numbers. I mean, when I took over the portfolio, they weren't this low. And when we got here, they weren't nearly this low. So this huge decline is very, very recent, and it's a little early to start making those decisions. But that being said, I think we have to look into whether or not there are better uses for these facilities and, you know, for the money that we are putting into them. Thank you.

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

**MR. ROCKY SIMPSON:** Thank you, Madam Chair. And I understand that, you know, you can't have a mixture of youth and seniors I guess, and in the time that I spent in the correctional centres -- visiting. You know, like I had lots of friends -- like, I had friends in there and I'd go visit because they had good food there. And so I'm just wondering if, you know, you've got, you know, one or two people in Fort Smith, say, in the facility there, is there any way to incorporate youth at risk that maybe aren't going to school, somehow, to use that facility as well to provide, you know, some education, because I suspect that, you know, some of that youth probably know the people in there, and it's not like it's -- you know, it -- it's kind of out of the ordinary. It provides them a place to maybe learn and upgrade and continue with their education. Thank you.

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

**HON. R.J. SIMPSON:** Thank you, Madam Chair. I mean, that's a bit of mixing of my portfolios but no, we haven't looked into something like that. And the thing about corrections, it is very rigid. There are a lot of rules around how inmates are dealt with and, you know, I think the Member noted that he used to go there to visit his friends and I think if you're from the North and you go to a correctional facility, you're going to see someone you know, if not someone that you grew up with. And so it's not like these are full of people who are, you know, extremely dangerous. A lot of people have made bad choices. A lot of people have addictions issues. But that being said, the mixing of youth and adults is probably not something that would be looked into. But I'm very open to finding better uses for money we have allocated and facilities that already exist. Thank you.

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

**MR. ROCKY SIMPSON:** That's all. Thank you.

**CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler):** Thank you. Any further questions on corrections? Member for Monfwi.

**MS. WEYALLON-ARMSTRONG:** Thank you, Madam Chair. Yes, it's good to know that -- I would not have known that North Slave Correctional Centre for youth was not being used as much and it's good to know then the number is down, and until my colleague here said it. So is there any way that we can set up a program or to work with Indigenous government and to identify that, okay, the youth, the kids are not being sent to jail anymore so is there any way that we can find a program where we can keep them out of there and focus more on healing so getting them back into the society?

I know that there's lot of youth that are in crisis that needs help. So I'm just wondering what we can do with that correctional centre that's not being used as often and then maybe take that money and then put it somewhere else in the regions. Thank you.

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

**HON. R.J. SIMPSON:** Thank you, and the issues we have are that we do need the facility, and we need it available at all times. And so it's not -- it's not a reliable venue to do other things because you never know when you're going to need it and when you're not. And the fixed costs associated with it are there regardless. So it's not something that really can be used in other ways.

And as to the question about, you know, keeping youth out of the facility and helping them down, you know, perhaps a better path, like, that's -- that's what Health does; that's what ECE does; that's what Housing does - that's what we really all try to do but it's a little beyond the scope of the facility that we have for youth right now. Thank you.

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

**MS. WEYALLON-ARMSTRONG:** Yeah, thank you.

**CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler):** Any further questions to the capital estimates for corrections? Seeing none. Justice, corrections, infrastructure investment, \$1,480,000. Does committee agree?

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler):** Thank you, committee. Thank you, Members. Please turn now back to the departmental summary. There we are. On page 55. Justice, 2022-2023 Capital Estimates, \$1,480,000. Does committee agree?

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler):** Does committee agree that consideration of the Department of Justice is now complete?

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler):** Thank you, committee. Thank you, Minister. Sergeant-at-Arms, please escort the witnesses from the Chamber.

**CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler):** I'll call Committee of the Whole back to order. Committee, we will now return to the Department of Infrastructure.

Members, we have previously considered the activity summaries for the Department of Infrastructure. Please return now to the departmental summary found on page 46. Are there any questions, comments from committee? Seeing none, I will now call the departmental summary. Infrastructure, 2022-2023 Capital Estimates, \$299,381,000. Does committee agree?

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler):** Does the committee agree that consideration of the Department of Infrastructure is now complete?

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

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

**MR. O'REILLY:** Thanks, Madam Chair. I move that further consideration of Tabled Document 437-19(2), Capital Estimates 2022-2023, be deferred. Thank you, Madam Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler):** The motion is in order. To the motion.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Question.

**CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler):** Question has been called. All those in favour? All those opposed? The motion is carried.

---Carried

**CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler):** Conclusion of consideration of Tabled Document 437-19(2), capital estimates, will be deferred -- or 2022-2023 has been deferred.

Committee, we'll just take a short recess and get ready to consider Bill 36, an Act to Amend the Territorial Court Act.

---Recess

**CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler):** I will now call Committee of the Whole back to order. Committee, we've agreed to consider Bill 36, an Act to Amend

the Territorial Court Act. I will ask the Minister of Justice to introduce the bill.

**HON. R.J. SIMPSON:** Thank you, Madam Chair. I am here to present Bill 36, an Act to Amend the Territorial Court Act.

Bill 36 proposes an amendment to the Territorial Court Act that would allow for more discretion in the appointment of a judge to the Judicial Appointments Advisory Committee. The function of the advisory committee is to make recommendations to the Commissioner and Executive Council respecting the appointment of territorial judges. The Territorial Court Act currently requires that the committee be comprised of the chief judge of the territorial court and the next most senior territorial judge, two members of the Law Society of the Northwest Territories appointed by that body, and four persons appointed by the Commissioner and Executive Council who are neither judges nor members or former members of a law society in Canada.

This is problematic because it may be impossible for the next most senior territorial judge to sit on the committee in the event of serious illness, disability, conflict of interest, or even planned vacation leave. This could affect the quorum of the committee and frustrate the committee's ability to complete its work in a timely fashion.

To address this issue, the proposed amendment will allow the chief judge, in consultation with the other judges, to appoint the additional judge to the committee without requiring the judge to be the next most senior territorial judge.

This concludes my opening remarks, and I would be pleased to answer any questions that Members may have regarding Bill 36. Thank you.

**CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler):** Thank you, Minister. Would you like to bring witnesses into the Chamber?

**HON. R.J. SIMPSON:** Yes, I would.

**CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler):** Thank you. Sergeant-at-Arms, please escort the witnesses to the Chamber.

**CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler):** Minister of Justice, please introduce your witnesses for the record.

**HON. R.J. SIMPSON:** Thank you, Madam Chair. On your left, Madam Chair, we have Karin Taylor, acting assistant deputy minister, attorney general; and Christina Duffy, director, legislation division. Thank you.

**CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler):** Sorry, can you repeat the first...

**HON. R.J. SIMPSON:** Ms. Karin Taylor on your left, and on your right Ms. Christina Duffy.

**CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler):** Thank you. All right. So I will now open the floor to general comment on Bill 36. Members have ten minutes to speak to the bill each if they choose to do so. Questions? Does anybody want to speak to the bill? No? I see no comments.

Does committee agree to proceed to a clause by clause review of the bill?

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler):** Committee, we will defer the bill number and title until after consideration of the clauses.

Please turn to page 1 of the bill. Clause 1, does committee agree?

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler):** Clause 2, does committee agree?

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler):** Committee, to the bill as a whole, does committee agree that Bill 36, an Act to Amend the Territorial Court Act is now ready for third reading?

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler):** Thank you, committee. Bill 36, an Act to Amend the Territorial Court Act is now ready for third reading. Does the committee agree that this concludes our consideration of Bill 36, an Act to Amend the Territorial Court Act?

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler):** Thank you, Minister, and thank you to our witnesses. Sergeant-at-Arms, please escort the witnesses from the Chamber.

**CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler):** Member for Frame Lake, what are the wishes of committee?

**MR. O'REILLY:** Thanks, Madam Chair. I move that the Chair rise and report progress. Thank you.

**CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler):** Motion on the floor to report progress. The motion is in order, non-debatable. All those in favour? Opposed? Motion is carried.

---Carried

**CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler):** I will now rise and report progress.

---Recess

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

### Report of Committee of the Whole

**CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler):** Mr. Speaker, your committee has been considering Tabled Document 437-19(2), Capital Estimates 2022-2023, and Bill 36, an Act to Amend the Territorial Court Act. And I would like to report progress with one motion carried, and that Bill 36 is ready for third reading. And, Mr. Speaker, I move that the report of Committee of the Whole be concurred with. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Member for Inuvik Twin Lakes. Do we have a seconder? Member for Monfwi. All those in favour? All those opposed? Motion is carried.

---Carried.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Third reading of bills. Mr. Clerk, orders of the day.

### Orders of the Day

**CLERK OF THE HOUSE (Mr. Mercer):**

1. Prayer
2. Ministers' Statements
3. Members' Statements
4. Recognition of Visitors in the Gallery
5. Reports of Committees on the Review of Bills
6. Reports of Standing and Special Committees
7. Returns to Oral Questions Date of Question
8. Acknowledgements
9. Oral Questions
10. Written Questions
11. Returns to Written Questions
12. Replies to Commissioner's Address
13. Petitions
14. Tabling of Documents
15. Notices of Motion
16. Motions
17. Notices of Motion for First Reading of Bills

## 18. First Reading of Bills

- Bill 36 An Act to Amend the Territorial Court Act

## 19. Second Reading of Bills

## 23. Orders of the Day

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

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Clerk. This House stands adjourned until Tuesday, November 30<sup>th</sup>, 2021, at 1:30 p.m.

- Bill 23, An Act to Amend the Public Utilities Act
- Bill 24, An Act to Amend the Revolving Funds Act
- Bill 29, Resource Royalty Information Disclosure Statute Amendment Act
- Bill 30, An Act to Amend the Aurora College Act
- Bill 31, An Act to Amend the Pharmacy Act
- Bill 32, An Act to Amend the Northern Employees Benefits Services Pension Plan Act
- Bill 33, National Indigenous Peoples Day Act
- Committee Report 17-19(2) Standing Committee on Government Operations Report on the Review of Bill 23: An Act to Amend the Public Utilities Act
- Committee Report 18-19(2) Standing Committee on Economic Development and Environment Report on Bill 24: An Act to Amend the Revolving Funds Act
- Committee Report 19-19(2) Standing Committee on Economic Development and Environment Report on Bill 29: Resource Royalty Information Disclosure Statute Amendment Act
- Tabled Document 437-19(2) Capital Estimates 2022-2023
- Tabled Document 438-19(2) Supplementary Estimates (Infrastructure Expenditures), No. 2, 2021-2022
- Tabled Document 439-19(2) Supplementary Estimates (Operations Expenditures), No. 2, 2021-2022
- Tabled Document 466-19(2) Supplementary Estimates (Operations Expenditures and Borrowing Authorization), No. 4, 2020-2021

---ADJOURNMENT

The House adjourned at 5:05 p.m.

## 21. Report of Committee of the Whole

## 22. Third Reading of Bills