



**NORTHWEST TERRITORIES**  
**LEGISLATIVE**  
**ASSEMBLY**

**2<sup>nd</sup> Session**

**Day 92**

**19<sup>th</sup> Assembly**

**HANSARD**

**Thursday, December 9, 2021**

Pages 3361 - 3382

**The Honourable Frederick Blake Jr, Speaker**

**Legislative Assembly of the Northwest Territories**

# 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*

**Mr. Jackie Jacobson**

(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****Thursday, December 9, 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 1:33 p.m.

**Prayer**

---Prayer

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

**Ministers' Statements**

**MINISTER'S STATEMENT 198-19(2):  
CORRECTIONS ACT IMPLEMENTATION**

**HON. R.J. SIMPSON:** Mr. Speaker, the new Corrections Act came into force on October 29, 2021. The new act modernizes the Northwest Territories' corrections legislation to incorporate modern practices and approaches, shifting the focus of the legislation to support the rehabilitation and reintegration of people in the corrections system through a supportive environment.

The new Corrections Act strengthens our commitment to improving outcomes for the individuals we work with. To give people the best chance at success, the Department of Justice has been shifting our practices and the ways we work with people who come into our care. To implement this new act, we have updated the associated regulations, policies, and operating procedures for the corrections service and are ensuring staff are equipped with the necessary training to better support inmates, and to be leaders in the corrections service.

Mr. Speaker, the new Corrections Act recognizes the unique cultural background, historic legacy, and experiences of the people we serve in the NWT, and sets the framework for incorporating these elements into the rehabilitation process in the corrections system. Many individuals in correctional centres have experienced significant trauma and violence and are living with addiction and mental health needs. Our corrections officers are being trained to use trauma-informed practices that emphasize physical, psychological, and emotional safety for everyone.

A key change to the act provides for the establishment of community advisory boards for each correctional facility, which will allow for greater community involvement in corrections. The community advisory boards will be able to review and make recommendations on the administration of the act and will help to ensure the needs of inmates in the NWT are being appropriately met.

The new Corrections Act introduces procedural safeguards to ensure decisions are made in a fair and transparent manner and provides offenders with a complaints process to ensure their rights are respected. It provides for independent decision-making in disciplinary matters through the use of adjudicators and establishes clear processes for the handling of complaints and appeals.

Mr. Speaker, the new Corrections Act also establishes the investigation and standards office. This office provides independent oversight of the NWT corrections service. It carries out investigations and inspections, and can review complaints from inmates or people on probation while they are under the care of the corrections service. In addition, the investigations and standards office can make recommendations regarding policies, procedures, and correctional practices.

We have renewed our focus on rehabilitation, and are committed to taking new and innovative approaches to address the root causes of violence and substance use.

The South Mackenzie Correctional Centre's long-awaited transformation to a therapeutic community model is now complete. The therapeutic community model combines work, counseling, and around-the-clock behavioural modelling to address the root causes of addiction and gives residents a chance at a new beginning.

Mr. Speaker, the model is based on the principle of individuals having a role in each other's recovery. Similar programs have been shown to reduce both rates of recontact with the justice system and rates of substance use in participants. This made-in-the-north therapeutic community model utilizes established best practices and incorporates Indigenous cultural teachings. This is an exciting

initiative, and I look forward to seeing the positive impact it will have on the lives of our residents.

We are moving in the right direction, but there is much work to be done as we adopt and implement new approaches.

Mr. Speaker, I have to thank the dedicated staff of the NWT corrections service who will be doing the heavy lifting that is required to adopt and implement these new approaches. They provide a valuable service to our territory 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, and I look forward to working with them and supporting them as we work together for the benefit of all our people. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

### Members' Statements

#### MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON SEASON'S GREETINGS

**MR. JACOBSON:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Merry Christmas, Mr. Speaker, I'll be the first one to say it today. I just want to thank all my leadership back home, my mayors, my community corp. chairs, all the frontline staff, especially the nursing stations in the communities, thank you for your hard work. For our leadership with the GTC, the Inuvialuit Regional Corporation Duane Smith, and all the Inuvialuit staff that's working up, Merry Christmas to everybody, especially to my elders and to my youth. And I just wish everybody a really Merry Christmas and a better 2022, and I look forward to that. And I just want to tell all my colleagues Merry Christmas to all of you and have a blessed time with your family back home this year. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Member. Member for Monfwi.

#### MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON ADDICTIONS AND MENTAL HEALTH

**MS. WEYALLON ARMSTRONG:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Okay, this is Member's statement for Health and Social Services on alcohol and drug addictions. So the NWT is in crisis situation with alcoholism and drug addictions, and we need to do a better job of supporting our people to be sober and healthy and well. Every one of us in this room has been affected by alcoholism or drug addiction. Some of our family, our own family members are struggling with this. Alcohol and drugs destroy lives and entire families. It robs people of their dreams, especially young people who still have so much life ahead of them. This is not a way for anyone to live or go through life. Youth are in their prime. They should be

enjoying life - going to school, being on the land, hunting and trapping.

Mr. Speaker, I know that young people as young as 12 years old are experimenting with drugs. Parents are doing their best to work with their children but everyone needs to keep our young people safe from alcohol and drugs. They are our future leaders.

Mr. Speaker, at one time there was no alcohol or drugs in our communities. Now we see them everywhere. Crack cocaine, fentanyl, and other hard drugs are in most of our small communities.

Mr. Speaker, I am very concerned for our people that don't have control over their drinking and drugging. We know that people with heavy addictions usually end up in jail and or their lives are cut short. Mr. Speaker, we cannot wait any longer. Our people need actions from the government to support those in the grips of alcoholism and drug addictions. The government needs to be more effective and work with people in the regions and communities, not just in Yellowknife.

I am aware that 5 percent of the government operational budget is to address addictions but, Mr. Speaker, that is not enough. Mr. Speaker, the government needs to start investing in programs that respond to the needs of regions, communities, and work directly with the people where they are at. What I mean is that the government needs to meet people in their home communities and in the stage of their addictions and recovery. I have questions for the Minister of Health and Social Services after. Thank you.

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

#### MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON PANDEMIC BUSINESS SUPPORT

**MR. ROCKY SIMPSON:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, it has been a challenging year, not only for this government but more so for the people and businesses of the NWT. Mr. Speaker, the pandemic has created uncertainty, it has created apprehension, it has created division, it has exposed gaps in the way this government provides services to residents of the NWT. We need to acknowledge and not lose sight of those gaps if we expect to close them.

The residents of the NWT are looking for leadership, this government has less than two years to deliver, and we must not disappoint. We need to set up, step up, and be a can-do government.

Mr. Speaker, as politicians we must listen to the people as they impart their needs, wants, and

dreams to each of us. It is then up to us to make it reality. Residents have expectations of us. To deliver on those expectations, it takes work and persistence. We want success for all residents and for them to have that success, we must lay the groundwork and provide the tools they require to achieve it.

Mr. Speaker, some residents have found themselves unemployed, some are working reduced hours, and there are those who are required to work beyond normal hours to meet the health needs of NWT residents - all struggling in their own way, trying to keep food on the table, trying to keep a roof over their head, trying to maintain their mental and physical well-being. We must acknowledge and respect that adversity and provide support wherever and whenever necessary.

Mr. Speaker, the businesses of the NWT have stood strong over the last two years. They have cooperated with this government throughout the pandemic. Some had to close their doors, some barely survived and are still struggling, while others flourished. During it all, these businesses continued to support their employees and residents of the NWT.

The pandemic required the government to ask a lot from northern businesses, and they met that challenge. Now is the time for all of us to show our gratitude by providing that same level of compassion through supporting their businesses now and throughout the year.

Mr. Speaker, I wish all the residents of Hay River, and those throughout the NWT, good health, safe travel, Merry Christmas, Happy Holidays, and all the best in 2022. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

#### MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON SEASON'S GREETINGS

**MR. BONNETROUGE:** Merry Christmas, Mr. Speaker. Merry Christmas to my colleagues in the House. I also would like to extend a Merry Christmas to all the staff who provide valuable services to us throughout the year, each and every day, and also Merry Christmas extended to the interpretation team that provide valuable services also.

Mr. Speaker, as this is the last day of the House sitting before Christmas and the New Year, I would like to extend appreciation to my residents of my riding Deh Cho. The Deh Cho riding communities of Katlodeeche, Kakisa, Enterprise, and Fort Providence have all stood behind me, as I have for them as the representative at the Legislative Assembly.

This past year has been especially hard on all of the communities due to outbreaks of COVID and communities isolating. This is especially true for Katlodeeche, and I am glad they were able to pull through. I extend a huge mashi cho to all the leadership in the Deh Cho riding for the diligence and caring and providing assistance to the residents during this difficult time. Your leadership has guided safeguards to preventing serious harm due to COVID. Although we may not always get what we want for our communities, we have persevered and made due with what we have. Using our own resources, whether they be people, volunteers, in-kind services, food banks, and what have you, the residents should be proud how they held themselves up to the challenges they have faced. I am proud to say I represent you as your MLA, and you have made my time here an enjoyable experience, one I will cherish heading in to the new year.

Christmas is usually hard on the most vulnerable residents of our community, and we should try our best to share and open our doors to help out. Christmas is a time for spending with family and friends, and to rid ourselves of all the stresses of everyday life and enjoy life to its fullest. On behalf of myself and my family, I extend a very Merry Christmas and Happy New Year to one and all. Have a good day. Mashi.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Members' statements. Member for Thebacha.

#### MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON SEASON'S GREETINGS

**MS. MARTSELOS:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, as we conclude a busy session, I would like to take this opportunity to wish all my colleagues, including you, Mr. Speaker, and all staff of the Assembly, a very Merry Christmas and Happy Holidays. I wish everyone, including all the people of the NWT, a safe and restful winter break. A special thanks, as well, to my amazing constituents of Thebacha. It continues to be an honour serving the amazing community of Fort Smith. I also want to wish a Merry Christmas to my special community team. They know who they are. I thank my family for bearing with me while I am away. Thank you to my husband Peter, my son Mickey, and my dog Rambo, a really wild one. Have a great Christmas, everyone, and I look forward to seeing you all in the New Year. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

#### MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON SEASON'S GREETINGS

**MS. NOKLEBY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I am going to give my colleagues on the

other side an early Christmas gift with no statements or no prepared statement and no questions today.

I just wanted to take this moment to wish you a Merry Christmas, to wish my constituency assistant Colleen O'Connor a Merry Christmas, the residents of Great Slave, and everybody in the Northwest Territories. I thank the staff for all of the work that they have done for us in helping to educate me on this side of the House. I do want to wish everyone a safe Christmas and to ask the people guard their mental health, that they take care of themselves, they take time for themselves, and not being hard on themselves if they are finding themselves not in that Christmas spirit. I think of all of those that are not with us for this Christmas, including my own mom, and I just want to wish everybody a very Merry Christmas, a safe Christmas, and thank MLA Martselos for my beautiful earrings today. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Members' statements. Member for Yellowknife North.

#### MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON PAID SICK LEAVE AND THE EMPLOYMENT STANDARDS ACT

**MR. JOHNSON:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In writing this statement, apparently I missed the memo that it was Christmas day. But what I would like to see for Christmas, Mr. Speaker, is some paid sick days for the working poor, Mr. Speaker. People shouldn't have to pick between staying home while they are sick or being able to afford rent and groceries. In fact, we know presenteeism is one of the reasons COVID is spread in workplaces throughout this pandemic. The feds have recently introduced changes to the Canada Labor Code that guarantees 10 days of paid sick leave to all workers in federally regulated areas. The Ontario government introduced three paid sick leave for the period of the pandemic and have now extended that to July 2022. Nova Scotia, Saskatchewan, and Manitoba all introduced paid sick leave as well during the pandemic, Mr. Speaker. BC recently passed legislation that will mandate a minimum of five permanent paid sick leave days that comes into effect January 1st, Mr. Speaker. BC consulted with workers and employers and found that, in general, folks take about zero to five sick days of leave a year, Mr. Speaker. I don't believe we have those stats in the NWT but I would like to see them.

Mr. Speaker, the pandemic has shown how important it is for everyone to have paid sick leave. I believe we owe it to the working poor to mandate some paid sick leave. I would like to know actually how many people don't have paid sick leave. I know all the GNWT workers do, Mr. Speaker, so let's give it to everyone else. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

---Applause

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

#### MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON SEASON'S GREETINGS

**MS. SEMMLER:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Merry Christmas, Mr. Speaker. While 2021 has been a difficult year for our residents in the Northwest Territories and we have faced many challenges over the last year, I can't help but to be optimistic about what 2022 will bring us. While we will enter the new year with many of the challenges we faced this year, like the housing needs, the social issues, the economic issues, and many other issues, I know by working together that we can overcome those challenges, Mr. Speaker. As I mentioned, I am optimistic about what the new year will bring and I think that we have taken steps over this last year to find solutions to issues that so many of our residents face on a daily basis.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to wish all my constituents, my CA Loretta Rogers and her family, which is probably half of the Delta, the staff of the Legislative Assembly, my colleagues here today, and the people of the Northwest Territories, a joyful safe Christmas and a Happy New Year, and I hope that you all spend time with family and friends and surround yourself with the warmth that they bring. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

---Applause

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

#### MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON ENVIRONMENTAL REMEDIATION AND ECONOMIC RECOVERY

**MR. O'REILLY:** Merci, Monsieur le President. Bah humbug. Sorry, no, honestly I am not Scrooge but there are some more things that I got to talk about.

On April 17, 2020 the federal government announced \$1.72 billion in financial assistance for remediation of orphan and inactive oil and gas wells in western Canada as part of Canada's Economic Response Plan for COVID-19. On May 28, October 14, 2020 and February 10, 2021, I made statements in this House about the potential for the NWT to access similar funding, working in partnership with Yukon and Nunavut. As I understand it, the requests from our government keep getting pitched as bailouts for the mining or petroleum sectors, or letting operators off the hook for current liabilities. Clearly this approach is not working as no federal

investment has materialized after more than a year and a half.

Despite our fumbling, there are success stories, such as the work done by the Sahtu Secretariat with the federal government on the governance agreement for the Great Bear Lake Remediation Project announced in February 2021. I will keep pushing our government to focus our proposals on an accelerated remediation program for northern contaminated sites, not a bail-out for the resource sector.

To repeat what I've said, the Federal Contaminated Sites Inventory shows 1,661 sites in the Northwest Territories with an estimated remediation cost at \$12.375 billion, about six times our total annual budget. The GNWT 2019-20 public accounts show a total of 278 sites under our jurisdiction that may require remediation with a cost of \$75 million. This work should be speeded up under a regional accelerated remediation program for the North.

Apart from the potential infusion of federal cash, there are the added benefits of environmental protection and capacity building for other work like Norman Wells and the Polytechnic University. In other words, building a remediation economy. I have offered several times to help Cabinet pitch an accelerated contaminated sites remediation program to the federal government but there's been no uptake. Later today I will have questions for the Minister of ITI on why there has been no visible progress on securing federal investment in an accelerated contaminated sites remediation program. Mahsi, Mr. Speaker.

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

#### MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON CHILD AND YOUTH ADVOCATE

**MS. CLEVELAND:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to revive a discussion started in the 14th Assembly about creating a child and youth advocate for the Northwest Territories.

Children and youth need our special attention and support, particularly when they are being cared for by people other than their immediate families. Since the NWT started discussing this issue in 2003, Yukon has created an advocate office and so has Nunavut. In fact, we are the only of two jurisdictions in Canada without an office dedicated to protecting the rights of children on both an individual and systemic basis as well as providing public awareness about those rights.

Mr. Speaker, Yukon has had a child and youth advocate office since 2010. The mission of the advocate in Yukon is to provide services for children

and youth up to 18 years of age by protecting and asserting their rights and ensuring their voices are heard in a safe and supported way. The office advocates for children who are receiving, or who are eligible to receive, government services, including help with mental health and addictions, education, and justice. The advocate is also involved in all aspects of child and family services.

In Nunavut, the representative for children and youth was appointed in 2014. This office supports young Nunavummiut by giving voice to concerns and ensures the government protects and advances their rights and interests. And elders council helps guide the work.

Mr. Speaker, I have done my own research since this statement was written in 2019, and I have found that in the last 30 years, politicians have mentioned "child and youth advocate" over 880 times in this House. In addition, the child and youth advocate for the Yukon reported that roughly 20 percent of children and youth who access their services are NWT residents. But Mr. Speaker, I am reassured by the fact that the original author of this statement is now the Minister of Health and Social Services. From this side of the House, the Minister stated "it's time for the GNWT to provide better services to children and youth. Creating a child and youth advocate is a good place to start."

I agree. We do need to ensure that NWT children and youth need our attention and support at a time when child and family services, corrections, and education are transitioning, youth focused care and legislation, it is time for the NWT to define child advocacy in the Northwest Territories. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

And while I did not wish a Merry Christmas, I hope everyone has a good opportunity to spend time over the holidays with a child of the Northwest Territories. If anybody needs an extra one, I have got some.

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

#### MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON AL REIMER AWARD RECIPIENT AL HARRIS

**HON. SHANE THOMPSON:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the Al Reimer Award is given out yearly by Western Canada Water or commonly called WCW, not the wrestling company. This award was established to acknowledge an operator member of an organization who has provided distinguished service to the profession through the association and to the provincial operators association. Recipients have provided faithful and meritorious service to the field of public water and of water waste. Al Harris was recognized for his dedication to the water industry.

Nominations for the award traditionally comes from members of the provincial-territorial water association that works with their members involved in the public water and wastewater field of work. It is my understanding that a past board member and president of the Northern Territories Water and Waste Association (NTWWA) did nominate Mr. Harris. This person currently sits as treasurer for the association.

Al Harris has been a member of NTWWA since 2007 and has sat on the NTWWA board of directors off and on for a total of nine years. He is currently president of the NTWWA and has served five of his nine years on the board in the president's position.

Al has been employed by the Hamlet of Fort Liard for 15 years as a manager of municipal services. Part of his responsibility of his services is overseeing daily operations of the municipal water plant and waste site, including wastewater operations. Al trained in and received his water and wastewater board of certification small systems water treatment operations Class 1 water treatment operations and small systems waste management treatment operation certification in 2008.

Al was honored and feels very privileged to have received this nomination. Knowing his name was put forward by fellow NTWWA board members is a real honour. He thanks his employer, the Hamlet of Fort Liard, for their trust and direction in having involved him in the field of work. The training and knowledge he has received has led to his success in the water and waste field of operation.

Al also says he works with the great people. They work hard in providing municipal services in his own and other communities. He believes it has also led to his success. The water and wastewater services that all of us are involved with WCW provide an instrumental in the strength and health of everybody around us.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank Al for his service to the community of Fort Liard and for receiving this honour award. As well, I would like to wish everybody a Merry Christmas here and my Nahendeh residents in the Northwest Territories. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Member for Nahendeh. Members' statement. Member for Sahtu.

#### MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON DELINE GOT'INE PRESCHOOL OPENING

**HON. PAULIE CHINNA:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and I would like to wish yourself and your family a Merry Christmas and also to my colleagues as well. I am happy to say today that my riding, the Deline Got'ine government today is opening up their

preschool today, and looking at the education and the culture colliding, it's coming together in that community, and was such a milestone of their self-government agreement, bringing it to surface, and looking at their celebrations and taking education into their own hands and being the driver and an example for the people of the Northwest Territories. I would like congratulate the Deline Got'ine government and also to acknowledge my riding and to awesome work that they have done today. And it is extremely an exciting event and for years to come in looking at how they're going to be striving and looking at education at the community level. Mahsi, Mr. Speaker, and Merry Christmas to everybody and the people in my riding as well too. Mahsi.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Members' statements. Member for Hay River North.

#### MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON RECOGNIZING HAY RIVER ORGANIZATIONS

**HON. R.J. SIMPSON:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, it seems like just yesterday people were counting the days until we were done with 2020, and they thought that 2021 was going to bring nothing but sunny days. While we've seen some great things happen this year, it's been a tough year. People here or their communities have really experienced the effects of COVID and my community as well. It hasn't been all good for all people but a lot of people have stepped up. I have heard my colleagues thank the leadership of their community, and I have to do the same.

We saw people stepping up, businesses stepping up to help out. We saw the leadership like the West Point First Nation, the Hay River Metis Government Council, and the Katlodeeche First Nation. I know they are in my colleague's riding, but their two communities are very close so I have to thank them as well.

It was also a difficult year for a lot of our vulnerable population in Hay River, and there's some organizations that really helped out a lot and I want to thank them for their work too. The Soaring Eagle Friendship Centre and the Hay River committee for Persons with Disabilities, as well as the RCMP.

As an MLA, we do our best to help our constituents but we can't do everything and these are the types of organizations who really step up and fill those gaps that exist, and so we are very thankful for them.

Of course we also had the COVID outbreak in the latter part of the year, and I know that the health authority in Hay River was working overtime nonstop to ensure that contact tracing was happening, that people were kept safe. And I have to thank them; I know the hours they put in and the whole community

is very appreciative. The DEA also did a lot of work to ensure that students could remain in schools, remain learning and stay safe as well.

So I want to thank all the organizations, all the businesses, all the people who stepped up in Hay River over this past year, and I want to wish everyone, all of my constituents, everyone in Hay River, a Merry Christmas, Happy New Year, and Happy Holidays. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Members' statements. Returns to oral questions. Recognition of visitors in the gallery. Acknowledgements. Oral questions. Member for Hay River South.

### Oral Questions

#### ORAL QUESTION 883-19(2): NORTHWEST TERRITORIES POWER CORPORATION VACCINATION POLICY

**MR. ROCKY SIMPSON:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, these questions will be for the Minister responsible for the NWT Power Corporation.

Mr. Speaker, it is the season for compassion. You know, it's important that we think about the people who are less fortunate; we think about people who are going to lose their jobs. So what I would -- and, Mr. Speaker, I understand the importance of being vaccinated and so do many that are not. I was hoping that we would see 100 percent of GNWT employees being vaccinated, but I knew that would never happen.

So, Mr. Speaker, can the Minister responsible for NTPC advise this Assembly as to what NTPC's vaccine policy is and when it will go into effect. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Member for Hay River South. Minister responsible for Northwest Territories Power Corporation.

**HON. DIANE ARCHIE:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, electric utilities across Canada, including those operating in the North, have or in the process of instituting mandatory vaccination policies. At this time, Mr. Speaker, NTPC employees and contractors have until January the 7th, 2022, to be compliant with the policy. And after this, employees will be placed on leave without pay, unless there is a significant change in the COVID pandemic situation. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. ROCKY SIMPSON:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, one of the issues with NTPC I think, and most employees I guess with the government in the NWT, is, you know, a lot of them have to use air travel. So will the Minister confirm if every NTPC

employee is required to travel by air as part of their duties? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**HON. DIANE ARCHIE:** Mr. Speaker, the majority of employees are required to travel for regular duties or travel on occasion for their jobs. For those employees who do not travel regular, they must be required to travel for things like safety training, professional development, site visits, or engagement with customers, and also engagement with communities. Just this week, for example, Mr. Speaker, we had a staff member who, at the direction of the community, was not allowed into the community because of their vaccination status. Obviously, this will cause operational issues for the clean delivery of power in the communities if we're not able to utilize all of our staffing resources. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. ROCKY SIMPSON:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the Minister committed to work with impacted employees to look at accommodation options for those not vaccinated. Can the Minister advise this Assembly if that has happened yet. Thank you.

**HON. DIANE ARCHIE:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, as it is their right, all employees have had the opportunity to request an accommodation to the policy on the basis of a protected ground under the Human Rights Act. Where requests for accommodations were made, all employees received feedback. NTPC continues to engage with its employees who have concerns about the policy. Exemptions unrelated to protected grounds under the Human Rights Act are not being considered at this time but that may change in the future should the situation change as well. The resources to do individual testing in the communities outside of Yellowknife do not exist, and the corporation does not see that as a viable option.

We also, Mr. Speaker, have to consider the rights and safety of the majority of NTPC employees that are in compliance with the vaccination policy and their feelings on having to work side-by-side with unvaccinated coworkers. 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, knowing that this pandemic will morph into an endemic disease, which may well be the new normal, when that will happen is not known. But we know it has to happen at some point. And those employees laid off or terminated due to the vaccine policy may well be qualified for rehire.

Mr. Speaker, can the Minister advise whether or not moving from a pandemic into an endemic situation was considered in developing the vaccine policy for

NTPC, and will those put on leave without pay be in a position to get their jobs back at some point? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**HON. DIANE ARCHIE:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It was not considered. According to the health professionals, including the NWT Chief Public Health Officer, vaccination continues to be the best defence against COVID-19. Vaccination requirements are fluid across Canada as employers adapt to changing circumstances. NTPC is committed to providing a safe and healthy workplace for its employees, and it will continue to take conservative approach to achieve this goal.

So NTPC continues to review its policy on a regular basis as the COVID-19 evolves. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

ORAL QUESTION 884-19(2):  
PAID SICK LEAVE AND THE EMPLOYMENT  
STANDARDS ACT

**Mr. JOHNSON:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In my Member's statement, I went through the fact that a number of jurisdictions are finally, I think, taking the long overdue step of introducing some paid sick days for workers under their employment standards legislation. My question for the Minister is will he do the same? Thank you.

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

**HON. R.J. SIMPSON:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I recall yesterday in the House the Member stood up and said we have to make some hard choices. We're facing a budget crunch, and we can't have everything we want.

If the GNWT were to do this, it would be a very expensive program. And if we put it on to private employers, it could be a very expensive program for them. That being said, maybe it is something we want so we do have to look into this.

The Employment Standards Act provides a bare minimum of protection for employees. So there could be employers right now under this act who are providing paid sick days. It is an employees' market right now. You know, it's tough to find staff. And so I think it would be a competitive advantage. So there is that market force.

As I said, maybe this is something we want. And when we review the Employment Standards Act, which is going to happen in the next fiscal year, so not that long from now, this is going to be one of the things we're looking at. Every once in a while, we

have to look at our act to make sure we are on par with other jurisdictions and make changes as necessary. So I look forward to that review, and I'm sure I'll get lots of feedback from the Member. Thank you.

**MR. JOHNSON:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Yes, I do believe that there's a much larger conversation to happen; if we're going to do this, you know, how many paid sick days. Are they funded like vacation pay? Is there some GNWT contribution? There's a lot of different ways this can look. But when we do a comparison of currently unpaid sick days in the Northwest Territories, it's clear our employment standards is below average of what other jurisdictions. Is this something the Minister is also willing to look at, is increasing the guaranteed number of unpaid leave days? Thank you.

**HON. R.J. SIMPSON:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. And again, when we look at this review it's something we can look at. There's other ways that unpaid sick leaves are implemented in other jurisdictions. So some provide -- some Employment Standards Act provide for extended medical leave. In some cases, in line with the EI sickness benefits. So there are some options more than just beyond just adding days. But I want to say that I think that this pandemic has shown us that when you're sick, you should stay home, even if it's a flu. Those kind of things really do -- they hinder the economy, they hinder the public health system, and we want to ensure that we are supporting people. So I'm more than willing to look at these reforms going forward. But, again, I can't promise anything. It's the Assembly that passes legislation, and it's the Assembly that passes the budget. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. JOHNSON:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I've tried to find some information on this, and I think key to having this conversation is knowing how many people currently have no paid sick days. I expect the overwhelming majority do. We know that all GNWT workers do and those with collective bargaining units certainly have paid sick leave. It's really a small percentage of what I would deem working poor typically who do not get access to paid sick days. I'm wondering if we have that information of who presently in the NWT labour force has zero sick paid sick days. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**HON. R.J. SIMPSON:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. And I don't have that information. Most people in the -- most employees in this territory are governed by the Employment Standards Act. But that is not to say that none of those people have access to paid sick days because employers could offer that. So while the majority of employees in the territory are governed under this act, we don't have the number of how many don't have access to paid sick days. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**MR. JOHNSON:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Well, I guess my next question is as part of the review of the Employment Standards Act, is that information the department could try and find out; could we engage with some of the small businesses who are not offering paid sick days and see kind of where we are at in order to close this gap? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**HON. R.J. SIMPSON:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Any changes to the Employment Standards Act, especially potential changes that could cost small businesses money, will be the subject of extensive consultation and discussion with small businesses. I do not want to do anything that is going to put a heavier burden on small businesses than they're already carrying. So I can guarantee the Member that we will have extensive consultations on these points. Thank you.

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

ORAL QUESTION 885-19(2):  
HOME CARE SUPPORT IN COMMUNITIES

**MS. SEMMLER:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I didn't have a chance to ask my questions yesterday so my questions are for the Minister of Health and Social Services.

Can the Minister state or commit to provide the estimated financial savings from decreasing the size of the long-term care facility from 48 to 16 beds? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Member for Inuvik Twin Lakes. Minister responsible for Health and Social Services.

**HON. JULIE GREEN:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. And thank you to the Member for the question. We have some loose ends in this project which we need to tie up before we can provide a specific dollar estimate of the savings.

The analysis that's underway right now is whether it is feasible to attach an extension to the current long-term care at the Inuvik Regional Hospital or whether it would be more effective to build a standalone facility. So this is something that engineering and geotechnical work is looking at evaluating. We do, because we've gone from 48 beds to 16 beds, in any case expect some reduction in the cost, but the amount of that is hard to quantify right at the moment. Thank you.

**MS. SEMMLER:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In order to reduce the demand for the larger regional long-term care facilities, support for elders are going

to be needed to be provided in their homes. So can the Minister commit to use the financial savings to provide the support or build that capacity within the communities, in the small communities for elders? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**HON. JULIE GREEN:** Yes, thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, this is a bit of an apples and oranges situation because we don't usually take funds dedicated to capital projects and move them into operations and maintenance. So even if there was savings on the capital project, it would be spent on other capital projects, whether for health or some other kind of development.

It's important to know that we get a chunk of funding from the federal government from the First Nations and Inuit home and community care funding, and what happens here is that the regional health and social services authorities identify the resources they need to meet what we already see is growing home care needs and we evaluate those for additional resourcing. Thank you.

**MS. SEMMLER:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I know in the health centres the nurses that we hire, or CHNs, I've said it in the House, they have many roles that they play in the communities and home care is just one little part that is added to all of their emergency, everything else that they do.

So can the Minister provide how many positions have been created in each -- in Inuvik in each of the seven Beaufort Delta communities to support the establishment of home care and home support workers available seven days a week for elders to age in place? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**HON. JULIE GREEN:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, following the home and community care review, which was completed and presented to the Members of the Standing Committee on Social Development in the summer of 2020, we've invested in oversight for home support workers to try and develop standards and scope of practice for these positions. So we've been looking at, for example, what kind of clinical supports people need who have complex needs, expanded hours of service as the Member mentioned, and how to meet the needs of the growing population of people who prefer to age in place.

In the Beaufort Delta region in particular, there is funding for two regional home care coordinator roles. But at this point, we have not added incremental positions to provide extra hours of service, but that is coming. Thank you.

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

**MS. SEMMLER:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd ask when, but I don't want to use my last question for

that. So can the Minister identify or provide the total cost of equipment that's been provided to -- oh, sorry. I switched that question up yesterday, because I knew I wouldn't get an answer.

Can the Minister commit that the Department of Health and Social Services will assess all elders' homes, as well as the homes that have elders living with them in the Beaufort Delta communities, or all NWT communities, small communities, for their equipment needs and work with the NWT Housing Corporation for their access needs in order to help them continue to age in place? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**HON. JULIE GREEN:** Yes, thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, next year we're going to implement a system called Interride, which I'm sure the Member is familiar with. It's an international assessment tool that assesses people for the kinds of needs they have, the services that they require, and the resources they need to meet their needs. And so this is going to be introduced and implemented for the whole population who requires supported living of some kind. And that will enable the health planner, that we have recently hired, to develop a plan about how to meet these needs, what kind of funding is required, where the needs are most urgent, and how to go about meeting them.

So this is a very systematic evidence-based decision-making assessment tool that will tell us what people need, when they need it, where they need it, and I'm really looking forward to the results so that we have a concrete way of making decisions about supporting people to age in place. Thank you.

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

ORAL QUESTION 886-19(2):  
ADDICTIONS SUPPORT IN COMMUNITIES

**MS. WEYALLON ARMSTRONG:** Thank you, Minister -- I mean Mr. Speaker. Okay, for the Health and Social Services. Many NWT residents have voiced that they want mental wellness and addiction recovery support in their own communities. Currently, most of the positions for this work is located in Yellowknife. But what plans are underway to increase more staff in the regions?

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Member for Monfwi. Minister responsible for Health and Social Services.

**HON. JULIE GREEN:** Yes, thank you, Mr. Speaker, and thanks to the Member for that question. The focus recently in Health and Social Services has been to provide community-based funds that have specific applications for services and programs that communities or Indigenous governments, in some

cases municipal governments and NGOs, can apply for to create service delivery in their communities.

So this year we announced an addictions recovery and aftercare fund which can be accessed for hiring community-based counsellors, and those counsellors could support two kinds of projects:

Projects that support individuals living in or working towards addictions recovery; and,

Projects that support addictions recovery and aftercare programming in the community.

So this has been a very popular fund. 13 proposals received so far. And just at a quick scan of this list, I don't see that there is one from Tlicho community services agency but certainly one would be welcomed.

We have other community-based programs. I won't go through them all but I'll just say there's a peer support fund; there's a suicide prevention fund; and there's the on-the-land healing fund.

The purpose of these funds in general are all the same which is to provide community-based responses to issues that people identify. Thank you.

**MS. WEYALLON-ARMSTRONG:** Thank you. In the field of mental health and addictions, we often hear that we must meet people where they are at. Are there outreach workers in each community? Thank you.

**HON. JULIE GREEN:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, if the community has used the funds that I'm talking about to hire counsellors, there may, in fact, be someone in place who does addictions outreach, otherwise that would be a function of the community counselling service that exists in either in-person, virtual, or telephone form everywhere throughout the NWT. So community counselling is the place to go for immediate same-day follow-up.

I also wanted to mention that where communities have connectivity, we have a mobile phone app called Wagon, W-A-G-O-N, which is an interactive aftercare and recovery app which is available to residents who would like to try it out and engage with the supports that are provided. This was developed by the Edgewood institution in Nanaimo, BC, which many Northerners have visited for their addictions -- for the facilities-based addictions treatment. Thank you.

**MS. WEYALLON-ARMSTRONG:** Thank you. Can the Minister identify what specific community-based programming is in place now to support people struggling with addictions between the age of 20 to 40 years old?

**HON. JULIE GREEN:** Yes, thank you. I just went over the general list, the community counselling program, which I just mentioned, and the fact that it is now transformed into a same-day service. There are child and youth care counsellors which are offered jointly with ECE in the schools which provide support to youth. There are the E-mental health options which I just mentioned, Wagon, but there are others. There are facilities-based addictions treatment. There are no facilities in the NWT so these are facilities in the south which we contract and people attend.

We have psychiatric care and treatment available in the Northwest Territories. We have the NWT Help Line to call with immediate needs. And then I'll just mention again the three specific funds:

- On-the-land healing;
- Community suicide prevention; and,
- Addictions recovery peer support.

Thank you.

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

**MS. WEYALLON-ARMSTRONG:** Thank you. How does the Department of Health and Social Services work with other department to provide wraparound supports to people in their 20s to 40s -- 40 years old struggling with addictions such as child care, counselling, career coaching, income assistance, etcetera. Thank you.

**HON. JULIE GREEN:** Yes, thank you. Providing those wraparound supports is very important. It's not just the work of one department; it is often the work of many departments. And I'll give an example:

Right now, we're asking for an expression of interest in transitional housing for people who are exiting facility-based treatment and require a place to live while they maintain their sobriety and build up some stamina in that area. So we're working with the Housing Corporation on that. We work with ECE on issues like income assistance. We work with Justice. This is really a cross-departmental approach.

As the Minister of Justice said earlier today about the therapeutic community at the South Slave correctional centre, this is a place where people can obtain their sobriety while serving their sentence and can then move into a continuum of service which includes not only Justice but as I say, Housing, ECE, and Health. So this is an area that's new. It's one that we're developing and we're very keen to receive feedback on. Thank you.

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

ORAL QUESTION 887-19(2):  
COMMUNITY JUSTICE PROGRAMS

**MS. CLEVELAND: MS. CLEVELAND:** Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my questions today are for the Minister of Justice. Earlier this year the Minister and I spoke in the House about the mens' new day program, a healing program for men, and we spoke about how that program was set to change.

Can the Minister update the House on the new program for men who choose to use violence in their intimate and family relationships? Thank you.

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

**HON. R.J. SIMPSON:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. And of course the new day program ended. It was not renewed by the Department of Justice, and so I'm glad the Member today read one of the Minister of Health's old statements and not one of my old statements from last term about the new day program.

I think that -- so the program has ended, but the money is still there. And so what the department has done is looked at other ways to utilize that money. We found that the new day program was not working for the Northwest Territories for a number of reasons, and we didn't want to continue down that road. But we have intimate partner violence rates that are ten times the national average, and so something needs to be done.

There was a 2017 study done by the Aurora Research Institute, and what they concluded and what they recommended is that we explore community-based programming. And so what we have done with that money is we put out a request for proposals, and communities were able to put forward proposals for a portion of that money to run programs out of their own communities.

Initially, the proposal called for, I think -- you could request up to \$40,000 for one year. There was limited uptake on that, and so some changes were made. It was increased to \$70,000 a year, and we opened ourselves up to multiyear agreements. So that's where we're at. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MS. CLEVELAND:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. And the Minister might remember I already used his words against him in February of this year.

Mr. Speaker, I'm wondering if the Minister can speak to how many or which communities are taking part and what the total budget is now for the program. Thank you.

**HON. R.J. SIMPSON:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The funding is still \$290,000 a year. The funding has

been fully allocated for this year and for next year because of the multiyear agreements.

So far, we have three-year agreements with the Gwich'in Tribal Council, the Friendship Centre in Behchoko, and Liidlii Kue First Nation, LKFN, and those are each \$70,000 a year for three years. And then the Sambaa K'e First Nation we have a \$70,000 a year agreement for two years with them. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MS. CLEVELAND:** Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I'm wondering how the department will evaluate the success of these new programs that are providing support in their communities? Thank you.

**HON. R.J. SIMPSON:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. And evaluations are something that we really learned to value with this funding because some of the issues that the department ran into early on with the new day program was the inability to really evaluate outcomes and how well it was working. And so all of these contribution agreements here require that there be reporting. There will be some short-term measures, so just things like the participation rates in the program and the feedback from clients. But we also require some more long-term reporting. And I will follow up with the department to ensure that we do have some measures that are going to be sufficient so that we know whether or not this money's actually being well spent. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**MS. CLEVELAND:** Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, one of the strengths sometimes of really good reports are error evaluations, are the anecdotes that come with them so the real life experiences of people in communities. And so more outcome-based and not just output-based as far as, you know, number of people that participate in workshop, number of workshops delivered, and so forth. And so I'm wondering if the Minister is willing to commit to sharing these evaluations with the Standing Committee on Social Development as they're available? Thank you.

**HON. R.J. SIMPSON:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and I agree with the Member about the types of evaluations we need do. Just because you deliver something doesn't mean it's working. So I will commit to share whatever we can share. I'm not familiar with the particulars of the type of information that will be used in these evaluations, and I don't want to overcommit and share sensitive information that really shouldn't be shared. But I want to make sure that there is oversight of the funds the GNWT are spending. And so there will be some information that will be sufficient for that purpose that I will share

with the standing committee when it becomes available. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

ORAL QUESTION 888-19(2):  
ENVIRONMENTAL REMEDIATION AND  
ECONOMIC RECOVERY

**MR. O'REILLY:** Merci, Monsieur le President. My questions are for the ITI Minister who seems to have the lead on our remediation economy. In my statements in May, October, February, and again today, I noted the potential for literally billions of dollars of federal investment across the northern territories as part of an accelerated program on contaminated sites remediation and economic recovery.

It's now clear that my calls to action or my offer of assistance have ever been taken seriously. But can the Minister provide an update on the status of this work to secure accelerated federal investment to build a remediation economy? Mahsi, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Member for Frame Lake. Minister responsible for Industry, Tourism and Investment.

**HON. CAROLINE WAWZONEK:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the Department of ENR is the lead for the remediation economy. They are the ones that are responsible for preparing a draft discussion paper. The fact that that paper is being prepared right now should be well known at this point by committee Members. Fortunately, Mr. Speaker, the Department of ENR and ITI actually meet regularly. There's a number of initiatives where the two departments are working quite closely together in addition to which there is an assistant deputy minister that also is working in this area of remediation. And so I'm certainly able to respond as I am not entirely sure where the rest of the questions will go. I can again assure the Member, assure this House, that that discussion paper is underway. It will go through its usual processes of approvals through Cabinet and sharing with the committee.

As for the potential of billions of federal dollars, I would love to know that there are billions of federal dollars that are so easy for the picking. I have, in the past, responded at some length about the efforts that I went through, the multiple letters and emails and context I went through, to see if we could get ourselves into the federal program that was announced for British Columbia, Alberta, and Saskatchewan. That program, however, was quite specific to orphaned or inactive wells that have no owners. We've gone through our process. We've tried to provide all the information necessary. And quite simply put, the situation, the wells that we have

here have owners and they will not be eligible for that program. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. O'REILLY:** Merci, Monsieur le President. I want to thank the Minister for that. And clearly, the approach we've taken to date has been a dismal failure. From what I've seen, we continue to pitch this investment as a way to bail out the extractive sector. Federal support is not a way to backtrack and pollute our pace or absolve the private sector of its liabilities.

So what assurance can the Minister give me that we're going to change our bailout approach and start to make a pitch for an accelerated northern contaminated sites remediation program? Mahsi, Mr. Speaker.

**HON. CAROLINE WAWZONEK:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I don't agree that there is any sort of bailout program and so in that sense I suppose I could simply say there is no direction to go towards any sort of bailout and end my answer at that.

I, however, Mr. Speaker, will continue on to reassure everyone that the polluter pays principle continues to be the live principle that applies in the Northwest Territories. That hasn't changed. And as for, again, looking for opportunities to build the remediation economy, that discussion paper's already underway, led by ENR.

And in the meantime, Mr. Speaker, although we might not find ourselves fitting into the program that was announced for those three western provinces, we're already looking at whether there's a way to pivot our ask to better adapt to the circumstances and situation we have here in the Northwest Territories so that we can access, if there are funds available, that we can be able to access them or find a way to ask for them that's more meaningful. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. O'REILLY:** Merci, Monsieur le President. I want to thank the Minister for that. I think part of the problem here is that we have no concrete proposal that's been put together to show what the contaminated sites are, the risks they pose, the cost to assess and remediate them, and the benefits that could accrue. I'm more than happy to roll up my sleeves and help with that work.

Can the Minister tell us whether there is a concrete proposal for an accelerated northern contaminated sites remediation program? Mahsi, Mr. Speaker.

**HON. CAROLINE WAWZONEK:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. So, again, ENR is the lead in terms of managing contaminated sites and the contaminated sites inventory. The Department of ITI certainly is responsible for liaising as well with the department on the federal level. With respect to the industry sector, Mr. Speaker, I can assure you that we did

undertake a fairly extensive program in order to determine the various types of sites and sumps all across the Northwest Territories. Simple fact is they have current owners and -- including all those sumps and as such, they didn't fit into that federal program. For a future ask, that's exactly why there's a discussion paper that's being put together so that there is an organized ask, goes across all of the departments that are involved on this initiative. And, Mr. Speaker, that effort is already well under its way -- underway. The drafts will be prepared in early 2022. Might not quite be a Christmas present, but maybe we'll have it in time for the Easter Bunny. 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. And as my Christmas present, this will probably be the last question I can ask my Cabinet colleagues in 2021.

We have an extensive inventory of contaminated sites so there's lots of work to be done. That work should also be part of -- a key part of what the polytechnic university might look at as well to help build capacity and capture opportunities for remediation economy.

Will the Minister commit to regularly update regular MLAs on her efforts to secure federal investment to accelerate remediation work? Mahsi, Mr. Speaker.

**HON. CAROLINE WAWZONEK:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, there's too many times where perhaps the Member from Frame Lake and I appear to disagree. This isn't one of them. I also agree that the remediation economy is one that we need to be looking at, that we need to look at carefully, that we need to find the opportunities, and it's going to involve not only ITI but ENR, ECE, and Lands.

So, yes, Mr. Speaker, I certainly will be more than happy to ensure that bringing all of that together and updating this House happens regularly. When there's multiple departments involved, it does take a bit more coordinating. But it's a lot of good work that's happening, and I'll definitely make that commitment. Thank you.

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

ORAL QUESTION 889-19(2):

NORTHWEST TERRITORIES ARTS PROGRAM

**MR. ROCKY SIMPSON:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. And it's good to hear the enthusiasm in Minister's voice. Mr. Speaker, the NWT arts program offers, as she said, registering artists the choice as well to have a public or private profile on this website. But I guess

the question I have, what does this actually mean, and does this allow for art to be sold on that website as well? Thank you.

**HON. CAROLINE WAWZONEK:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm happy to give some information about the difference between the two. If there's a public profile on the NWT arts website, then they can use that as a way to help promote themselves. They can link to their own public pages. If they have a private profile, then, Mr. Speaker, they wouldn't have as much information available on the site. They'd certainly still be a registered artist so that they can use the branding. But obviously, that's not quite the same in terms of the promotion that they might get, but they may -- certainly it's up to them to be able to decide. The Northwest Territories arts doesn't actually sell art or sell artwork, but there is the "where to buy" section that can help link customers to online stores and to stores here in the Northwest Territories. Thank you.

**MR. ROCKY SIMPSON:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the department promotes the NWT arts logo as a mark of authentic artwork in the marketplace and the website as a tool to find NWT art and artists. Does this logo differentiate between Indigenous and non-Indigenous artists, as we have Metis, First Nations, and Inuit artisans. Their artwork, as far as I'm concerned, should be recognized and promoted as such because it's -- you know, it's valued throughout Canada and worldwide as well. Thank you.

**HON. CAROLINE WAWZONEK:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, at present, no, the arts logo doesn't differentiate between the artists' background of any sort. They are a Northwest Territories artist, and that is the extent of it. So I mean obviously if somebody wants to find out more information, again, they can go to the artist's profile. But that may be the sort of item where artists themselves may want to discuss with us if they are interested in seeing some differentiation. 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 took a look at the strategy, the 2021, 2031 strategy this morning, and I noticed that it was silent on distinguishing between Indigenous and non-Indigenous artists. And I think that, you know, by not having that -- not distinguishing, we're missing out on a big market out there. And I think it's something that the department should actually look at.

And, Mr. Speaker, you know, we got buyers who are seeking northern Indigenous artwork, and they need to have a mechanism that is central, accessible, and safe to use. And I guess what I'm saying is that we

need a platform that artists can, you know -- that can go on there and they could have their product on there, and it's -- you know, the government looks after the cost of managing it and so we can get that -- you know, get the artisans' products out to the world. And, you know -- and I don't see anything like that. You know, all I see is kind of Facebook and like Kijiji, eBay, you see some stuff on there, but, you know, you really have to look for it. And we need something that's central to the NWT.

So how is this accomplished or to be accomplished, or is it even on the department's radar to have something that's central? And I have talked to the Minister of ECE about it as well so I'm hoping that between the two departments they can kind of take a look at it and decide whether it's worthwhile pursuing. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**HON. CAROLINE WAWZONEK:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. And so, again, at present, that's not a distinction that is being made, but we're at a good moment in time with the new art strategy having come out and a lot of work happening right now to determine the future of ways in which we're going to promote arts in the Northwest Territories. So I can certainly speak with my colleague of course at E, C and E about this, about whether there is some differentiation that might happen and want to of course talk to the artists themselves about what that might look and what benefit they would see from that. We do certainly have the seals and sealing network which does promote specifically Indigenous crafts based on seal skins. So that may be somewhere to start and somewhere to see just how -- how the impact of having an Indigenous lens and Indigenous identifier included might impact on buying decisions. So, you know, as I said, happy to look into that and certainly want to make sure we're promoting our artists. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

ORAL QUESTION 890-19(2):  
PUBLIC ACCOUNTS AND LITIGATION AGAINST  
THE GOVERNMENT OF THE NORTHWEST  
TERRITORIES

**MR. JOHNSON:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I already got my early Christmas present from the Minister of Finance when she tabled the 2021 public accounts yesterday. And in those public accounts, Mr. Speaker, a trend that has continued for a number of years continues on with the GNWT exponentially getting sued for more and more money, well over a \$100 million right now. I was just hoping the Minister of Finance could shed some light on what is going on here. Who is suing us? And why does this number just exponentially grow? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Member for Yellowknife North. Minister responsible for Finance.

**HON. CAROLINE WAWZONEK:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I didn't know I was going to get called Santa Claus today. But, you know, Mr. Speaker, there's -- I don't know I'd characterize it as exponential growth. I am able to look at of course all of the various lawsuits that are issued against the GNWT. We don't have any control over who decides to sue the government. And I've asked the department to find out whether in fact this is something where it's unusual for the GNWT as opposed to all governments across Canada. I can say from my past life, but there's sometimes a bit of a pension to sue the government on the assumptions that we have deeper pockets than what we actually maybe do. Anything that's been filed publicly, anyone can go and access the court filing records. And in those filing records, they would see who has sued the government and for what amount.

The number of the \$107 million that's being described here, that is for a contingent liability. What that means, Mr. Speaker, is the total amount that someone is suing us for if it is unknown whether or not that will end one way or another, it's included at that point. It is not an actual liability. It's not the actual amount that we're expecting to pay. It's not even -- it's not reflective of where a settlement might be at. That's a different value entirely. That's your legal liability, and it's much, much lower. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. JOHNSON:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'll have questions at another time about if we can somehow perhaps take what's filed in the courts and get it somewhat public. I know there's some tension in doing that with matters before the courts. But I guess I want to talk about after that process.

You know, none of us want to see a \$100 million all of a sudden show up in our budget. If we do settle these, and I assume we'll settle them for much less than that, does that get reported publicly anywhere, Mr. Speaker?

**HON. CAROLINE WAWZONEK:** Yes, thank you, Mr. Speaker. Yes, Mr. Speaker, so when there's a legal liability, that's where there's an amount that is more determined where it's, you know, at a point where there's some relative certainty around the final amount, that does get reported. That is reported in the financial statements. And when there's a final statement, in fact, that -- if there's a liability that's owing or an amount that's being paid for under a settlement, then that is included under the specific department that is involved with that particular litigation. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. JOHNSON:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I know in the past, both by myself and by the media, there

have been questions about, you know, when we do settle cases what happened, what lessons, and there's kind of been this tension and resistance to not answer them. Sometimes I have caught them in the specific department's public accounts or a supplemental appropriation if it's significant enough and they can't find it internally. I know that happened with the Norman Wells Health Centre as an example. But can I just get some clarification of when we can't answer questions about public money that has been settled or why there has been a refusal in the past. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**HON. CAROLINE WAWZONEK:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, if a matter is still outstanding as a matter of ongoing legal determination, well, then we can't speak to the matter. I mean, obviously, as representative of the government, we'd be speaking on a matter that has lawyers involved that's before a legal decision maker. It's not appropriate for us to speak about the details. When it comes to this matter being settled, it is quite standard -- industry standard, not necessarily anything do with the government, that there would be confidentiality provisions associated. The confidentiality provisions, really, they benefit all the parties of litigation and, in fact, a lot of times litigants who have put themselves forward don't want their information shared.

You know, Mr. Speaker, I can say that having looked briefly at the list of outstanding litigation, a large number of it is individuals who have claims of past abuse against governments, government agents, government agencies, or who are looking to make those connections, whether that will actually tail back to the government or not. As an example, I suspect that many of those individuals would not want a final settlement detail to be included in public accounting documents.

So that's what makes it difficult for us as ministers to come out and to stand up and to try to detail all of this because they are matters where it's just simply not appropriate to give that kind of information. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**MR. JOHNSON:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I suspect there's a much larger conversation here about the appropriateness of NDAs in society generally and with the government, you know, sometimes ask for NDAs when perhaps the victim does not even want them. But I guess I'll go to settlement agreements that are contract disputes, I know in the past they have had confidentiality requirements, which I think if we're paying out millions of dollars of public money in some sort of construction dispute, we should have a principle that there isn't one so that when I see that money in a corresponding budget or a public account, I can actually ask questions about it. Is this

something the Minister of Finance is willing to review? Thank you.

**HON. CAROLINE WAWZONEK:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I mean, as far as going back and looking at the settlement provisions, that's probably more of a question for the Minister of Justice and the Minister of Justice's department and the extent to which that would impede the ability to settle, whether it might, frankly -- you know, whether it would impede the ability to settle or whether it would breach expectations that are typically brought to us. I mean, I can certainly speak further about this not in the House but it would be drawing on my own experience as a lawyer where that's not the role I'm in anymore, Mr. Speaker. So, you know, we can certainly -- we are always looking for ways to improve our public transparency in the accounts and in the financial documents. We're going to continue to try and do that. When I went through our public accounts and contingent liabilities were mentioned by the auditors of the Auditor General's, there was no concerns raised. But if there's ways we can at least assist committee in terms of understanding that, Mr. Speaker, I'm happy to try and do that because this -- this shouldn't be made out to be something that it's not. And I think a little bit more information at least to Members can help alleviate that, then I'll certainly look for ways. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

ORAL QUESTION 891-19(2):  
ADDICTIONS EDUCATION

**MS. WEYALLON-ARMSTRONG:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm asking this question because I worked in the school for many years, and it's to the Department of Health and Social Services regarding the addictions.

Children are being exposed to alcoholism and drug addictions throughout their entire school experience. What programs are in place for school age from elementary through to high school to educate young people about the negative impacts of alcohol and drugs, drug addictions? Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Member for Monfwi. Minister responsible for Health and Social Services.

**HON. JULIE GREEN:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I feel like I would like to consult my colleague, the Minister of Education, Culture and Employment, to provide a full response on that. I don't have that information off the top of my head. Thank you.

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

**MS. WEYALLON-ARMSTRONG:** Thank you. I know I should have addressed Minister of Education as well, but I do have one more questions but it's more technical, and I will submit written questions for that. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Member for Monfwi. Would the Minister like to respond or -- take it as a comment. Thank you. Oral questions. Member for Kam Lake.

ORAL QUESTION 892-19(2)  
HEALTH CARE CENTRE STAFFING

**MS. CLEVELAND:** Sorry, no, I'm trying to keep up with emails. Thank you. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, I'm going to start with a really quick question for the Minister of Health and Social Services. My really quick question is does the Minister of Health and Social Services expect any closures of health care centres in the Northwest Territories due to staff shortages? Thank you.

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

**HON. JULIE GREEN:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm going to give a really quick answer. No.

**MS. CLEVELAND:** Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. That's my only question I have on that one but I'd like to go back on your list for further questions.

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

ORAL QUESTION 893-19(2)  
IMMIGRATION MEDICAL

**MS. CLEVELAND:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my next questions are also for the Minister of Health and Social Services in regards to immigration medicals.

The federal website indicates that only a panel physician can perform an immigration medical exam, and the NTHSSA website indicates that all of our physicians are panel physicians for the purposes of immigration medicals. Contradicting that, the federal website, if you punch in that you're trying to locate a panel physician in the Northwest Territories, it indicates that we have no panel physicians here in the Northwest Territories. And so I'm wondering if Health and Social Services will work with the federal government to have our NWT physicians added to the federal website? Thank you.

**HON. JULIE GREEN:** Yes, thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, as the Member has referenced, the immigration medicals are driven by the federal government as they are the primary regulator of

immigration. And as she said, NTHSSA can't assign physicians to immigration -- to IRCC panels. But we are working with the federal government to have physicians added to the list of paneled physicians who can do immigration medicals, which I just have to say are quite involved. They are maybe not your standard medical as you may have experienced it in your life.

It is in fact possible to have an IRCC medical performed in Yellowknife because while we don't have paneled physicians here, locations which are a certain distance from major centres are not required to have dedicated panel physicians. I think the key here is that when the person is making an appointment for the medical, it's really important to stress that it is an immigration medical so that all of the additional tests and paperwork are completed. Thank you.

**MS. CLEVELAND:** Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. And I appreciate that from the Minister, and I really hope that we can get that fixed as far as coordinating with the federal government to have their website changed. It does add uncertainty for people travelling through that process here in the Northwest Territories.

I do find as well that I hear a lot from constituents who, they do contact NTHSSA to book an appointment and what they find out is that there is a lengthy period of time that they have to wait in order to complete that process, and sometimes that puts them too far up against the wall for their deadlines with Immigration Canada. And so for certainty, they end up travelling to Alberta in order to complete their immigration medicals. And so I'm wondering if the NTHSSA would be able to provide service standard commitments to people doing their immigration medicals in Yellowknife? Thank you.

**HON. JULIE GREEN:** Yes, thank you, Mr. Speaker. As I mentioned, we're in discussions with the federal government on this topic. I don't feel like I'm in a position at this time to make a commitment on service standards. But I do take the Member's point that the service turnaround time is putting undue stress on people who are counting on that turnaround time in order to secure their immigration status. Thank you.

**MS. CLEVELAND:** Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, when we take a jurisdictional scan of Canada, we see that the average cost for a medical in Nova Scotia is \$200; the average cost in Ontario, \$300; and in Edmonton, \$365. Here in Yellowknife, the cost has an average of about \$675. And so I'm wondering why medicals are more expensive in the Northwest Territories. Thank you.

**HON. JULIE GREEN:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I wonder if the Member can point to anything that is

cheaper in the NWT than it is anywhere else in the country, and that certainly is true for health as well. So what happens here is that several factors come into play to determine the cost of services and fees. They're set on a cost recovery basis. We're not trying to profit from this. But, for example, if chest x-rays are required as part of the medical exam, they must be sent to Alberta for review, and we have to pay the cost of both sending them and having the review done.

So this is an additional cost that may not be relevant in the southern provinces. But we can certainly take another look at our fee structure. We don't want to overcharge people but nor do we want to subsidize them. Thank you.

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

**MS. CLEVELAND:** Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I'd say hugs are cheaper in the North because everybody wants to give them. It's the last day. Well, COVID friendly hugs.

Mr. Speaker, is it possible for NTHSSA to work with the federal government, to even the playing field on immigration across Canada, and perhaps have the Immigration Canada support the NWT's drive for immigration by evening the playing field on the cost of immigration medicals in the Northwest Territories. Thank you.

**HON. JULIE GREEN:** Yes, thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, as an immigrant myself, I appreciate and value the role of immigration in our society in building our society, providing a skilled workforce. As you may know, my family came here, my dad is a plumber or was at the time we came, a plumber, and we had to go through all these hoops back in the day. And so we want to make things as efficient as possible. But as I said earlier, there are some limitations on what we can do as a territory where this is a federal jurisdiction. And so I'm not able at this time to say that we will match the current fee structure that Alberta has because I really feel that that is beyond my ability to follow through on. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Minister. Colleagues our time for oral questions has expired. Written questions. Member for Monfwi.

### Written Questions

WRITTEN QUESTION 33-19(2):  
COMMUNITY BASED POST-SECONDARY  
EDUCATION

**MS. WEYALLON-ARMSTRONG:** Community Based Post-Secondary Education Program:

My questions are for the Minister of Education, Culture and Employment. There are many challenges Tlicho residents face if they want to pursue post-secondary education.

Aurora College has a presence in each of the Tlicho communities through the Adult Education Learning Centre but these centres do not deliver Aurora College diploma programs. If Tlicho people were provided the opportunity to become a teacher, a social worker, or even a nurse through remote learning centres, Tlicho residents could remain in their community while working towards an education that results in long-term employment in their home community. There's five questions.

1. To date, how much money has the Government of the Northwest Territories spent on relocation costs to hire non-Northwest Territories residents for employment in schools within the last five years;
2. Since 2018, how many Northerners have graduated from Aurora College diploma programs in nursing, education and social work;
3. How many people in the Northwest Territories have a grade 12 education and are on income support;
4. Can the Minister provide data showing how many Indigenous teachers, social workers and nurses are in the Northwest Territories; and,
5. When will Aurora College complete the report on the teacher and social work program and open doors to students?

Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Member for Monfwi. Written questions. Returns to written questions. Replies to the Commissioner's address. Petitions. Reports of committees on the review of bills. Reports of standing and special committees. Tabling of documents. Minister responsible for Industry, Tourism and Investment.

### Tabling of Documents

TABLED DOCUMENT 539-19(2):  
CRITICAL MINERALS WORKSHOP  
INFORMATION PACKAGE

**HON. CAROLINE WAWZONEK:** Mr. Speaker, I wish to table the following document: Critical Minerals Workshop Information Package. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

TABLED DOCUMENT 540-19(2):  
NORTHWEST TERRITORIES CORONER  
SERVICE 2020 ANNUAL REPORT INCLUDING 10  
YEAR REVIEW 2011-2020

**HON. R.J. SIMPSON:** Mr. Speaker, I wish to table the following document: Northwest Territories Coroner Service 2020 Annual Report Including 10 year Review 2011-2020. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Minister. Tabling of documents. Minister responsible for Municipal and Community Affairs.

TABLED DOCUMENT 541-19(2):  
OPERATIONS REPORT 2020-2021 WESTERN  
CANADA LOTTERY ACT

**HON. SHANE THOMPSON:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I wish to table the following document: Operations Report 2020-2021 Western Canada Lottery Act. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Minister. Tabling of documents. Minister responsible for the Northwest Territories Housing Corporation.

TABLED DOCUMENT 542-19(2):  
NORTHWEST TERRITORIES HOUSING  
CORPORATION ANNUAL REPORT 2020-2021

**HON. PAULIE CHINNA:** Mr. Speaker, I wish to table the document: Northwest Territories Housing Corporation Annual Report 2020-2021. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Minister. Tabling of documents. Minister responsible for the Northwest Territories Power Corporation.

TABLED DOCUMENT 543-19(2):  
ANNUAL REPORT 2020-21 NORTHWEST  
TERRITORIES HYDRO CORPORATION AND  
NORTHWEST TERRITORIES POWER  
CORPORATION

**HON. DIANE ARCHIE:** Mr. Speaker, I wish to table the following document: Annual Report 2020-21 Northwest Territories Hydro Corporation and Northwest Territories Power Corporation. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Minister. Tabling of documents. Minister responsible for Health and Social Services.

TABLED DOCUMENT 544-19(2):  
FOLLOW-UP LETTER FOR ORAL QUESTION  
820-19(2): STAFFING AT STANTON  
TERRITORIAL HOSPITAL

**HON. JULIE GREEN:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I wish table the following document: Follow-up Letter for Oral Question 820-19(2): Staffing at Stanton Territorial Hospital. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

### Motions

MOTION 46-19(2):  
APPOINTMENTS TO BOARD OF MANAGEMENT  
AND STANDING COMMITTEE ON  
GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS,  
CARRIED

**MR. O'REILLY:** Merci, Monsieur le President.

WHEREAS this Legislative Assembly is required to appoint alternate members to the Board of Management in accordance with section 36 of the Legislative Assembly and Executive Council Act;

AND WHEREAS Rule 89 requires that the Assembly appoint a Board of Management in accordance with section 26 of the Legislative Assembly and Executive Council Act;

AND WHEREAS there are currently two vacancies for alternate members of the Board of Management;

NOW THEREFORE I MOVE, seconded by the honourable Member for Hay River North that the following members be appointed as alternate members of the Board of Management: Mr. Rocky Simpson, the member for Hay River South; and, Ms. Caroline Cochrane, the Member for Range Lake.

AND FURTHER that the following members be appointed to the Standing Committee on Government Operations: Mrs. Lesa Semmler, the Member for Inuvik Twin Lakes; Ms. Caitlin Cleveland, the Member for Kam Lake; Mrs. Frieda Martselos, the Member for Thebacha; and Mr. Rylund Johnson, the member for Yellowknife North. Mahsi, Mr. Speaker.

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

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Question.

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

---Carried

Motion. Member for Thebacha.

MOTION 47-19(2):  
REPEAL AND REPLACE RULES OF THE  
NORTHWEST TERRITORIES LEGISLATIVE  
ASSEMBLY,  
CARRIED

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

WHEREAS the proceeding of the Legislative Assembly of the Northwest Territories and all of its Standing and Special Committees are conducted in accordance with the Rules of the Legislative Assembly of the Northwest Territories;

AND WHEREAS the current Rules of the Legislative Assembly of the Northwest Territories were adopted on February 12th, 2021;

AND WHEREAS the Rules of the Legislative Assembly have been reorganized;

AND WHEREAS a copy of the revised and approved Rules of the Legislative Assembly of the Northwest Territories was tabled in this House on December the 7th, 2021 and identified as Tabled Document 527-19 (2);

NOW THEREFORE I MOVE, seconded by the honourable Member for Hay River North, that this Legislative Assembly repel the rules of the Legislative Assembly of the Northwest Territories originally adopted on February 12th, 2021, and adopt the newest version of the rules of the Legislative Assembly of the Northwest Territories identified as Tabled Document 527-19(2);

AND FURTHER that the new rules of the Legislative Assembly of the Northwest Territories, upon adoption of this motion, come into effect February the 2nd, 2022.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Question.

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

---Carried

Motions. Member for Thebacha.

MOTION 48-19(2):  
EXTENDED ADJOURNMENT OF THE HOUSE TO  
FEBRUARY 2, 2022,  
CARRIED

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

I MOVE, seconded by the honourable Member for Hay River North, that, notwithstanding Rule 4, when this House adjourns on December 9th, 2021, it shall be adjourned until Wednesday, February 2nd, 2022;

AND FURTHER, that any time prior to February 2nd, 2022, if the Speaker is satisfied, after consultation with the Executive Council and Members of the Legislative Assembly, that the public interest requires that this House should meet at an earlier time during the adjournment, or at a time later than the scheduled resumption of the House, the Speaker may give notice and thereupon the House shall meet at the time stated in such notice and shall transact its business as if it had been duly adjourned to that time.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Question.

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

---Carried

Motions. Notices of motion for the first reading of bills. First reading of bills. Second reading of bills. Consideration of Committee of the Whole of bills and other matters. Bill 23, Bill 29 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. Member for Hay River North.

**HON. R.J. SIMPSON:** Thank you, Madam Chair. I just want to take a moment and say that for every word we speak in this House, there is a group of interpreters who are saying those same words. And so they have been with us this whole time and they have been busy, they have been working very hard, and I want to take a moment on our last day to make sure that we recognize their work and I would like the House to join me in giving them a round of applause. Thank you, Madam Chair.

---Applause

**CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler):** Thank you, Member. Member for Frame Lake, what is the wish of committee?

**MR. O'REILLY:** Thanks, Madam Chair. That's a pretty hard act to follow. But I move that the chair rise and report progress.

**CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler):** The motion is in order and is non-debatable. All those in favour? All those opposed? Abstentions? The motion is carried. I will now rise and report progress.

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

### Report of Committee of the Whole

**MS. SEMMLER:** Mr. Speaker, your committee has been considering Bill 23 and Bill 29 and would like to report progress, and, Mr. Speaker, I move that the report of the committee of the Whole be concurred with. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Member for Inuvik Twin Lakes. Do we have a seconder? Member for Frame Lake. All those in favour? All those opposed? Any abstentions? The motion is carried.

---Carried

Third reading of bills.

Madam Clerk, will you ascertain if the Commissioner of the Northwest Territories, the Honourable Margaret Thom, is prepared to enter the Chamber to assent to bills.

### Assent to Bills

**THE COMMISSIONER OF THE NORTHWEST TERRITORIES (Hon. Margaret M. Thom):** Mahsi, please be seated.

Mr. Speaker and Members of the Legislative Assembly, good afternoon.

[Translation] Thank you, it is good to be here and see all of you. It seems so long that I was to thank you for your hard work and your patience during these challenging times. I want to say thank you. [Translation Ends].

It seems such a long time to see each and every one of you again. It seems so long ago that I was here addressing you, and I want to thank each and every one of you for your hard work and your patience during these challenging times.

As we enter the festive season and what is our third year of the COVID-19 pandemic, we continue to face many challenges.

The challenges will continue and I believe that is what gives us courage, gives us strength, and it gives us the opportunity for personal growth. In spite of the challenges, we must keep moving forward with the best of our abilities and always remember the

accomplishments that we have each made - both personally and professionally.

The last two years during this pandemic has been very difficult, particularly to those of us who have lost loved ones due to the pandemic or other reasons. We mourn the loss of loved ones, we celebrate and cherish the ones present, and we must have faith and hope for the future and excitement for the ones yet to come.

As you journey home for this well-deserved break with your families, friends, and your constituents, know that you are going to make cherished memories. Memories are precious.

I wish you sincere blessings of the season and Happy Holidays. Mahsi.

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

- Bill 24: An Act to Amend the Revolving Funds 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: The National Indigenous Peoples Day Act
- Bill 36: An Act to Amend the Territorial Court Act
- Bill 42: Supplementary Appropriation Act (Infrastructure Expenditures), No. 2, 2021-2022
- Bill 43: Supplementary Appropriation Act (Operations Expenditures), No. 2, 2021-2022
- Bill 44: Supplementary Appropriation Act (Operations Expenditures and Borrowing Authorization), No. 4, 2020-2021
- Bill 45: Appropriation Act (Infrastructure Expenditures), 2022-2023

Mahsi Cho, Thank You, Quyanainni, Merci Beaucoup, Koana.

**MR. BONNETROUGE:** Madam Commissioner, on behalf of the Legislative Assembly, all the MLAs, and most importantly the residents of the Northwest Territories, we extend our warmest Merry Christmas Greetings to you and your family for your service to the Northwest Territories. Colleagues, please join me in applause for the Commissioner of the Northwest Territories. Mahsi.

---Applause

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

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

Members, I also want to thank each of you. This sitting has been a challenging one. We have faced multiple delays starting this sitting due to COVID-19 outbreaks in our communities and within this building, and we have dealt with issues in this Chamber, but you have maintained your professionalism throughout. Mahsi. Thank you.

Despite the challenges, this House has done a lot of work and you should feel proud of what you have accomplished. I am particularly proud of our vaccination policies. As leaders within the territory, we have an obligation to lead by example.

Members, I believe we are doing that and I thank each of you for playing your part.

We have also seen many good debates and discussions during this sitting and in this House. We represent ourselves and our constituents and we will not always see eye to eye. That is okay. Conflict and disagreement are unavoidable in our line of work. It is required.

As Members, and the voices of our people, we should not seek to avoid these conflicts and disagreements; rather, we should seek to do so with respect for one another and for this institution. During this sitting, you have done exactly that. I thank you and congratulate you for doing so.

This House will not sit again until the new year, but we will remain busy. Our days will be filled with the ongoing business of committees and government and serving our constituents. Although we will be busy, I remind each of you to take time to reflect upon the holiday season and what it means to you.

Make time for your family and friends. While we are busy in this Assembly and with our duties, these are the people who support us and make it possible for us to do our important work. Show them that they are appreciated.

I know that the holiday season can be a difficult time for some people. If you are having a difficult time, please reach out. I assure you there are many people who want to help and will be there for you.

If you believe somebody else may be having a difficult time, please take the time to check on them and provide them the support they need. As

Northerners, we help each other, support each other, and rely on each other.

As we celebrate the holidays, please remember to do so safely. Follow all public health orders, travel safely on our roads, and on the land. Thank you, colleagues.

Mr. Clerk, orders of the day.

### Orders of the Day

**CLERK OF THE HOUSE (Mr. Mercer):** Orders of the day for Wednesday, February 2nd, 2022:

1. Prayer
2. Ministers' Statements
3. Members' Statements
4. Returns to Oral Questions
  - Oral Questions 846-19(2): Addictions, Aftercare and Mental Health Supports Date of Question - December 1, 2021
5. Recognition of Visitors in the Gallery
6. Acknowledgements
7. Oral Questions
8. Written Questions
9. Returns to Written Questions
10. Replies to Commissioner's Address
11. Petitions
12. Reports of Committees on the Review of Bills
13. Reports of Standing and Special Committees
14. Tabling of Documents
15. Notices of Motion
16. Motions
17. Notices of Motion for First Reading of Bills
18. First Reading of Bills
19. Second Reading of Bills
20. Consideration in Committee of the Whole of Bills and Other Matters
  - Bill 23, an Act to Amend the Public Utilities Act
  - Bill 29, Resource Royalty Information

### Disclosure Statute Amendment Act

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

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Clerk. This House stands adjourned until Wednesday, February 2nd, 2022 at 1:30 p.m.

---ADJOURNMENT

The House adjourned at 3:35 p.m.