



NORTHWEST TERRITORIES  
**LEGISLATIVE  
ASSEMBLY**

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

**HANSARD**

**Monday, February 21, 2022**

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**The Honourable Frederick Blake Jr, Speaker**

# Legislative Assembly of the Northwest Territories

## Members of the Legislative Assembly

### Speaker

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

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**Hon. Diane Archie**

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

**Mr. Ronald Bonnetrouge**

(Deh Cho)

**Ms. Caitlin Cleveland**

(Kam Lake)

**Hon. Paulie Chinna**

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

**Hon. Caroline Cochrane**

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

**Mr. Richard Edjericon**

(Tu Nedhe-Wiilideh)

**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)

**Mr. Kevin O'Reilly**

(Frame Lake)

**Ms. Lesa Semmler**

(Inuvik Twin Lakes)

**Mr. Rocky Simpson**

(Hay River South)

**Hon. R.J. Simpson**

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

**Hon. Shane Thompson**

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

**Hon. Caroline Wawzonek**

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

**Ms. Jane Weyallon-Armstrong**

(Monfwi)

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## YELLOWKNIFE, NORTHWEST TERRITORIES

Monday, February 21, 2022

**Members Present**

Hon. Diane Archie, Hon. Frederick Blake Jr., Mr. Bonnetrouge, Hon. Paulie Chinna, Ms. Cleveland, Hon. Caroline Cochrane, Mr. Edjericon, 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 1:32 p.m.

**Prayer**

---Prayer

**SPEAKER (Hon. Frederick Blake Jr.):** Good afternoon, colleagues. We are reconvening today, after another delayed start date due to COVID-19 outbreaks. We last convened in this Chamber on December 9, 2021. I hope that everyone had a wonderful holiday season and a good start to 2022.

I know with restrictions that were in place, many of us were not able to have large family gatherings like we are used to having during the holidays. I would like to thank everyone for continuing to do our part in protecting our communities, our children, and our elders.

On January 20th, pursuant to Motion 48-19(2) and in the public interest, I announced the winter sitting would be rescheduled. This decision was made after careful consideration and discussions with the Executive Council and all Members of the Legislative Assembly. The changes to the schedule will reduce travel between the capital and small communities. To make up some of the time lost, pursuant to Motion 119(2), I order that the Assembly shall sit on Friday, March 4, 2022, at 10 a.m. and Monday, March 7, 2022, at 1:30 p.m.

COVID continues to be a problem and a very real threat in some of our communities as situations can change very quickly. Fortunately, it seems that the cases are on the decline throughout the territory. It is my hope that as we continue to follow the public health orders as they evolve with the virus, that we will be able to return to normal when it is safe to do so.

Members, please join me in welcoming our new colleague, the Member for Tu Nedhe-Wiilideh, Mr. Richard Edjericon, to the Chamber today.

The Member for Tu Nedhe-Wiilideh, Mr. Richard Edjericon, was declared member-elect on February 10th with the official swearing-in ceremony held earlier today. Unfortunately, the Legislative Assembly building remains closed to the public but

our capacity allowed for friends and family to be present for this exciting event.

The Member for Tu Nedhe-Wiilideh, Mr. Richard Edjericon, is a descendant of Chief Oliver Edjericon who signed Treaty 8 on July 28, 1900, in Fort Resolution. The Member has held many positions:

- Former chairman for the Mackenzie Valley Environmental Impact Review Board;
- Former Head Chief of the Yellowknives Dene First Nation;
- Chief Executive Officer of the Yellowknives Dene First Nation; and,
- Chairman of the GNWT Apprenticeship Board.

Now, as always, I would like to take this time to remind Members to conduct themselves in keeping with the rules of this Assembly. With just under two years left in the 19th Assembly, we need to continue to show respect for one another, for this institution and, most importantly, for those who elected us.

Treat each other with dignity and take pride in the work that we do here. We are here to serve as representatives for the people that elected us and put their trust in us. It is an honour for us all to be here on behalf of our constituents and residents of the Northwest Territories.

Although the Assembly remains closed to the public, media are welcome in the gallery. We continue to broadcast and live stream our proceedings to ensure the public has the opportunity to see and understand the work being done on their behalf.

Now, colleagues, it is my duty to advise the House that I have received the following message from the Commissioner of the Northwest Territories. It reads:

Dear Mr. Speaker, I wish to advise that I recommend to the Legislative Assembly of the Northwest Territories, the passage of Appropriation Act (Operations Expenditures), 2022-2023; Supplementary Appropriation Act (Infrastructure Expenditures), No. 3, 2021-2022; and, Supplementary Appropriation Act (Operations Expenditures), No. 3, 2021-2022 during the second

session of the 19th Legislative Assembly. Yours truly, Margaret M. Thom, Commissioner.

Thank you, colleagues.

### Ministers' Statements

#### MINISTER'S STATEMENT 199-19(2): NOTICE OF BUDGET ADDRESS

**HON. CAROLINE WAWZONEK:** Mr. Speaker, I give notice that I will deliver the budget address on Tuesday, February 22, 2022. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Minister. Ministers' Statements. Honourable Premier.

#### MINISTER'S STATEMENT 200-19(2): SESSIONAL STATEMENT

**HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE:** Mr. Speaker, I want to welcome all Members back to the House for this sitting of the 19th Legislative Assembly. There is important work to be done over the next six weeks, and I look forward to working with each of you as we advance the priorities of this government.

I want to start today with an acknowledgement of the 18 residents who have lost their lives to COVID-19 in the last two years. It is a painful reminder of the unpredictable and unforgiving nature of the pandemic. My heart goes out to those who have passed away, and the family, friends, and communities of those who continue to grieve. Our thoughts are with you.

Mr. Speaker, the last two years have been challenging for all levels of government across Canada and around the world, including the Government of the Northwest Territories. Since the COVID-19 pandemic was declared in March 2020, our government has been primarily focused on protecting the health and well-being of residents.

It sometimes feels like COVID-19 has dominated all public discussion and attention and while the government's COVID response is important, it has had the unfortunate consequence of hiding lots of other good work this government has done on our many pre-existing priorities and I want to highlight some of them today.

The work we accomplished in the first two years of this government is about people, place, prosperity, and partnerships. Mr. Speaker, these themes are not mutually exclusive of one another, they represent our efforts to improve the lives of residents and communities; to sustain our land and environment as we adapt to a changing climate; and, to ensure

Northerners have access to the infrastructure and opportunities required for prosperity.

To achieve all this, strong collaborative partnerships are needed. The pandemic has demonstrated that we must work together with Indigenous governments, the federal government, municipal governments, the business community, and other key stakeholders to achieve success.

I want to turn now to what our government has accomplished to support people, place, and prosperity in the Northwest Territories.

Mr. Speaker, while in Ottawa in December for meetings with the Prime Minister and Members of his Cabinet, we announced the Early Learning and Child Care Agreement with Canada. This investment of \$51 million over five years is an historic investment that will create more affordable, inclusive, high-quality child care across the Northwest Territories. It will put money back in the pockets of families and ensure increased childcare options across the territory and, in some cases, access to childcare spaces for the very first time.

Mr. Speaker, the Government of the Northwest Territories is committed to improving student success across the territory and understands that education is vital to all residents. The plan to adopt the British Columbia curriculum will produce far-reaching and long-lasting outcomes for students and the future of the Northwest Territories.

BC's curriculum is designed to meet the needs of students in an ever-changing world. It incorporates financial literacy skills, begins providing career education in the early grades, and offers applied design, skills, and technologies curriculum that builds on students' natural curiosity and creativity. This approach will prepare students for the challenges of life after high school.

We need a public service that is representative of the people who live in the Northwest Territories and understand the needs of our diverse population. The Indigenous Recruitment and Retention Framework has been developed to help our government improve Indigenous representation among public servants with the ultimate goal of a public service that is representative of the population it serves. As we move forward towards achieving this goal, we will become more engaged, more responsive, more aware of residents' needs, and more flexible in our responses to those needs.

We have invested in mental health and addictions supports, Mr. Speaker. Our government is committed to ensuring a healthy and vibrant territory, and this includes making sure our most vulnerable residents are not left behind. An additional \$725,000 to address on-the-land healing currently in place.

The funding assists Indigenous governments to deliver mobile addictions treatment, family-based treatment, and aftercare programming. Supporting Indigenous governments to deliver land-based healing helps residents to receive supports for mental health and addictions healing closer to home, in their own language and culture.

Mr. Speaker, the Government of the Northwest Territories recently established an Addictions Recovery and Aftercare Fund to increase access to peer support for addictions recovery programming in the communities. The fund increases the number and variety of culturally respectful community-based mental wellness and addictions recovery programs in the Northwest Territories. The fund creates increased opportunities to hire local community-based counsellors who can support individuals working towards recovery and healing at the community level. As a result, there are currently eight agreements in place in six regions across the territory.

As part of the GNWT's commitment to enhancing community safety and resiliency, we launched a Community Safety Officer Pilot Program in Fort Liard in July last year. The program is an innovative, community-driven initiative exploring alternative approaches to community safety and crime prevention. With an annual investment of \$303,000 over the next three years, community safety officers will respond to non-criminal safety concerns, develop and implement crime prevention strategies, build and promote the community's relationship with the RCMP, and patrol the community. The safety officers act as a community safety enhancement service who work collaboratively with the RCMP to better address residents' needs and to promote safety and wellness.

Mr. Speaker, the new Corrections Act came into force in October 2021. The new act brings the Northwest Territories' corrections legislation up-to-date by incorporating 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 act recognizes the unique cultural background, historic legacy and experiences of the people we serve in the territory and sets the framework for incorporating these elements into the rehabilitation process in the corrections system.

Strengthening our leadership and authority on climate change and enhancing efforts to stabilize the cost of power is also a priority of this government. So is increasing the use of alternative and renewable energy. I want to highlight some of the accomplishments the GNWT has had since the beginning of this government.

Last year, we secured \$45 million under the Investing in Canada Infrastructure Program for the Fort Providence-Kakisa Transmission Line Project. Mr. Speaker, this will help stabilize the cost of power and reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 15 percent of our 2030 target. In the life of this government, a record \$11.9 million in funding has been provided to the Arctic Energy Alliance to help residents, business, and communities reduce their energy costs and greenhouse gas emissions. I am proud to say thousands of rebates have been given out, Mr. Speaker.

Under the Greenhouse Gas Grant Program, the GNWT has distributed \$4 million to community governments, government agencies, and businesses. This includes The Woolgar Avenue Biomass District Heating System in Yellowknife that will replace 60,000 litres of heating oil with wood pellets. This switch will reduce emissions by the equivalent of 193 tonnes of greenhouse gases per year. The program also includes the Fort Smith Electric Heat Project that will reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 510 tonnes per year, and the addition of a third liquefied natural gas tank in Inuvik that will reduce emissions by 606 tonnes per year and help stabilize electricity rates.

The pandemic has brought to the forefront the economic and social challenges that the territory is facing, Mr. Speaker. In the last two years, we responded by making investments that will support the prosperity of residents, communities, and businesses across the NWT. Infrastructure projects will play a significant role in our economic recovery. This Legislative Assembly understands why we need to make this kind of significant investment. It creates jobs for residents and supports business growth. Capital projects will inject millions into the economy and help us recover from one of the largest economic downturns the territory has seen.

Mr. Speaker, the last two capital budgets passed in this House have totaled \$957 million. The 2022-2023 capital budget alone is the largest in history, at \$506 million, helping to deliver the critical infrastructure the territory needs to thrive.

The government's renewal initiative will help ensure we are investing in areas that are most critical and valuable to residents. We will support departments to evaluate their programs and services to determine if the intended results are being met. It is about more than just delivering the same programs year over year, Mr. Speaker. It is about meeting the needs of residents over time.

The future is bright for post-secondary education in the Northwest Territories as we work towards the establishment of a polytechnic university that will help Northerners be first in line for Northern jobs. We are well positioned to benefit from scientific

research, innovation, and technologies, especially with an Indigenous and Northern lens.

The work to amend the Aurora College Act and the \$8 million investment from Canada to support our transformation efforts are significant accomplishments that will support post-secondary education for residents for generations to come.

Mr. Speaker, a healthy and vibrant mineral exploration and development sector is critical for the NWT, its people, and our future prosperity. That is why we are working hard to develop a Mineral Resources Act and Regulations that benefit all Northerners and represents the priorities of Indigenous governments across the territory.

Critical and strategic minerals are key components in modern technology. Those found within the territory are an important part of future resource and economic development for the Northwest Territories. The development of a critical mineral strategy will ensure we put ourselves on the map to support the international transition to a greener economy. This work is well underway, Mr. Speaker, and represents the next chapter in mineral resource development in the Northwest Territories.

We have undertaken a comprehensive review of our procurement policy that will help ensure more money stays in the North. While we will continue to rely on specialty workers from outside the territory and suppliers, this government is dedicated to working to close any potential loopholes in the system, maximize benefits for Northern companies with a specific focus on Indigenous procurement, and ensures much of our public spending as possible stays in the territory.

A diversified NWT economy will help support our current and future prosperity, Mr. Speaker. We are investing in secondary industries like manufacturing, diamond polishing, and the new commercial fish processing plant in Hay River. We recently completed public engagement on how to best support the knowledge economy, recognizing the economic value of scientific and traditional knowledge.

As part of Emerging Stronger, our post-pandemic plan for social and economic recovery, we have identified the need to investigate how we can reap the benefits of the reclamation economy that exists in the Northwest Territories and beyond. There is significant potential in the NWT that could create jobs and business opportunities while ensuring we can protect the environment.

Making more land available for community governments means more business opportunities that help build stronger local economies. To reduce the municipal funding gap, we have transferred a

total of \$405,000 worth of public lands to community governments. The transfer of lands will better position municipal governments to administer and control land within their communities and remove barriers for land transfers. It will also enable communities to advance their own priorities for land development and present more own-source revenue opportunities. A process guide has been developed to support this work and will continue to ensure an effective and efficient transfer of lands moving forward.

Mr. Speaker, without strong, collaborative partnerships, things would have looked very different for this government over the last two years. If we have learned anything from this pandemic, it is that we must find ways to work together and ensure that we are doing our best to support residents and ensure they have every opportunity at success.

We worked closely with regular Members, Indigenous leaders, municipal governments, the business community, and many other stakeholders to share information, hear the concerns they had, and find solutions to ensure we continued to adapt to the ever-changing pandemic. In many ways, through partnership and a collaborative spirit that exemplifies what it means to be a Northerner, the pandemic has brought us all closer together.

Emergency management and response is a collective responsibility that relies on participation from everyone, including individuals, families, communities, the GNWT, and Indigenous leadership.

In spring 2021, we faced the largest flood in our history resulting in major response efforts, evacuations, and damage to six communities. The Emergency Management Organization coordinated GNWT resources to support affected communities, evacuated residents, and coordinated disaster assistance. Flooded communities responded to ensure the safety of residents and to reduce damage. Despite the challenges that existed because of the pandemic, residents, communities, and the GNWT worked together to ensure everyone's safety.

In the first two years of this government, we have secured \$635.1 million from the federal government - an increase of \$277.5 million from the previous government's first two years. This is a 78 percent increase, Mr. Speaker. Our work with the federal government over the last two years has resulted in significant and historic investments in the Northwest Territories.

Having safe and affordable housing is a priority for this government. Through partnership with the Government of Canada, \$60 million from the National Housing Co-Investment Fund is flowing

from the federal government to housing in the NWT. This is on top of the \$25 million we received for housing in Canada's 2021 budget.

This is the biggest increase to public housing in the NWT in a generation and responds to the need to improve and increase our housing stock. This is not just about partnerships, but the people it will benefit, the economic opportunities and jobs it will create across the territory, especially in smaller communities, and the overall improvement to the health and well-being of communities.

One of our biggest accomplishments has been the strong and collaborative partnerships we have developed with Indigenous governments.

Mr. Speaker, we have established the Council of Leaders and the Modern Treaty and Self-Government Partners Forum, in addition to the Intergovernmental Council established because of devolution. All of these tables are a way to support discussions and common areas of interest amongst Indigenous governments to identify opportunities to work together. If we continue to work together, we can achieve improved outcomes for residents.

For instance, the NWT Council of Leaders has agreed to collaborate on areas of shared interest and to become the regional implementation body for the Arctic and Northern Policy Framework of the Northwest Territories. It's a major step forward, but we still have work to do to enhance collaboration on both the GNWT and Indigenous government initiatives.

With the support of nine Indigenous governments that sit on the Intergovernmental Council, the Legislative Development Protocol is another shining example of the collaborative spirit of our government. Mr. Speaker, the protocol will result in stronger and more effective land and resource management legislation that accounts for Indigenous priorities and views. It will also better position the GNWT to collaborate on any new legislative authority it obtains through ongoing discussions to bring elements of the Mackenzie Valley Resource Management Act home to the NWT as part of devolution.

Mr. Speaker, we have spent significant time and resources in the last two years on the COVID-19 pandemic, and I want to take a moment to recognize this work.

When the pandemic was declared, we said our top priority was the health and well-being of residents. This priority extended beyond the healthcare efforts that have helped us limit the spread of COVID-19 and protect the integrity of healthcare delivery in the NWT.

We had an obligation to support residents and businesses as best we could during these challenging times. As of December 31, 2021, we have invested \$74.9 million to support residents, businesses, and industries important to our economic success and prosperity. This is on top of the \$156.9 million the federal government has provided during the pandemic. Mr. Speaker, I seek unanimous consent to conclude my statement. Thank you.

---Unanimous consent granted.

Mr. Speaker, we are moving towards a return to normalcy. We are moving into a situation where society will begin to live with COVID-19. Leisure travel will return at the end of this month, which has been greatly anticipated by the tourism and hospitality sectors. The end of restrictions and the public health emergency will happen in the very near future where we are planning for the ongoing supports Northerners will need to stay safe while we transition to an endemic state in the territory, including managing for future outbreaks.

We have just under two years left in the life of this government. It's important that we take every opportunity to bring positive change that will have a long-lasting impact on the health and well-being of all residents. As we emerge from the pandemic, we have a lot of work to do and will continue to invest in people, place, prosperity, and partnerships. We are committed to the overall economic prosperity of the territory and will continue to work closely with our partners for a better Northwest Territories for all of us. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

### Members' Statements

#### MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON IMPACTS OF COVID-19 PANDEMIC AND LIFTING PUBLIC HEALTH RESTRICTIONS

**MR. ROCKY SIMPSON:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and I'll be brief. Today I will speak of pandemic restrictions here in the Northwest Territories. Firstly, out of respect and appreciation, it is important to acknowledge the work that Dr. Kandola and her medical team have undertaken over the past two years in working to protect the health of all residents in the Northwest Territories – something that must not be lost on us – and for this I say "thank you."

Mr. Speaker, this pandemic has impacted all our daily lives. It required engaging medical science as lives were being lost. It forced governments to make timely decisions. Hospitals were overrun with patients; elective surgeries cancelled; medical staff

were overworked, harassed and threatened; mental health issues on the rise. Businesses were forced to close; workers being laid off; employees terminated for refusing the vaccine; employees required to work remotely; increased cost of goods; closed borders; limited in-class learning; children being shamed in schools; children being kept from grandparents and friends; extended care facilities locked down; vaccine mandates and travel restrictions became a reality; science has been questioned; charter and human rights have been questioned; religious rights have been questioned; big pharma ethics are questioned; many are living in fear; mistrust of government; and the list goes on.

Mr. Speaker, the responsibility for developing a plan to limit the impact of the virus fell on the shoulders of medical experts, not only in the Northwest Territories but throughout Canada and the world. Now this government has had two plus years in which to develop a plan that moves us from pandemic restrictions to an endemic response. We need to bring back some normality to the lives of people in the NWT. How this unfolds is a discussion that, if not already started, needs to start now. An exit plan needs to be developed, communicated to the public, and actioned.

To reach our end goal we must continue to provide ongoing medical support and protection to the most vulnerable. We must continue to make decisions that are based in fact, and those facts must be balanced. They must consider scientific information which include health, the economy, and freedoms on all sides of the debate.

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

---Unanimous consent granted.

Mr. Speaker, it is time for this government to end the public health emergency and, as are other governments, to systematically rollback pandemic restrictions in order that those fractures created begin to close. And, just as importantly, we must begin to provide post-pandemic health and business supports to those that so desperately need it. Mr. Speaker, I will have questions at the appropriate time. Thank you.

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

#### MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON GOALS OF THE 19TH LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

**MS. SEMMLER:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I'd like to welcome my colleagues back and Happy New Year as this is the first time we've all had all the members together in person since December.

I'd like to also welcome and congratulate our new colleague, Mr. Edjericon, on your successful election, and I look forward to working together for the remainder of our term for the people of the Northwest Territories.

To my constituents who have come to me with all their concerns throughout the last couple years and questioned some of my decisions that I have brought forward, thank you, and I am your voice in this house, and I will continue to be for the remainder of this term.

I'd also like to wish my constituents and anyone in the Beaufort Delta as we are struggling with a little bit of an uptake in COVID these past few weeks a speedy recovery for all those who have gotten sick.

Mr. Speaker, since the beginning of this 19th Assembly, we've all brought many issues to the table from housing, healthcare, education, our economy. We were then hit with the pandemic five months into our term which sidelined and slowed us in accomplishing the goals that we had set out for the NWT residents.

COVID-19 has proven to us how fragile we are as a territory and continues to be, especially in our healthcare system, our housing situations, and our economy.

Mr. Speaker, we have just over a year and a half to complete our priorities that this government set together, and I look forward to the plan that our Premier and Cabinet will be providing with us -- to us this sitting on what they accomplished and what they will -- how they will be completing the goals that we have set together.

I am sure my colleagues and myself will be using this sitting to ensure that we are bringing our constituent concerns to our -- of our territory and hold this government to account.

In closing, Mr. Speaker, it is not too often that many get to celebrate their 80th birthday. So I want to take this opportunity to wish my grandmother, Ester Semmler, a very happy birthday for today. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

#### MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON SECURITY IN YELLOWKNIFE APARTMENT BUILDINGS

**MS. NOKLEBY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As I've said numerous times, one of the main things we hear about from residents is housing, and, in my constituency, I hear mainly about Norseman Manor and Simpson House. Both properties are privately

owned by Northview REIT however several Housing Corporation clients have been placed in these buildings rather than in ones owned by the GNWT. As such, this government, as a landlord, has the responsibility to ensure these homes are safe and suitable for habitation. However, this is not always the case.

I receive numerous calls, emails, and texts with photos, video, and audio clips from housing clients in these particular buildings detailing broken windows, busted locks, filthy hallways, and poor maintenance. Parents feel their children are not safe and report incidents of violence and substance abuse on a regular basis, that no child should ever be exposed to. Told to call the police, residents say they don't show up.

Mr. Speaker, I have been asking for security for two years and I have made no progress to better the situation for my constituents despite repeated efforts with the Housing Minister. With a rental market monopoly in Yellowknife and little to no housing in the communities, housing clients literally have no options but to take substandard, dangerous housing, or couch surf, becoming a burden to family and friends, further compounding mental health issues.

In discussions with Northview, they seem willing to work with the Housing Corporation on these issues, however, point to problem housing clients and a lack of accountability for them for the issues, putting the onus back on the GNWT.

Mr. Speaker, I believe there is enough responsibility to go around and it is on everyone to ensure the residents, especially children, have safe housing.

I want to congratulate the minister on the recent acquisition of the Nordic Arms building. I encourage her and the department to look at this building as an opportunity to create a new housing model, one that integrates social programming and client services, such as was offered at the YWCA's former Rockhill site. I would like to see the prioritization for the new building of vulnerable families on the waiting list, including those waiting to transfer from their current unsafe situation such as at Norseman or Simpson House.

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

---Unanimous consent granted.

Chronic problem tenants within the housing system should not be placed in buildings with families with children. Instead, the Housing Corporation needs to work with Health and Social Services to create family friendly spaces where parents aren't afraid to walk down the hallway with their baby and needed supports are just next door. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

#### MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON ECONOMIC RECOVERY

**MS. MARTSELOS:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, to begin, I would like to welcome back my colleagues to the latest session of the new year. I would also like to give a special warm welcome to our newest colleague, the Member for Tu Nedhe-Wiilideh. I look forward to working along side our new colleague.

Mr. Speaker, for my statement topic today, I want to talk about the economy recovery for the NWT. We've begun to see more and more that our government is shifting away from a pandemic response and is beginning to treat COVID-19 with an endemic response. We likely will not ever see COVID-19 eradicated; therefore, we must adjust our daily lives and start living with it in a different way than we have with public emergencies and lockdowns as we had in the last two years.

Mr. Speaker, for these reasons, it is now more important than ever that our government also begins to shift its approach in dealing with our economy. Right now the overall state of the NWT economy is not positioned for long-term growth or stability. There are many economic uncertainties that are presenting tremendous challenges for average NWT residents. For example, Statistics Canada reported last week that the national inflation rate has reached a 31-year high with an increase of 5.1 percent since January 2021. Similarly, the NWT Bureau of Statistics reported last week that all items consumer price index for Yellowknife rose 4 percent compared to one year ago.

Mr. Speaker, these figures represent a substantial increase of nearly all consumer goods across the board. Overall, food from stores increased by 4.2 percent; however, certain items went up more. Meat increased by 7 percent. Fish and seafood increased by 6 percent. Furthermore, shelter costs have gone up by 2.8 percent. Water, fuel, and electricity has increased by 11.3 percent, and the price of gasoline increased by 24.7 percent. People's purchasing power is much weaker than it was a year ago. People are having difficulties making ends meet.

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

---Unanimous consent granted

In addition, Mr. Speaker, the NWT is facing a population crisis. According to the 2021 Census data, the NWT is only one of two provinces and territories facing a decline in population. We have 716 less people in the NWT than five years ago. Only

10 out of 33 of our communities had an increase in population compared to 2016.

In closing, Mr. Speaker, it is extremely important that our government initiate a renewed effort towards accomplishing the priorities of the 19th Assembly. This pandemic has set back the fulfillment of many of our priorities; however, that does not mean we give up trying and get them done. We need to continue settling and implementing Treaties and self-government agreements. We must continue pursuing the completion of the Mackenzie Valley Highway, the Slave Geological Corridor, and the Taltson Hydro Expansion. We must continue to increase resource exploration and development and to reduce cost of power and increase the use of renewable energy. I will have questions for the ITI minister later today. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Member for Thebacha. I didn't know that we were having theme day here today.

---Laughter

**MR. SPEAKER:** Unanimous consent. Members' statements. Member for Monfwi.

#### MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON WATER INFRASTRUCTURE ISSUES IN BEHCHOKO AND EDZO

**MS. WEYALLON ARMSTRONG:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Okay, today I'm going to be talking about water, and it's to the Minister of MACA. So Mr. Speaker, the Minister responsible for MACA keeps talking about the community having to choose. Mr. Speaker, the community never had a choice when these water pipes were put in place back in 1970s. The territorial government was only three years old when these pipes were installed. Mr. Speaker, at that time, the community consultation process did not exist. The community did not have a choice in 1970, and now you are asking them to pay the bill. It was the GNWT's decision 50 years ago to put in underground water pipe. Now it is your job to fix it.

Mr. Speaker, this piece of infrastructure was nearly 40 years old when MACA decided to share gas tax with the community. The GNWT should have established a fund to replace the infrastructure at that time that it was built.

Mr. Speaker, it is very unfair of the government to provide an extra million dollars in funding and tell the community to pay for a \$10 million infrastructure.

Mr. Speaker, I am currently doing research, and I believe the GNWT is underfunding 23 of 33 communities in the Northwest Territories.

Mr. Speaker, this is an emergency situation. There are 200 people that rely on that water pipe. Also

several pieces of GNWT infrastructures, like Chief Jimmy Bruneau School, Elizabeth MacKenzie Elementary School, Jimmy Erasmus Senior Home, Mary Adele Bishop Health Centre, and government offices that consist of staff from MACA, income support, justice, renewable resources, social services, medical travel, mental help, and TCSA finance and admin.

GNWT assets are all on water pipe system. As we speak, Elizabeth MacKenzie Elementary School is closed due to water pipe frozen.

Mr. Speaker, as reported, education outcome in Tlicho region is poor. Disruption with water is not helping. Mr. Speaker, all of these department had to shut down their office due to water problems. Both schools -- Mr. Speaker, can I have a unanimous consent to conclude my statement.

---Unanimous consent granted

**MS. WEYALLON ARMSTRONG:** Okay. Mr. Speaker, all of these department have to shut down their offices due to water problems. Both school have frozen pipes several times in the winters. In January, senior home had to bring in water to manual flush toilets with bucket. All government services and offices were shut down for two weeks after Christmas due to water problems. By not helping the community resolve this problem, I feel GNWT is making a decision that will impact essential community services.

Mr. Speaker, water is a human right, and it is important to people's health and wellness. Even the Minister said it himself in an email when he said ensuring residents have safe drinking water is a priority for all levels of government.

Mr. Speaker, this is an emergency situation. The GNWT has to respond. The federal government gives the GNWT \$2 billion a year to look after the people of the Northwest Territories. I cannot believe the government cannot find a few million dollars to help provide clean water to citizens of Behchoko and Edzo, and it is -- in its own essential services, like health and education.

Mr. Speaker, I will have questions for MACA at appropriate time. Thank you.

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

#### MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON MANDATORY VACCINATION POLICY

**MR. BONNETROUGE:** Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, we all know the controversy surrounding the mandatory vaccinations policy. The policy has marginalized residents of the Northwest Territories.

There is now a vaccinated group of residents and an unvaccinated group of residents. These divisions are happening in many of our communities, and the mandatory vaccinations policy has created something of a battleground which has pitted one against the other.

It is disheartening to hear young teenagers and children over 12 not being allowed into sports venues and other facilities, thus contributing to their state of mental health all because they do not choose to take the vaccination. Many parents of these children and teenagers are not even allowed into these facilities also. In fact, they all feel marginalized.

This is the 21st century, and we all know how long of a struggle it was to accept people of all races into mainstream society, and now we are back to marginalization of population.

Mr. Speaker, I will have questions for the Premier at the appropriate time. Mahsi.

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

#### MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON INTERNET ACCESS FOR STUDENTS

**MR. O'REILLY:** Merci, Monsieur le President. I want to return to the topic of adequate and affordable access to internet services and the barriers facing students and families.

In February 2021, I asked questions of the Ministers of ECE and of Infrastructure regarding the total inadequacy of bandwidth provided to Yellowknife school authorities. I raised the problem after I was told that Yellowknife schools and Aurora College shared an internet connection of 300 megabytes per second provided by the GNWT, which is equivalent to a cable modem at home. Consider that Yellowknife Catholic schools alone has about 1700 users and you begin to understand how hopelessly inadequate this arrangement has been.

In response to my questions, the Minister of Infrastructure, who is responsible for information technology said, "we have been working on an RFP or Request for Proposals for increased internet services" for boards.

All three Yellowknife education authorities record using their program funds to buy more internet bandwidth and even additional modems to provide greater in-school coverage. As one representative told me, this significant expenditure was essential given the high level of frustration and lack of ability for teachers and students to access technology sufficient for learning.

Even without the increased demands of COVID, providing students adequate internet is an essential part of modern education. Our education authorities have repeatedly raised this issue through the NWT Superintendents Association, and through the English and French associations of school superintendents of Canada giving us a rather poor national standing. This situation still exists a year after the Infrastructure minister told me a solution was in the works. Failure to provide needed technical infrastructure puts our students at a disadvantage compared to learners in other jurisdictions and even within the Northwest Territories. I will have questions for the Minister of Infrastructure on when this problem of equitable internet access throughout our education system will finally be fixed. Mahsi, Mr. Speaker.

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

#### MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON THANKING CONSTITUENTS

**MR. EDJERICON:** Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. For my first member's statement, I would like to begin by saying thank you to my constituents of Tu Nedhe-Willideh. I am humbled and honoured to be elected the new MLA for four communities in my riding, Lutselk'e, Dettah, N'dilo, and Fort Resolution.

In addition, Mr. Speaker, I want to acknowledge all the elected leaders from my constituency: Chief Darryl Marlowe of Lutselk'e; Chief Edward Sangris and Chief Frank Sangris of the Yellowknives Dene First Nation; Chief Louis Balsillie of Deninu K'ue First Nation; and Acting President Arthur Beck of the Fort Resolution Metis Council; and Mayor Patrick Simon of Fort Resolution.

Lastly, Mr. Speaker, I would like to extend greetings to all my colleagues here in the house. I'm honoured to start this journey with you to build on past successes and build new opportunities for our youth, elders, and citizens of our land. Mahsi.

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

#### MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON FAMILY DAY

**MR. JOHNSON:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. To the people of New Brunswick, Ontario, Saskatchewan, BC, I would like to wish a happy Family Day. And to the people of Manitoba, a happy Louis Riel Day. And to the people of PEI, a happy Islander Day. And to Nova Scotia, a happy Heritage Day. And for everyone in the NWT, I'm hoping you're having an all right Monday, Mr. Speaker.

--Laughter

**MR. JOHNSON:** I'm glad the sun is finally poking its head out because it's been a long winter, and we are looking forward to spring, that magical season where the public health emergency ends, Mr. Speaker. This is the longest period of time between statutory holidays in the north, and with cold months, it just makes it feel even longer. Let's give our workers a much needed break, Mr. Speaker. I've asked the minister previously if there was ever any intention in bringing a holiday to the people of the north in February, and Mr. Speaker, I will be asking him once again on this lovely Family Day. And to be honest, I don't really care what it's called, but let's get a holiday in February, Mr. Speaker.

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

#### MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON MANAGING COVID IN THE NORTHWEST TERRITORIES HEALTHCARE SYSTEM

**MS. CLEVELAND:** Mr. Speaker, as the territory speaks of transitioning from pandemic to endemic, it's important that we as Northerners understand what this means. There will be timelines for eased restrictions and the eventual dismantling of the COVID Secretariat. But, Mr. Speaker, I want to understand what it means for the GNWT healthcare system and services to residents. Although an endemic is supposed to mean some stability of transmission, hospitalizations and death, the virus will continue to circulate, and can still be widespread and deadly.

Here in the North we are already familiar with endemic diseases. The NWT rate of tuberculosis is twice the national average. In 2020, 10 million people worldwide contracted TB and 1.5 million people died. Just like TB, COVID will still require ongoing management and resources, but I question how our health system will move forward and return to normal when we have not really yet accepted that the definition of "normal" has changed.

Health and Social Services will still need to support people with COVID while managing vaccinations and resourcing testing in a system that has seen the burnout and exodus of healthcare workers. Canadians en masse are waiting for elective surgeries, access to specialists, testing and treatment requirements of cancers, chronic disease, and STIs, and a surge in addiction and mental health support needs.

In addition, special treatment programs like audiology, speech pathology, physiotherapy and occupational therapy appointments put off over the

last two years will further bottleneck our already fragile healthcare system.

The catch up, Mr. Speaker, will take years and some national experts speculate that the Canadian healthcare system may never catch up.

Although COVID has brought new lessons and opportunities in virtual care, the time has come for us to get creative with recruitment, support holistic partnerships, and spread the responsibility of community care.

Mr. Speaker, we need a plan and we need to talk about this. Residents need to be included in the conversation about how health policy and personal choices will lead us out of this state of emergency and what the word "endemic" will mean for our healthcare here in the Northwest Territories. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

#### MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON EULOGY FOR CONSTITUENTS OF NUNAKPUT

**MR. JACOBSON:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Since our last sitting, Nunakput constituents have passed. I'd like to give our thought, prayers and -- thoughts and prayers to the families of the deceased.

In Ulukhaktok, we had the passing of Philip Inuktukliit, husband and father, survived by his father, Donald; wife, Lillian; children RayAnne, Kyle, and Bennett. The passing of Winnie Joss, wife of a well-respected elder, survived by husband, Alan; sons Dan, Robert, and Wallace; daughters Molly, Irene, Helen, and Cora.

In the community of Paulatuk, passing of Fred Bennett, well-respected elder, former IRC director, survived by wife, Mary Bennett; sons Jerry, Chris, Darren, Kirk; and his sister, Ida, Ida Harris. Passing of Peter Green, well-respected elder, former co-president land claims negotiator, survived by wife, Sarah; children Eleanor, Eugene, Adrian, Justin, Jesse, Marjorie; brothers Tony, Noel, Andy, Rubin, James, David, and Ian; and sisters Rita and Irene. Passing of Sandra Pokiak, a young mother in our community of Tuk, survived by parents, Andy Avik and Mary Pokiak Avik; daughters Lindell, Nicole, and Jessica.

Mr. Speaker, whoever lost anyone in the past few months across our territory and in our riding in the Beaufort Delta, thoughts and prayers are with you, Mr. Speaker, and God bless. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Member for Nunakput. Our thoughts and prayers are with all the families in the Delta and everywhere in the Northwest

Territories as well. Mahsi. Members' statements. Member for Nahendeh.

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON  
LIAM GILL, 2022 WINTER OLYMPIAN

**HON. SHANE THOMPSON:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, with the 2022 Winter Olympics ending this past Sunday, like a lot of Canadians I spent a good part of my evenings watching various competition. It was amazing watching our Canadian athletes perform on the biggest stage.

As many are aware, Liam Gill represented Canada in the snowboarding halfpipe event. Liam is a proud descendant of a long line of Dene from the North and represent the Dehcho Dene as a member of Liidlii Kue First Nation. Upon hearing the news, I reached out his grandma to congratulate her on his accomplishment.

Like most Fort Simpson residents, we put it in our calendar to watch the halfpipe competition. It was with great pride, we watched Liam's two runs. To help do this statement, I reached out for help to put this together.

Liam is an 18-year-old snowboarder born and raised in Calgary, Alberta. His parents are Lance and Joanne Gill, grandmother is Rosemary Gill, and his grandfather was Lyle Gill and his sister Mia. He had the honour to take part in the Winter Olympic Games on the Canadian snowboarding team. He knew how important it was to represent the Dene and, further, all Indigenous people in the sport on a global stage. The support he received from coast to coast was amazing, especially all the support he received from people from the North. He believed that he was sharing his first Olympic experience with everybody that supported him. He hopes his story and presence at the Winter Olympic Games will inspire young Indigenous athletes to pursue their goals in sports and other career choices.

With the Olympics experience being over and in true Northern fashion, Liam is giving back to the North youth and his sport. He will be visiting three communities from February 23rd until early March to attend snowboarding clinics in Fort Smith, Fort Simpson, and Yellowknife. He wants to welcome people to come say 'hi' and welcome him to these communities.

I want to congratulate him on the Olympics and thank him for coming home to give back to our youth. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Member for Nahendeh. Members' statements. Returns to oral questions. Minister responsible for Health and Social Services.

**Returns to Oral Questions**

RETURN TO ORAL QUESTION 846-19(2):  
ADDICTIONS, AFTERCARE AND MENTAL  
HEALTH

**HON. JULIE GREEN:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I have a Return to Oral Question asked by the Member for Great Slave on December 1st, 2021, regarding addictions aftercare and mental health.

Mr. Speaker, there's no single approach that I or the Department of Health and Social Services take to engage with the federal government to advocate for the needs of residents of the Northwest Territories. While it would not be appropriate for me or the department to direct the federal government regarding the operation and administration of its programs and services, I take every opportunity to provide advice or feedback with respect to the needs of NWT residents.

In addition to this, when participating in provincial, federal, and territorial tables, both the department staff and I bring awareness of the needs and realities of the North to the table and advocate for partnerships and opportunities to address the priorities of government and the needs of residents.

I met with the Honourable Carolyn Bennett, Federal Minister of Mental Health and Addictions on January 20th this year for initial discussions, and it is our intention to continue engaging on areas of common interest and priority. This meeting was a significant step to establish what I anticipate will be a positive working relationship with Minister Bennett. My goal in this work will be to ensure Minister Bennett has a sound understanding of the northern context as it relates to mental health and addictions and to ensure opportunities to meet the needs of residents are maximized.

It's prudent to remember that while the federal government is an important partner in the delivery of mental health and addiction services, it is certainly not the only provider and that residents have access to programs and services that are delivered in the Northwest Territories by the Department of Health and Social Services and their authorities. Despite disruptions associated with the pandemic, these services are delivered primarily on a face-to-face in-person basis. If an NWT resident has been negatively impacted by changes to a counselling service delivered by another party, that individual can self-refer to a counsellor with a community counselling program. Same day access is available across all regions. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Minister. Returns to oral questions. Recognition of visitors in the gallery. Acknowledgements. Oral questions. Member for Hay River South.

### Oral Questions

#### ORAL QUESTION 894-19(2): LIFTING COVID-19 RESTRICTIONS

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

Mr. Speaker, a special advisory committee on COVID-19 has agreed on the following criteria to determine whether jurisdictions are ready to lift restrictions, and this criteria includes COVID-19 transmission is controlled, sufficient health capacity, test, trace, and isolate cases are there, expand healthcare capacities exists, supports in place for vulnerable groups, workplace preventive measures, avoid risk of importation of cases, engage and support communities to adjust to a new normal.

Mr. Speaker, I ask the Minister of Health what criteria is being used by the office of the CPHO to evaluate whether this government should continue invoking the public health order and does those criteria differ from the criteria I just mentioned? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**HON. JULIE GREEN:** Yes, thank you, Mr. Speaker, and thank you to the Member for the question. This is obviously a topic that's very much on people's minds.

The CPHO follows evidence based decision-making based on science and her own medical professional training. And she does, in fact, monitor some of the same criteria that the Member mentioned, including the number of cases in the NWT, the impact on the health system of those cases, both in acute care in the hospital and through public health capacity.

She looks at where infections are occurring and in what populations, including the vulnerable populations, the severity of those infections measured through hospitalizations, ICU admissions, and deaths.

She also looks at the number of infections and trends in other jurisdictions, especially those in neighboring jurisdictions such as Alberta, Yukon, and Nunavut. She also looks at vaccine coverage, including booster uptake. As we know, vaccines reduce the impact of the illness on the people who have them.

And finally, as the Member mentioned, the CPHO looks at how COVID-19 is being transmitted. So the criteria is much the same as he articulated. Thank you.

**MR. ROCKY SIMPSON:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I believe that the majority of residents on both sides of the fence do not expect a complete opening tomorrow, as much as some would welcome it. What I'm hearing people say is that they're wanting to see restrictions such as mask and vaccine passports removed or turned into recommendations. They want to see opening in sports and other venues where vaccinated and unvaccinated can participate. They want to see the SIP plan go away.

So Mr. Speaker, I ask the Minister what do I tell the residents of Hay River and those throughout the NWT when they ask, what is this government's exit plan from this pandemic? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**HON. JULIE GREEN:** Yes, thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thank you for the question. I advise the Member to tell his constituents we're working on it. We know the measures that are in place now have resulted in significant disruptions to people's lives, and we want to bring that disruption to an end. As I previously said, we'd be following an evidenced-based decision-making process in order to decide when and how to lift restrictions.

The CPHO has already agreed to lift leisure travel restrictions by March 1st, which is a week from tomorrow. She has said she is reviewing further orders and is prepared to make additional announcements by March 1st on areas such as self-isolation requirement after travel, gathering orders, and proof of vaccine requirements.

So what I hear from my constituents and from my constituency meeting last week and what I heard from Indigenous governments when the Premier and I met with them last week is that people favour a gradual withdrawal of restrictions. They want reassurance that we will be able to provide for their health needs in the event that the outbreaks continue. Thank you.

**MR. ROCKY SIMPSON:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, over the past several months, I've had the opportunity to talk to numerous constituents, including those vaccinated and unvaccinated about current COVID restrictions and posed the question to them, should the public health emergency end and restrictions lift? The overwhelming response was to end it but with the caveat that we must ensure the safety of the vulnerable.

Mr. Speaker, will the Minister tell the people of the NWT at what point will she no longer invoke the health emergency, and is she willing to do that today? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**HON. JULIE GREEN:** Thank you. I appreciate the question. I'm not going to end the public health emergency today, but bringing it to an end is a topic

of discussion which I want to engage you and your colleagues in as soon as possible. We have been working on a plan, and I think that we will be in a position to share that with you by the end of the week and get your feedback on what we're doing and when we're doing it and how you think that will sit with your constituents. Thank you.

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

**MR. ROCKY SIMPSON:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I'm pleased to hear that there is a plan in the works and that we'll hear something this week. I think constituents and people throughout the territory will be happy as well to actually hear something.

Mr. Speaker, we have seen COVID-19 variants with the latest being less severe than others. Now I hear there's a B2 I think, coming out that may be a little more severe and can transfer 1.4 times more quicker than the B1.

So can the Minister tell the residents of the NWT what is her department's plan if another variant surfaces that causes severe health issues causing health services to be overrun. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**HON. JULIE GREEN:** Yes, thank you, Mr. Speaker, and thank you for the question. We are going to have health capacities set up knowing that this disease is not going to go away and that outbreaks are likely to continue. So the CPHO will be actively monitoring COVID as she has throughout the last two years. She will continue to do that and give us advice on how to deal with the variants as they come along.

As things stand now, what we're looking at is making sure that we have a robust public health response to the endemic portion of the disease, meaning that we have capacity to test, trace, vaccinate, isolate, and otherwise take care of the population if they become infected with COVID, with a special focus on the vulnerable population who may not have had the opportunity to get vaccinated. So we are acutely aware that this is not over, that it will continue, public health emergency or not, and that our obligation is to keep the residents of the NWT safe. Thank you.

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

ORAL QUESTION 895-19(2):  
HOUSING SECURITY AND HOUSING PLANS

**MS. NOKLEBY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my questions are for the Minister of Housing. First, I'd like to know when there will be a solution to address the security issues with the

apartments on 52nd Avenue like Norseman Manor and Simpson House? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**HON. PAULIE CHINNA:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The Housing Corporation and the local housing organization here in Yellowknife continue to meet regularly with Northview Management to find key operating security and maintenance. Both the Housing Corporation and the Northview are committed to ensuring the safety of their residents. I'm pleased to advise that the Housing Corporation has seen continuous improvement over these areas in terms of securities such as expanding security checks, new key lock system, installation of new camera system, and increasing its numbers of security patrols at Norseman Manor from seven per day to nine per day. In addition, a stand-in guard coverage has been increased from four days a week to now seven days a week for ten hours during a day peak security hours.

These enhancement security arrangements represent an annual investment of over 50,000 by Norseman Manor alone. The Housing Corporation and Northview senior management continue to meet regularly. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MS. NOKLEBY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and thank you to the Minister for that answer. I do have some constituents that are saying they have not seen security around the building so I will follow up with the Minister on that.

My next question is when will the recently purchased Nordic Arms be available for NWT Housing clients and how will the department determine which clients will be moved there. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**HON. PAULIE CHINNA:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The Housing Corporation is anticipating March of this year, 2022. The corporation will be meeting with each of the existing tenants to discuss transition planning. The timeline for public housing unit allocations are expected to be known earlier in this fiscal year. Public housing tenant allocation to the new buildings will be done in accordance to an existing public housing program policy. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MS. NOKLEBY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I am glad to hear that, but I would also like to encourage the Minister to think about perhaps prioritizing vulnerable families over just going through the formal process list as before.

My third question is will the Minister commit to providing funding to the YWCA for the expansion of Lynn's Place as somewhat of a replacement to the transitional housing that was lost when Rockhill burned down. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**HON. PAULIE CHINNA:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. And for the Member as well too, I will bring that back to the Housing Corporation to prioritize the families for the allocation to our new purchased building.

The Housing Corporation also continues to meet regularly with CMHC and YWCA on the status of this project to anticipate an announcement early in the near future. The Housing Corporation is certainly willing to consider cost sharing requirements for this project. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**MS. NOKLEBY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and thank you to the Minister for committing to bring back my comments, as well as I'm glad to hear that there is ongoing conversation around Lynn's Place as I know that the Y does lots of great work.

My last question, which may be a surprise to the Minister, is can the Minister speak about how she personally sees the transition of housing happening to more of a social department versus a technical or an infrastructure-based department? Can she give us some examples of how she sees that improving? Thank you.

**HON. PAULIE CHINNA:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Just to advise, I guess, the Members as well too that we've created a Council of Leaders working table with the Indigenous groups, and we will be looking at all of the programs and policies for the Housing Corporation. And also we will be looking at the mandate and the renewal for the corporation as well too, and those are expected documents to be coming in the next coming months. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

ORAL QUESTION 896-19(2):  
ECONOMIC RECOVERY

**MS. MARTSELOS:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, can the Minister tell us what her vision is for an economic recovery for the NWT? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**HON. CAROLINE WAWZONEK:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, obviously the vision of this Assembly is laid out in the priorities of the Assembly, and certainly the vision in response to the COVID-19 pandemic is laid out in Emerge Stronger, and Mr. Speaker, certainly that vision continues to evolve in response to the pandemic.

As for the Department of ITI as a single department, their role is to provide supports to all sectors of the economy so looking both from, you know, the smallest retail and the smallest hospitality or single-tour operators all the way through to large investments, and we're going to continue to ensure that full spectrum is being covered as we recover from the pandemic. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MS. MARTSELOS:** Mr. Speaker, given the closure of many mines in the NWT in the coming years, can the Minister tell us if she and her department have plans to open the NWT up for business. Specifically, are there plans to create more desirable economic conditions to attract and secure greater investment in the NWT? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**HON. CAROLINE WAWZONEK:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, there is tremendous amount of work happening not only in the Department of ITI but across the government for that very exact purpose, to ensure that the Northwest Territories is a place that has all of the right pieces in place to help the economy grow. We have everything starting from the regional economic development plans, which is an opportunity to look at the individual and unique circumstances of each community from fisheries to maker spaces to knowledge economy, film, all the way through to work that's happening at the higher end of large-scale investment to help revitalize the resource exploration sector and advance projects.

On that one, Mr. Speaker, consistently we hear that the barriers in the North around infrastructure, the infrastructure deficits seen across, that they are something that exists that can be addressed. We have the three large projects that are being advanced, Mr. Speaker, and much that's happening on a somewhat smaller scale. For example, Mr. Speaker, there's the Mackenzie Valley operational dialog that's meant to really look at how we can make our regulatory system more approachable and easier for those entrants. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MS. MARTSELOS:** Mr. Speaker, can the Minister tell us what her department's plan is to encourage more investments into the NWT to support future projects that will help create economic development for the NWT? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**HON. CAROLINE WAWZONEK:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, again, it's a question that I could probably spend 20 minutes on my own speaking to. So what I'm going to suggest I do, Mr. Speaker, is focus specifically on the space of doing more around the things that we have that are so good in the Northwest Territories. And where I'm going with that is on ESG, or environmental, social, and governance factors. It's a growing area for investors all across the world, Mr. Speaker, but it's

something that in the Northwest Territories is how we do business. We have strong regulatory system. It's co-management in the Northwest Territories. There's social and governance factors where we value partnerships with Indigenous governments. The Intergovernmental Council, Council of Leaders have all come together. We have protocols now for the development of the Mineral Resources Act regulations.

And then the other comment I wanted to make, Mr. Speaker, is that this is a place where another area for future investment all around the world right now is on critical minerals and metals, and we are doing work in that space, so. And why I highlight those two in particular, Mr. Speaker, is that while everyone hopefully knows about the priorities and the advancements of the priorities, these are two areas that have been getting attention and work even as we continue to advance the priorities, and even though they weren't there two or three years ago, we figured out that that's an area that we have strengths and we're going to promote them. Thanks, Mr. Speaker.

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

**MS. MARTSELOS:** Mr. Speaker, we've had many briefings from the Minister on various topics. Can the Minister tell us if she's aware of a new group called the NWT Indigenous Leaders Economic Coalition? If so, does the Minister support this group and does she intend to work with them to help strengthen the NWT economy? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**HON. CAROLINE WAWZONEK:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Yes, Mr. Speaker, I'm quite familiar with them. I've certainly have had the opportunity in this role to meet with them. And over the last several years that they've been around, Mr. Speaker, I know they've undertaken a variety of projects on behalf of the government or have been funded through SEED money and otherwise for other projects and activities that they have undertaken in the community, Mr. Speaker. So certainly continue to work with them, continue to also be working with the modern treaties and self-government forums and generally any opportunity that we have to engage with organizations that are working with Indigenous governments and that have had involvement of the Indigenous governments, we would always be looking for those opportunities. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

ORAL QUESTION 897-19(2):  
MANDATORY VACCINATION POLICY

**MR. BONNETROUGE:** Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my questions are for the Premier of the Northwest Territories regarding my Member's statement on mandatory vaccinations.

I spoke at length on what the mandatory vaccinations has caused in the communities across the Northwest Territories. It has marginalized residents into categories of vaccinated versus unvaccinated. Can the Premier explain to the unvaccinated residents as to why the need to take away their right to choose what is right for them and categorically marginalize them from mainstream society? Mahsi.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Member for Deh Cho. Honourable Premier.

**HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE:** Mr. Speaker, vaccinations are within the Department of Health and Social Services. I'd like to defer it to Minister Green. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Honourable Premier. Minister responsible for Health and Social Services.

**HON. JULIE GREEN:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and I thank the Member for Deh Cho for his questions.

I just want to begin by clarifying that there are no mandatory vaccinations in the NWT. It is, in fact, a personal choice. There are some businesses, municipalities, and other entities who have decided that in order to increase their gathering limits, they would ask for proof of vaccination from people who are using their services. So that's the proof of vaccine credential, which has been in place since the end of last year.

It is, in fact, a personal choice to get vaccinated. I do recommend it. It decreases the impact of COVID, even in the Omicron variant, particularly if you have a booster as well.

And so, as I say, we promote vaccines, but the ultimate choice is to the resident to decide. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. BONNETROUGE:** Mahsi, Mr. Speaker, and mahsi for that answer there. Mr. Speaker, the Omicron variant has opened our eyes as to what it can do and who it can affect. Obviously, the Omicron variant does not distinguish between the vaccinated nor the unvaccinated. Can the Premier explain what this predicament does to the mandatory vaccinations policy? Mahsi.

**HON. JULIE GREEN:** Yes, thank you, Mr. Speaker, and I thank the Member for that question. Just to reiterate, there is no mandatory vaccine policy.

We did see people who were vaccinated contract Omicron variant and, in some cases, those people

have been hospitalized and in some cases they have been part of the unfortunate number of people who have died. But generally speaking, the vaccine presents greater protection for the severity of illness and outcomes to people who choose to take it, particularly if they take the booster shot as well. And vaccination is an important tool that we consider in making decisions about whether it's time to reopen the territory. The higher the rate the better. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. BONNETROUGE:** Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. Mahsi to the Minister for that. It's the second time she said there is no vaccination policy, mandatory one. But the thing I've been reading in several documents is all the employees of the GNWT are being forced, you know, into losing their jobs and they have to take the vaccination, which is mandatory. So that's where I'm getting that from.

Mr. Speaker, for us that live in small communities, we don't distinguish between vaccinated and the unvaccinated. We go about our daily lives. Kids go to school. Residents go to work. Residents do their shopping. Residents are eating in restaurants, and everyone is mingling with each other. This is like it was before the virus. Can the Premier explain what this situation does to the mandatory vaccinations policy? Mahsi.

**HON. R.J. SIMPSON:** Mr. Speaker, point of order.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Raising a point of order.

**HON. R.J. SIMPSON:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. A number of times the Member has stated that the government has a mandatory vaccination policy and has stated that GNWT employees are being required to get vaccinated or being laid off, and both of those are false. The Member is uttering falsehoods about the government and its policies. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Minister. There is no point of order. Sorry, I'll allow it. Member for Deh Cho.

**MR. BONNETROUGE:** Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. I suppose there's a point of order on the floor.

**MR. SPEAKER:** There's no point of order. You may continue.

**MR. BONNETROUGE:** All right. Thank you. Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, removing the mandatory and the continuance of encouraging the vaccinations may be a win-win for all, especially the ones who choose not to take the vaccinations. This has given the rights and freedoms we have all come to enjoy back to the residents of the Northwest Territories, especially the unvaccinated.

Will the Premier give consideration to removing "mandatory" and encourage residents of the availability of the vaccinations? Mahsi.

**HON. JULIE GREEN:** Yes, thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, there is no mandatory vaccine policy. Not for the public, not for the public service. People have a choice to make here. We are promoting a socially responsible place so that we can offer a safe workplace and a safe environment for the people of the NWT. That can be accomplished primarily by being vaccinated. It reduces transmission, and it reduces the severity of the illness.

So for further information on the government public service vaccine mandate, I recommend that the Member direct his questions to the Minister of Finance responsible for Human Resources. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Minister. Final supplementary. Member for Deh Cho. Okay. Oral questions. Member for Frame Lake.

#### ORAL QUESTION 898-19(2): INTERNET ACCESS FOR STUDENTS

**MR. O'REILLY:** Merci, Monsieur le President. My questions are for the Minister of Infrastructure, who is responsible for government information technology services.

A year ago the Minister promised a solution for education authorities' internet bandwidth problems through a request for proposal which was to be issued last winter. Can the Minister provide us with a brief update on the status of that work and tell us how close we are to increasing internet bandwidth available to Yellowknife school authorities? Mahsi, Mr. Speaker.

**HON. DIANE ARCHIE:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I'll give a brief update on where we're at with the project.

So TSC, Technology Service Centre, oversees the GNWT network connectivity provided to GNWT schools. TSC is currently rolling out the new digital communication network, which is the DCN, to GNWT schools across all the communities here in the Northwest Territories. This contract was awarded to Northwestel in September of 2021, and this work is currently underway.

To date, there has been completed approximately some -- the work that's been completed to date is about 50 percent of the communities. This includes hardware upgrades that, in most communities, will increase the bandwidth available to GNWT offices and schools. The current schedule estimates that the balance of the work should be completed within two to three months.

Community service by satellite technology will unfortunately continue to have limitations, including the amount of bandwidth available overall.

So to mitigate this lower bandwidth availability, the school internet traffic leverages bandwidth that is not part of the GNWT network, and this will allow for better performance overall. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. O'REILLY:** Merci, Monsieur le President. I want to thank the Minister for that. There's some new information there that I wasn't aware of, but. I noted that in my statement that problems of inadequate internet access continue to be raised with us as Yellowknife MLAs and that they raised this territorially and nationally. So can the Minister tell us what specific solutions and funding is going to be made available to fix this problem here in Yellowknife right now? Mahsi, Mr. Speaker.

**HON. DIANE ARCHIE:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, as I mentioned, under the new DCN contract, the TSC will be able to leverage new satellite technology which we call Low Earth Orbit, otherwise known as LEO, as it becomes available within the North for GNWT schools. So again, this is expected to be completed in the next two to three months. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. O'REILLY:** Mahsi, Mr. Speaker, and I want to thank the Minister for that. I understood that Low Earth Orbit technology really is a benefit for more remote communities, not like Yellowknife. So I want to ask again, the Minister, what is this DCN rollout by Northwestel going to do to improve internet access for Yellowknife school authorities. Mahsi, Mr. Speaker.

**HON. DIANE ARCHIE:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd be happy to provide the Member with more details on exactly how this would roll out. I think, you know, it would take up a lot of our time here today, and we still have lots of Members that want to speak. So 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 because neither one of us are techies. You can tell just from the tone of the questions and the answers. So I look forward to getting more information from the Minister. But what I'm really looking for is a clear commitment that the internet access problem for Yellowknife school authorities, students, and families here in Yellowknife is going to get fixed. So can the Minister tell us when that problem is going to get fixed here in Yellowknife? Mahsi, Mr. Speaker.

**HON. DIANE ARCHIE:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the Member's last question is a really

important one. So I'm just going to make sure I speak slow when I'm going through this.

In Yellowknife, the provision of internet services is a shared responsibility with school boards as the Yellowknife schools manage their own networks and hardware within each of the schools, including the non-GNWT internet connections as they have purchased and installed within the schools. The TSC has no visibility into how these separate internet connections are used, managed, or how its usage is tracked.

The TSC provides Yellowknife schools with internet services through existing GNWT enterprise internet contract. So any increases to their bandwidth would be through the existing contract.

I hope I'm making sense here, Mr. Speaker. Capacity under this contract was increased in September from 1 gigabyte to 2 gigabytes, and we have the ability to increase to 5 gigabytes under the existing contract when additional capacity is required.

Currently, our understanding is the 2 gigabytes provided to the Yellowknife schools is not fully utilized. It is not the case. If that's not the case, Mr. Speaker, I ask the YK schools to reach out to Education, Culture and Employment, and also Infrastructure, to increase that bandwidth. The TSC has also provided ECE with turbo sticks, Chromebooks, to be able to facilitate online learning. ECE -- and I'm looking at my colleague here -- manages the distribution among those in the various schools. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

ORAL QUESTION 899-19(2):  
COMMUNITY GAS TAX FUNDING AND WATER  
ISSUES IN BEHCHOKO

**MS. WEYALLON ARMSTRONG:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Question for the Minister of MACA. Will the Minister commit to providing funding to the community to resolve this issue.

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

**HON. SHANE THOMPSON:** Thank you. And I give the Member credit for keep on asking the question. I've had numerous emails. I've had conversations with the Chief and that.

We give money through gas tax, CIP, and we work with the communities. Through the new deal, communities make decisions on where it is. We don't

have any other money. There's no slush fund out there. So the answer, quickly, shortly, no. Thank you.

**MS. WEYALLON ARMSTRONG:** Thank you. Does the Minister think it is fair to give community gas tax funding of a million dollars in 2007 and not provide any funding for a 40-year-old water pipe liability costing over \$10 million. Will the Minister commit to seeking out unused funds from other departments to respond to the emergency? Thank you.

**HON. SHANE THOMPSON:** I think there was about four questions in there, but I'll try to answer them all, and if I miss, I apologize.

So the first is the funding in regards to each community have their infrastructure. In 2007, the Municipal and Community Affairs came up with a new deal. The new deal, the money is allocated by a funding formula and so since 2007 to 2022, the department gave Behchoko, in the community public infrastructure money, of just over \$15 million, the gas tax funding of just over \$10 million. And communities make decisions. They make priorities. So they have to make decisions on what they think needs to be done for the community, and they make choices. Unfortunately, this situation is 40 years old, as the Member has said. Community has the choice to prioritize this over other projects that didn't happen. Other communities are in the same boat. So we don't have any new money. There is no new money. The departments don't have any money. We're \$1.5 billion in debt as we try to operate moving forward.

So as I tried to explain to the Member numerous times is we don't have any money. If we had the money, there's other communities that have other issues as well, I'd be more than willing to do it if we had the money but we don't have the money. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MS. WEYALLON ARMSTRONG:** Well, that wasn't the answer I was looking for but I think -- I don't think he really answered my questions too as well. So the Minister talks about \$40 million. Some of this funding includes money for daily operations. People have to live and eat and work. So some of them goes to the operations, and this money is not for capital replacement like he is talking about. What money is available needed to maintain the existing infrastructure and not do a major capital plan replacement. So what money is available? That's what I'm asking him. Thank you.

**HON. SHANE THOMPSON:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, as I tried to explain to the Member, there's CIP; there's gas tax and their water and sewer. On top of it, the community gives \$30 million since 2007 for the operation of it. So they have -- this year, they got \$2.27 million for the operation of their community. So on top of it, that's where the money is. Is there new money available?

No. What the community has been able to do and as of today, and this is going to take a little bit of time and I apologize it might be a Minister's statement, but MACA staff have met with the Behchoko SAO, assistant SAO, and water superintendent to discuss the water and sewer infrastructure situation. Work as with Ace Construction to identify and fix a number of leaks in Edzo. Four houses now have temporary aboveground service lines. They have issued public notices to help identify leaks. The treatment water reserve is now up to 50 percent capacity, and the water treatment plant is able to make water faster than it is being consumed. Work on the 20-year-old replacement plan identified in the 2019-ADCO report has not begun. MACA has since reached out to them about updating and that report and respect to costing and priority.

So Mr. Speaker, the Department of Municipal and Community Affairs is doing everything we can do with the community to help. We don't have any additional money. I've said that publicly. I've said it in the press. I've sent numerous emails to the Member. I've said it to the Chief. We don't have any money. We give the money that we get from Municipal and Community Affairs, 80 percent of it goes out to municipalities. There's no new money. There's no new slush fund. So as I tried to explain to the Member, if there was a slush fund it would be great, but the municipalities, we don't have that type of money. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Final supplementary. Member for Monfwi.

**MS. WEYALLON ARMSTRONG:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Okay, I know he made numerous reference to the \$40 millions and to the 2007, and I think I know what this Minister is trying to do, is that he is trying to discredit the community government and playing blaming game. I won't have time for that. So I think that's what he's trying to do.

**HON. R.J. SIMPSON:** Point of order.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, the Minister is seeking a point of order. Minister of ECE.

**HON. R.J. SIMPSON:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The Member is imputing motives to the Minister, saying that he's making comments in an attempt to discredit the municipality. I think it's a pretty clear one. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Minister. You may continue with the point of order. Member for Monfwi, please withdraw and apologize to the House.

**MS. WEYALLON ARMSTRONG:** What's that?

**MR. SPEAKER:** Please withdraw your remarks and --

**MS. WEYALLON ARMSTRONG:** Okay, okay. Then I'll --

**MR. SPEAKER:** -- apologize.

**MS. WEYALLON ARMSTRONG:** -- say that. Not to discredit or the community government, okay, I'll withdraw with that statement. But I think in 2007 --

**HON. R.J. SIMPSON:** Apologize.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Apologize to the House, and thank you.

**MS. WEYALLON ARMSTRONG:** I apologize. I'm sorry, Mr., whatever. Okay, okay.

In 2007, when he made reference to 2007, and I think in 2007 when the decision was made to take out another project, that was with good intention. And there's a lot of things that we have done. But there was nothing that -- for all the years that I was there too, we never -- I don't want to say discredit again but I know they do get our financial statement. And if they knew that there was something wrong with our water pipe system 40 years ago, why didn't they address it back then and tell us. And years later, when we're experiencing this problem now. That is the reason why I said what I said before. But he keeps referring to 2007. Something must have happened in 2007 when I was not there when the other leaders are not here to defend themselves. So that's why I said that. But I would like to know if the Minister of -- he didn't answer my questions too. Will the Minister commit to seeking unused funds from other department to respond to this emergency? Thank you.

**HON. SHANE THOMPSON:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, as I said, the new deal started in 2007. So what was happening before that it was the government of the Northwest Territories were making decisions on what infrastructure was going to go into the communities. The new deal allowed the communities to make decisions. I fully support that. I think the communities make the good decisions based on the evidence they had.

In 2013, the department wrote a letter to the municipality saying you need to look at some of these decisions; here's a potential future problem that could happen. These things happen. We understand that. We, as government, make decisions and then we look at it and go whoops, that wasn't right but we're stuck with the decision we made. I respect the decisions that council made. However, the Member has asked me to go to the other departments and get money for stuff that -- if I do that, there is -- I have to do that for 33 -- or 32 other communities. There's priorities and needs there in the communities.

Another thing is we don't have leftover money to give to projects like that. I have reached out to the federal government. We continually reach out to the federal government to have those conversations. We support the community by having our staff in there. 40 years ago, the lines weren't a problem. They are a problem now. We're having this situation now. That's why you budget and we do things that way. And the department is more than willing to work with the community to deal with this. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

ORAL QUESTION 900-19(2):  
FAMILY DAY

**MR. JOHNSON:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I just have one question today for the Minister of Education, Culture, and Employment who is in charge of their Employment Standards Act, and if he says yes, everyone can feel free to go home. Will the Minister make today a statutory holiday, Family Day, for the people of the Northwest Territories? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**HON. R. J. SIMPSON:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. No, and I wish the Member a happy Monday. Thank you.

---Laughter

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

ORAL QUESTION 901-19(2):  
HEALTHCARE SYSTEM CAPACITY

**MS. CLEVELAND:** Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my questions today are for the Minister of Health and Social Services. I'm wondering if the Minister can speak to what work is being done to evaluate the demands on the NWT healthcare system to manage healthcare expectation and catch up required due to COVID-19. Thank you.

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

**HON. JULIE GREEN:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and thank you to the Member for that question. This is a topic that is on the mind of many residents of the NWT.

We are aware that people haven't had the same access to services that they may have had in the

past for a variety of reasons. We've had staff who have been sick or in isolation. We have staff who've been committed to the pandemic effort. And so the result is in some cases we have fallen behind. The NTHSSA is right now working to identify areas where we need to enhance our capacity or bring new resources to focus on developing a plan to catch up for things like cancer surgeries, endoscopies, and core public health issues such as vaccinations of other types than COVID. So this is an issue that we are aware of, and we're working to resolve. Thank you very much.

**MS. CLEVELAND:** Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I'm wondering if in this work health is reevaluating how and who provides services. Examples of this would be maybe someone with a nursing degree is doing a role that doesn't require a nursing degree. Potentially other provinces and states are currently looking at expanding at-home testing kits to include not only HIV but STIs as well. And so is that type of work being done as part of this? Thank you.

**HON. JULIE GREEN:** Yes, thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the question. One of the game changers during this pandemic has been virtual healthcare. I'm sure most people in this room have had a virtual appointment with a healthcare practitioner or a mental health counsellor, and it certainly has opened the possibility of care without having to leave home, which many people appreciate.

We also do, as the Member has said, have people in new roles and that has prompted us to look at things like the scope of practice, whether people are working to the scope of their practice or whether, in fact, we need to change the skill mix to provide care more efficiently. So these are lessons that we are reflecting on now and we expect to respond to. Thank you.

**MS. CLEVELAND:** Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. One question that has come up quite a bit actually as MLA for Kam Lake are questions regarding the backlog of surgeries, specifically elective surgeries that aren't considered urgent but do add to the quality of life and the ability of different residents to be able to go grocery shopping, leave their homes, return to work. And so I'm wondering how Health and Social Services intends to address the backlog of elective surgeries in the Northwest Territories. Thank you.

**HON. JULIE GREEN:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. So it's true that early in the pandemic some surgeries were postponed. And during this most recent outbreak, the Omicron outbreak, there was a period of about three weeks where Stanton again postponed elective surgeries, especially if they'd require a hospital stay because they were trying to

preserve the hospital beds for people who were admitted because of COVID. But these surgeries have since resumed, and following this most recent outbreak, there's a triage of the elective surgery list going on with prioritization and scheduling happening as soon as possible. So I expect that residents who are waiting for elective surgeries will hear from healthcare professionals as soon as possible about when they can expect their procedure to happen. Thank you.

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

**MS. CLEVELAND:** Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker, and thank you to the Minister for that. I think that there are residents who will be very happy to hear that.

My last question for the Minister is in regards to cost. Cost of COVID has been quite extreme everywhere, not just in the Northwest Territories. And I think when we first began this, we were counting down the days until we could wipe COVID costs clear off the books, but the reality of it is that there still will be a cost to managing and dealing with COVID because people are still expected to do the work that goes with that. And so I'm wondering if the Minister has a dollar figure as to what the expected cost increase to the NWT healthcare system will be to maintain COVID health requirements and services here in the territory? Thank you.

**HON. JULIE GREEN:** Yes, thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the question, but at this time, I don't have a specific dollar figure. What we're trying to work out is what kind of increase in our public health capacity we need to continue doing testing, contact tracing, vaccinations, and managing outbreaks. And so it's so difficult to tell exactly what kind of resources we're going to need for that. And here's why:

Since the Omicron variant, we've had 6,000 cases in the NWT, three times as many as we had prior to the beginning of Omicron. So the amount of staff that has been involved in responding to that outbreak has been enormous, and many of the staff themselves have been affected by this outbreak. So this is an area that we are trying to plan for, and we recognize there are some significant challenges because of the uncertainty of what future outbreaks will be like and what they will require. We just have to consider the difference between the impact of Delta and the impact of Omicron to understand how variable COVID-19 responses are. But having said that, we are certainly prepared, within the coming week or two, to share our preliminary thinking with Regular Members about what kind of resources we need to manage COVID as an endemic disease. Thank you.

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

ORAL QUESTION 902-19(2):  
HEALTHCARE STAFF RECRUITMENT

**MS. CLEVELAND:** Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I would like to ask a few more questions of the Minister of Health and Social Services, please.

In my Member's statement today, I did speak about the burnout and the exodus of healthcare workers. And we're not only seeing that in the territory, but you're seeing it nationwide and you're seeing it globally as well. People are tired. And I think people's expectations are also changing as well for what they want out of life. The good news is that the Northwest Territories has great things to offer, including some good work life balance and some great people to hang out with, and we need more people to move here and work in our hospitals. And so I'm wondering if I can ask the Minister of Health and Social Services how Stanton is planning for the loss of potentially additional healthcare staff and what they're doing to attract new healthcare professionals.

Before we left in December, we had a large conversation in this house about the OBS ward. And as we stand here today, the OBS ward has not yet returned to full capacity and so having a conversation about healthcare workers in the territory I think is a very important one. Thank you.

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

**HON. JULIE GREEN:** Yes, thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, this is obviously a crucial area. We don't have healthcare if we don't have human health resources. So because of the large vacancy rate in our health workforce and because of our mandate commitment to increase the size of the resident healthcare workforce, we've developed a three-year health and social services system human resources plan, which will be made public in April. Some of the work is already underway that is laid out in that plan, including exploring financial incentives, improved access to training, ongoing outreach to understand the issues impacting retention of nurses and other health professionals, and strengthening approaches to recruitment.

The fact is that staffing at Stanton always fluctuates. And the good news is that as of December 21st, the vacancy rate had gone down by 4.2 percent compared to June of 2021. That doesn't solve all of our problems, but we're going in the right direction. Thank you.

**MS. CLEVELAND:** Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker, and I appreciate that, and I look forward to

seeing that plan when it's shared with Regular Members. I think it's one that not only Members but a lot of people from one end of the territory to the other are looking forward to seeing.

Currently, Stanton is very reliant on agency nurses, and I know that this is common right across Canada, and I'm wondering if the Minister can speak to whether or not this plan incorporates agency nurses as a key component and long-term plan for continuing to maintaining staffing levels at Stanton or what the future of agency nursing is in the territory. Thank you.

**HON. JULIE GREEN:** Yes, thank you, Mr. Speaker. I appreciate the question. The fact is that we need to continue to provide health resources in whatever way we can, whether that's hiring locums or agency nurses or, best of all, having people become our resident indeterminate staff.

So, we've worked particularly on hiring local indeterminate staff. I'm pleased to tell the Member that all 11 nursing graduates from Aurora College in 2021 were hired into indeterminate positions. The Indigenous Gateway Program has provided us with ten new hires. The Health and Social Services summer student program has provided us with 81 summer students last summer. So we are doing our best to hire the people who are trained and available locally, and we're also very interested in helping people upgrade their skills, if that's what they are interested in doing. We have funds available for that. But as I say, the bottom line here is that in order to keep our healthcare system going, we hire locums. We've always hired locums. We just recently started hiring agency nurses. And they are probably part of our future. But our preference is, of course, to, first of all, retain the staff we have and, in the event of vacancies, then to hire local staff wherever possible. Thank you.

**MS. CLEVELAND:** Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I was furiously writing as the Minister was speaking, and I have about 25 more questions but I'll start with one.

Mr. Speaker, do graduates of Aurora College currently have a guarantee with the GNWT that following graduation of a nursing program that they can secure employment with the Government of the Northwest Territories? I know that right now it is hopefully a given but is that a guarantee that is afforded to students who complete the program. Thank you.

**HON. JULIE GREEN:** Yes, thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I don't believe it's a guarantee, but I will inquire and return with that information. Thank you.

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

**MS. CLEVELAND:** Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Another thing that the Minister alluded to were funds for education. And one of the things that I'm finding with different constituents that I serve is that funds for education aren't clearly accessible depending on what department that you work in. Some people work in departments where it is part of their mandate to provide that training because it helps with the job that they're currently in, whereas other GNWT employees may have found themselves in a position where they want to go into nursing; they want to be part of the solution and they want to serve the people in a healthcare capacity that they've grown up with, that they care about; these are their neighbours and their family members. But their home department doesn't have a healthcare mandate, and so they don't have access to the same education dollars as their colleagues in other departments. And so will Health and Social Services work with the Minister of Finance in order to set up a whole of government approach to helping GNWT employees access education dollars to become a healthcare worker? Thank you.

**HON. JULIE GREEN:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thank you for the question. At this point, there is a dedicated health human resources unit in the Department of Finance so we, in fact, already work closely with them to recruit people and to provide for training and other opportunities for staff. So that would be decided on a case-by-case basis, what kind of support is available and to whom and when and how that relates to the department that the person is coming from. So this fund for skill enhancement is in place, and we want it totally spent. If people are interested in expanding their skills and taking up different roles in the healthcare system, we're more than willing to see that happen. Thank you.

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

ORAL QUESTION 903-19(2):  
REOPENING BORDER

**MR. SIMPSON:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, this question is for the Premier. Mr. Speaker, other jurisdictions are opening up. Their borders are opened up. You can cross them as you please. And I guess you can here as well. But I guess, you know, people are coming across and, you know, some of them are asking me what it take to come across. I said, well, with the way enforcement and monitoring's going, I said, it's either a SIP plan or Tim Horton doughnuts, one or the other.

So, you know, I'd ask the Premier when can we expect the border monitoring personnel to be asked to stand down and the border wide open? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Member for Hay River South. Honourable Premier.

**HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We work closely with the CPHO, and the CPHO is determining that now based on science and like I think the Minister of Health and Social Services says, we will provide an update to Members in the short future. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Honourable Premier. Oral questions. Member for Hay River South. Colleagues, our time for oral questions has expired. Written questions. Mr. Clerk. Returns to written questions, Mr. Clerk.

### Returns to Written Questions

RETURN TO WRITTEN QUESTION 31-19(2):  
ACCESS TO ENERGY EFFICIENCY RETROFIT  
PROGRAMS

**CLERK OF THE HOUSE (Mr. Tim Mercer):** Mr. Speaker, I have a Return to Written Question 31-19(2) asked by the Member for Frame Lake on December 2nd, 2021, to the Minister of Infrastructure regarding Access to Energy Efficiency Retrofit Programs.

A request was made to provide details of the Department of Infrastructure's work with the Arctic Energy Alliance, including information on how the Department ensures maximum access for Northwest Territories residents, additional funding allocated to enhance accessibility of these programs, and which programs ran out of money before the end of a fiscal year.

Mr. Speaker, the Arctic Energy Alliance's Regional Coordinators in its five Regional Offices outside of Yellowknife engage with every community in every region of the Northwest Territories. Even during the past 18 months, when the ability to travel was affected by COVID-19, Regional Coordinators have continued to reach out to all communities to promote energy efficiency and renewable energy, and to encourage participation in their programs and services.

Additionally, the Arctic Energy Alliance has developed two programs that provide specialized support for low-income residents: the Community Woodstove Program and the Low-Income Home Winterization Program. Both are based on partnership models, and the community partners are responsible for identifying eligible residents who would benefit most from these programs. The Arctic Energy Alliance has also recently increased rebates amounts for various programs to better meet the needs of clients. More details on these programs are available in the Alliance's annual reports.

Mr. Speaker, regarding the questions about additional funding allocated to enhance

accessibility of these programs for residents, the Government of the Northwest Territories and Arctic Energy Alliance conduct a review of the Alliance's budget every fiscal year in the third quarter and reallocate budgets from undersubscribed programs to programs with more uptake than expected.

This process allows the flexibility needed to meet unanticipated demand without the government having to appropriate new funds each year and avoids having to repay contribution funding for undersubscribed programs. The downside is that clients end up on waitlists until this process is completed, which historically happens at different times of the year due to variable public uptake.

Mr. Speaker, the core ongoing budget that the Government of the Northwest Territories provided to the Arctic Energy Alliance is \$2.74 million dollars. In 2021 - 2022, the Government of the Northwest Territories provided an additional \$2.744 million dollars in supplemental funding under the federal Low Carbon Economy Leadership Fund starting April 1, 2021, as well as an additional \$1.09 million dollars in Low Carbon Economy funding through a supplementary appropriation last summer carrying forward unspent federal funding from the previous fiscal year.

Most recently, \$100,000 dollars in federal Low Carbon Economy funding was reallocated from the Community Energy Plan Implementation budget to the Energy Efficiency Incentive Program to better manage the program to fiscal year end. The total budget for the Arctic Energy Alliance this year is \$6.6 million dollars, which is the largest budget to date.

Mr. Speaker, there have been no Arctic Energy Alliance programs that have run out of money before the end of the fiscal year in the last five years.

This year, only two programs are experiencing increased uptake: the Alternative Energy Technology Program and the Energy Efficiency Incentive Program. The Arctic Energy Alliance is actively managing these through waitlists and the internal relocations of funding. This year, the last Energy Efficiency Incentive Program rebate issued before a waitlist was established, was for an application dated August 31, 2021.

The Alternative Energy Technology Program has a pre-approval requirement; that is, a project is given pre-approval and is issued a purchase order to ensure budget is available for the rebate when the project is completed. The Arctic Energy Alliance continuously assesses projects that have started to determine if they will be completed in the current

fiscal year. If that is unlikely to happen, available funding may be moved to other projects.

With the substantial number of pre-approved projects in the current fiscal year, the Arctic Energy Alliance felt it was prudent to notify applicants who applied after mid-June 2021 that their projects were not guaranteed funding and they would be placed on the waitlist. Some projects that were waitlisted in June have since been issued rebates with funds reallocated from projects that were not able to be completed. It is too soon to tell if we will be able to cover Alternative Energy Technology Program demand for this year through reallocations.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

RETURN TO WRITTEN QUESTION 32-19(2):  
MAP STAKING VERSUS CLAIM STAKING FOR  
MINERAL RIGHTS

**CLERK OF THE HOUSE (Mr. Tim Mercer):** Mr. Speaker, I have a Return to Written Question 32-19 asked by the Member for Frame Lake on December 7th, 2021, to the Minister of Industry, Tourism, and Investment regarding map staking versus claim staking for mineral rights.

Presently, the Mining Regulations outline the work requirements to keep a mineral claim in good standing. Later today, at the appropriate time, I will table a summary of the claims that have been recorded since April 1, 2014.

At the moment, regulations for the Mineral Resources Act are being discussed at the Intergovernmental Council Secretariat table, which will define work requirements at the claim stage. When these work requirements are determined, we will then address requirements for the claim issuance processes related to the Online Mapping System. The new system will incorporate measures to avoid speculation and nuisance staking. The regulatory framework will ensure that any claims issued are within the proponent's reasonable ability to conduct exploration work. This framework will also allow the government to receive the geoscience knowledge produced from exploration work, regardless of whether the proponent intends to keep the exploration property active after the initial period.

The work to develop online map staking will take into account best practices across Canada and around the globe. We expect to develop a territory-based system with protocols to prevent large scale staking without intent to explore. These restrictions will be an essential component of the new system.

Indigenous governments have been clear that they want a modern system that moves mineral tenure issuance online. The online system will allow for other considerations such as environmental and

political concerns. We are continuing to discuss these factors at the Intergovernmental Council table.

Economic and behavioural analysis is ongoing with the Intergovernmental Council. We need to confirm work requirements and other general regulations for the tenure issuance process before we begin significant work on the online system. This analysis will be based on a cross jurisdictional review that highlights the patterns of use and economic impacts seen post-implementation. Development projects must contribute to the economic well-being of all Northwest Territories residents.

Public engagement is underway this spring. Beyond the close collaboration on the Intergovernmental Council, we are engaging with the public, industry, and regulatory boards this spring. Formal Aboriginal consultation will begin next year when the draft regulations have been completed.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**CLERK OF THE HOUSE (Mr. Tim Mercer):** Finally, Mr. Speaker, I have a Return to Written Question 33-19(2) asked by the Member for Monfwi on December 9th, 2021, to the Minister of Education, Culture, and Employment regarding community-based post-secondary education programs. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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? From April 2016 to present, the Government of the Northwest Territories has spent just over \$3.7 million on the relocation of non-Northwest Territories residents to the NWT for employment in schools.
2. Since 2018, how many northerners have graduated from Aurora College diploma programs in nursing, education and social work? Since 2018, 67 Northerners have graduated from Aurora College in the Bachelor of Science in Nursing program, 12 in the Bachelor of Education program, and 21 in the Social Work Diploma program. It is important to note that the Social Work Diploma and the Bachelor of Education programs suspended student enrollments in 2017 to complete reviews of the programs. The graduation numbers are for those students that were already in the program when enrollments were suspended.

3. How many people in the Northwest Territories have a grade 12 education and are on income support? This data is not tracked by the Department of Education, Culture and Employment, as this information is not a requirement to qualify for assistance.
4. Can the Minister provide data, showing how many Indigenous teachers, social workers and nurses are in the Northwest Territories? As of November 30, 2021, 52 of 670 or 7.8% nurses, 36 of 123 or 29.3% social workers, and 126 of 661 or 19.1% teachers employed with the GNWT are Indigenous Aboriginal.

Yellowknife Education District No. 1 or YK1, Yellowknife Catholic Schools or YCS and the Hay River Health and Social Services Authority or HRHSSA do not have an Affirmative Action Policy for hiring and do not collect information on Indigenous status of their employees. YK1 has a total of 215 teachers and YCS has 114 teachers. There are 42.5 Registered Nurse, 23 Licensed Practical Nurse, and one Nurse Practitioner positions, along with six social workers and three social worker support staff positions, within the HRHSSA.

5. When will Aurora College complete the report on the teacher and social work program, and open doors to students? The timeline for the completion of the Social Work Diploma and Bachelor of Education Program reviews has been impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic. However, external reviewers have been engaged virtually, have completed their review and provided their recommendations. Following best practice, the external review recommendations are being examined internally by Aurora College program staff prior to the release of an institutional response that will outline next steps for each program. The institutional response from Aurora College will be released in Spring 2022. Although no decisions have been made, it is likely that Aurora College will have social work and education programming in the future. Pending the results of the program reviews and other considerations, such as identifying and securing a post-secondary institutional partner to support program delivery, a Social Work program could be reinstated for the 2023-2024 academic year and the Bachelor of Education in 2024-2025.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Clerk. Returns to written questions. Replies to the Commissioner's address. Petitions. Reports of committees on review of bills. Member for Kam Lake. Bill 38. Member for Kam Lake.

### Reports of Committees on Review of Bills

BILL 38:  
MISCELLANEOUS STATUTE LAW AMENDMENT  
ACT

**MS. CLEVELAND:** Mr. Speaker, I'd like to report that Bill 38, the Miscellaneous Statute Law Amendment Act, is ready for consideration in Committee of the Whole. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Member for Kam Lake. Reports of committees on the review of bills. Reports of standing and special committees. Tabling of documents. Minister responsible for Health and Social Services.

### Tabling of Documents

TABLED DOCUMENT 545-19(2):  
FOLLOW-UP LETTER FOR ORAL QUESTION  
791-19(2): OBSTETRICAL CARE

TABLED DOCUMENT 546-19(2):  
FOLLOW-UP FOR ORAL QUESTION 849-19(2):  
HEALTHCARE WAIT TIMES

**HON. JULIE GREEN:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I wish to table the following two documents:

Follow-up letter to Oral Question 791-19(2), obstetrics care; and, Follow-up letter to Oral Question 849-19(2), healthcare wait times. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

TABLED DOCUMENT 547-19(2):  
FOLLOW-UP FOR ORAL QUESTION 812-19(2)  
AND ORAL QUESTION 835-19(2): COST OF  
FUEL IN NUNAKPUT REGION AND MARINE  
TRANSPORTATION SERVICES TO NUNAKPUT

TABLED DOCUMENT 548-19(2):  
FOLLOW-UP LETTER FOR ORAL QUESTION  
871-19(2): COLD WEATHER TESTING

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

Follow-up letter to Oral Question 812-19(2) and Oral Question 835-19(2), cost of fuel in Nunakput region and marine transportation services to Nunakput; and follow-up letter to Oral Question 871-19(2), cold weather testing. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Minister. Oral questions. Minister responsible for Environment and Natural Resources.

TABLED DOCUMENT 549-19(2):  
FOLLOW-UP LETTER FOR ORAL QUESTION  
798-19(2): LAND OWNERSHIP ISSUES IN SMALL  
COMMUNITIES

**HON. SHANE THOMPSON:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I wish to table the following document: Follow-up letter to Oral Question 798-19(2), land ownership issues in small communities. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

TABLED DOCUMENT 550-19(2):  
FOLLOW-UP LETTER FOR ORAL QUESTION  
822-19(2): TERRITORIAL POLICING SERVICES  
AGREEMENT

TABLED DOCUMENT 551-19(2):  
FOLLOW-UP LETTER FOR ORAL QUESTION  
853-19(2): IMMIGRATION STRATEGY

**HON. R. J. SIMPSON:** Mr. Speaker, I wish to table the following two documents: Follow-up letter to Oral Question 822-19(2), Territorial Policing Services Agreement; and Follow-up letter to Oral Question 853-19(2), Immigration Strategy. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

TABLED DOCUMENT 552-19(2):  
FOLLOW-UP LETTER FOR ORAL QUESTION  
865-19(2): HIGHWAY NO. 7 BORDER HOURS OF  
OPERATION

**HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE:** Mr. Speaker, I wish to table the following document: Follow-up letter to Oral Question 865-19(2), Highway No. 7 border hours of operation. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

TABLED DOCUMENT 553-19(2):  
FOLLOW-UP LETTER FOR ORAL QUESTION  
831-19(2): TLICHO REGIONAL HOUSING

TABLED DOCUMENT 554-19(2):  
FOLLOW-UP LETTER FOR ORAL QUESTION  
837-19(2): NEW HOUSING INITIATIVES IN THE  
TLICHO REGION

**HON. PAULIE CHINNA:** Mr. Speaker, I wish to table the following two documents: Follow-up letter for Oral Question 831-19(2), Tlicho regional housing; and, Follow-up letter for Oral question 837-19(2), new housing initiatives in the Tlicho region. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Minister. Tabling of documents. Minister responsible for Industry, Tourism, and Investment.

TABLED DOCUMENT 555-19(2):  
SUMMARY OF CLAIMS RECORDED SINCE  
APRIL 1, 2014

**HON. CAROLINE WAWZONEK:** Mr. Speaker, further to my return to Written Question 32-19(2), I wish to table the following document: Summary of claims recorded since April 1st, 2014. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

TABLED DOCUMENT 556-19(2):  
HOUSING POLICY DEBATE JOURNAL ARTICLE  
"HOUSING AND HOMELESSNESS IN  
INDIGENOUS COMMUNITIES OF CANADA'S  
NORTH"

TABLED DOCUMENT 557-19(2):  
NWT HEALTH STATUS CHARTBOOK –  
TRANSITION AND STRATEGIC PLANNING, FALL  
2019

TABLED DOCUMENT 558-19(2):  
EMAILS AND ESTIMATE FOR NEW SEWER AND  
WATER TANK IN EDZO

**MS. WEYALLON ARMSTRONG:** Mr. Speaker, I wish to table three documents. The first is an article from the Housing Policy Debate Journal entitled Housing and Homelessness in Indigenous Communities in the Northwest Territories, in Canada's North.

The second document is the health status chart book transition and strategic planning dated fall 2019 prior to 19th Assembly elections. And the third one, email and estimates for a new sewer and water tank in Edzo. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

TABLED DOCUMENT 559-19(2):  
NORTHWEST TERRITORIES LEGISLATIVE  
ASSEMBLY ANNUAL REPORT 2020-2021

TABLED DOCUMENT 560-19(2):  
REPORT OF THE NWT INTEGRITY  
COMMISSIONER ON THE INVESTIGATION INTO  
A COMPLAINT MADE BY THE BOARD OF  
MANAGEMENT ALLEGING THAT MR. JACKIE  
JACOBSON, MLA FOR NUNAKPUT, WAS IN A  
CONFLICT OF INTEREST AND BREACH THE  
MEMBERS' CODE OF CONDUCT

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Member for Monfwi. Tabling of documents. I hereby table the 2020-2021 Annual Report of the Legislative Assembly of the Northwest Territories.

Pursuant to section 102 of the Legislative Assembly and Executive Council Act, I wish to table the report of the Integrity Commissioner of the Northwest Territories - the report of the Integrity Commissioner of the investigation into a complaint made by the Board of Management alleging that Mr. Jackie Jacobson, MLA for Nunakput, was in a conflict of interest in breach of the members' code of conduct.

Tabling of documents. Notices of motion. Motions. Notices of motion for the first reading of bills. First reading of bills. Second reading of bills. Consideration in Committee of the Whole of bills and other matters, Bill 23, 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. What is the issue of committee? Mr. O'Reilly.

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

**CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler):** Thank you. There's a motion on the floor to rise and report progress. Does committee agree?

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

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

**Report of Committee of the Whole**

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

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

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

---Carried

Third reading of bills. Mr. Clerk, orders of the day.

### Orders of the Day

**CLERK OF THE HOUSE (Mr. Tim Mercer):** Orders of the day for Tuesday, February 22nd, 2022, 1:30 p.m.

1. Prayer
2. Budget Address
3. Ministers' Statements
4. Members' Statements
5. Recognition of Visitors in the Gallery
6. Replies to Budget Address
7. Reports of Committees on the Review of Bills
8. Reports of Standing and Special Committees
9. Returns to Oral Questions
10. Acknowledgements
11. Oral Questions
12. Written Questions
13. Returns to Written Questions
14. Replies to Commissioner Address
15. Petitions
16. Tabling of Documents
17. Notices of Motion
18. Motions
19. Notices of Motion for First Reading of Bills
20. First Reading of Bills
21. Second Reading of Bills
22. 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

23. Report of Committee of the Whole

24. Third Reading of Bills

25. Orders of the Day

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Clerk. This House stands adjourned until Tuesday, February 22nd, 2022, at 1:30 p.m.

---ADJOURNMENT

The House adjourned at 3:45 p.m.

