



NORTHWEST TERRITORIES
**LEGISLATIVE
ASSEMBLY**

2nd Session

Day 98

19th Assembly

HANSARD

Monday, February 28, 2022

Pages 3559 - 3602

The Honourable Frederick Blake Jr, Speaker

Legislative Assembly of the Northwest Territories

Members of the Legislative Assembly

Speaker

Hon. Frederick Blake Jr.
(Mackenzie Delta)

Hon. Diane Archie

(Inuvik Boot Lake)
Deputy Premier
Minister of Infrastructure
Minister responsible for 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-Willideh)

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)

Officers

Clerk of the Legislative Assembly

Mr. Tim Mercer

Deputy Clerks

Mr. Glen Rutland
Ms. Kim Wickens

Committee Clerks

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

Law Clerks

Ms. Sheila MacPherson
Mr. Toby Kruger

Box 1320

Yellowknife, Northwest Territories

Tel: (867) 767-9010 Fax: (867) 920-4735 Toll-Free: 1-800-661-0784

<http://www.assembly.gov.nt.ca>

TABLE OF CONTENTS

PRAYER	3559
MINISTERS' STATEMENTS	3559
COVID-19 Health and Social Services Update (Green).....	3559
Mandatory Entry Level Training for Commercial Truck Drivers (Archie)	3560
New Safe Workplace Program for Employers in Northwest Territories (Chinna).....	3560
MEMBERS' STATEMENTS	3561
Drug Enforcement and Opioid Crisis (Rocky Simpson)	3561
Online Security (Nokleby)	3561
Lifting of COVID-19 Restrictions and Message of Appreciation (Martselos)	3562
Strategic Oil and Gas Liabilities (O'Reilly).....	3562
Northwest Territories Housing Corporation Forgiveness of Debts (Weyallon-Armstrong).....	3563
Amending Liquor Act to Provide Community-based Decision-making (Johnson)	3563
Government of the Northwest Territories COVID-19 Vaccination Policy (Bonnetrouge)	3564
Eulogy for Colin Allen (Semmler)	3564
Municipal Funding Gap (Cleveland)	3565
ORAL QUESTIONS	3568
TABLING OF DOCUMENTS	3578
MOTIONS	3578
Motion 49-19 (2) – Referral of Minister's Statement 202-19(2) and Tabled Document 567-19(2) to Committee of the Whole, Carried.....	3578
CONSIDERATION IN COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE OF BILLS AND OTHER MATTERS	3578
REPORT OF COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE	3599
ORDERS OF THE DAY	3599

YELLOWKNIFE, NORTHWEST TERRITORIES**Monday, February 28, 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. Johnson, Ms. Martselos, Ms. Nokleby, Mr. O'Reilly, Ms. Semmler, Hon. R.J. Simpson, Mr. Rocky Simpson, Hon. Shane Thompson, Hon. Caroline Wawzonek, Ms. Weyallon-Armstrong

The House met at 1:30 p.m.

Prayer

---Prayer

SPEAKER (Hon. Frederick Blake Jr.): Ministers' statements. Minister responsible for Health and Social Services.

Ministers' Statements**MINISTER'S STATEMENT 210-19(2):
COVID-19 HEALTH AND SOCIAL SERVICES
UPDATE**

HON. JULIE GREEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, today I am providing an update on easing public health restrictions as we move toward lifting the public health emergency on April 1st. We have seen a steady decline in cases in the NWT since the mid-January peak after, but not before, Omicron produced over three times the number of new COVID-19 infections compared to all previous waves of the virus combined in the NWT.

Given the decline in cases, the Chief Public Health Officer is easing public health restrictions. Effective tomorrow, leisure travel will resume. Anyone will be able to travel into the NWT, regardless of vaccination status. All indoor and outdoor gathering restrictions will be lifted. The proof of vaccine program, which enabled businesses and organizations to apply for increased capacity, will end.

Mr. Speaker, the Chief Public Health Officer has always been guided by the most current scientific evidence to ease public health restrictions. I am confident that we have the tools in place to help keep residents safe because we all realize COVID-19 is not going away. Some restrictions will remain throughout March until the public health emergency ends, including wearing face masks in indoor public places, mandatory isolation if you have COVID-19 or are sharing a household with a person who has COVID-19, and reporting positive COVID-19 tests. In addition, any out-of-territory traveller will be required to get tested the day they enter the NWT and 72 hours later if they are going to a small community,

working or volunteering with vulnerable or high-risk populations, or arriving from outside Canada.

Throughout the pandemic, we have all had to change the way we live our lives. We have missed work, school, weddings, birthday parties, feasts, and celebrations. Many of us have struggled to maintain our mental health. We grieve the loss of 19 NWT residents to the virus. I want to extend my sincere condolences to everyone who has lost a loved one or friend.

Mr. Speaker, vaccination is still the best way to protect the health of residents and prevent further disruption to our lives. I encourage everyone 12 years of age and older, who had their second dose at least six months ago, to get a booster. Boosters provide maximum protection against severe illness and death. This is very important for those at high risk, especially elderly residents, those with chronic health conditions, and pregnant women.

As of last week, 81 per cent of the eligible NWT population is now fully vaccinated and 51 per cent of adults have received boosters. I would like to thank everyone who made the decision to get vaccinated and have their children vaccinated.

Mr. Speaker, over the last two years, every NWT resident has made sacrifices to adapt to COVID-19. We are all tired of the pandemic and of the public health measures that have been necessary to keep us safe. Throughout these two years, NWT residents have learned how to protect themselves and how to manage their own risk. We are now at the point where we must turn a corner and encourage residents to evaluate risks for themselves and set their safety nets. It is time to end the public health emergency because the risks associated with COVID-19 are no longer the emergency they once were. We are in the process of determining what services and resources will be required to be ready to respond to COVID-19 outbreaks.

I want to again take this opportunity to thank health and social services staff for their tireless work in providing top quality care for NWT residents. Mr. Speaker, I also want to thank residents for complying with the public health orders and recommendations, and for supporting each other through every outbreak, school closure, containment

order, and business interruption. I ask everyone to continue to help each other and take precautions to allow us to move forward to enjoy time with family, friends, and communities after this long interruption. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Ministers' statements. Minister responsible for Infrastructure.

MINISTER'S STATEMENT 211-19(2):
MANDATORY ENTRY LEVEL TRAINING FOR
COMMERCIAL TRUCK DRIVERS

HON. DIANE ARCHIE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the trucking sector is an important industry here in the Northwest Territories. Our communities and residents rely on this sector to deliver essential supplies to northern communities every day. At the same time, the health and safety of NWT residents is a top priority of the Government of the Northwest Territories. We must consider policies that will make our transportation system safer for everyone.

Mr. Speaker, following the Humboldt Broncos bus tragedy in Saskatchewan in 2018, there have been renewed calls for mandatory training for commercial drivers in Canada. All jurisdictions in Canada, the federal government, the Canadian Council of Motor Transportation Administrators, the Canadian Transportation Agency, have all agreed that new national safety standards in entry-level training are critical for the continued sustainability and advancement in the industry. That is why in late January, the GNWT implemented mandatory minimum training requirements for commercial truck drivers applying for a Class 1 licence for the first time. This training will enhance safety for drivers and the public and align the NWT with other jurisdictions in Canada who have implemented entry-level training for Class 1 drivers.

In January of 2019, public engagement sessions were held with industry, stakeholders, and the public on this important issue. Our government received feedback regarding its implementation on how the program might be designed to best meet the needs of Northerners while remaining consistent with similar programs in other jurisdictions.

Targeted stakeholder engagement was held in October of 2021 with NWT driving schools and trucking companies. The purpose of this engagement was to share information about progress being made to implement entry-level training, gather feedback, and answer questions. These engagement sessions showed there is strong public support for mandatory entry-level training for Class 1 drivers in the Northwest Territories.

Mr. Speaker, this new mandatory training will consist of class curriculum, in-cab training and in-yard training, and NWT residents will be able to get that

training in the North. The GNWT is working with driving schools interested in seeking approval to become training providers in the territory. Entry-level training is available and being offered by Aurora College at this time.

With mandatory entry level training now a reality in the Northwest Territories, I am confident this program will provide first-time commercial truck drivers with a solid foundation upon which to develop safe driving skills and practices they need to do their work safely. It will also enhance safety on NWT roads and in NWT communities. Quyanainni ekati, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Minister. Ministers' statements. Minister responsible for Workers' Safety Compensation Commission.

MINISTER'S STATEMENT 212-19(2):
NEW SAFE WORKPLACE PROGRAM FOR
EMPLOYERS IN NORTHWEST TERRITORIES

HON. PAULIE CHINNA: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Today I want to share some details about a new initiative led by the Workers' Safety and Compensation Commission, called Safe Workplace, launched this year in Nunavut and the Northwest Territories. Safe Workplace is a health and safety program that recognizes employers for their workplace safety performance and helps others identify areas to improve.

As part of this program, every year employers must file their annual payroll numbers with the Workers' Safety and Compensation Commission and complete a health and safety questionnaire. This year, the deadline for sending that information to the WSCC is today, February 28.

To qualify, employers must meet criteria based on legislated requirements under the Workers' Compensation Act, Safety Act, and Mine Health and Safety Act. Employers accredited by a third-party occupational health and safety program in the Northwest Territories are considered an advanced safe workplace.

Safe Workplace employers are listed on WSCC's website and receive a safe workplace or advanced safe workplace certificate and digital badge to display on their worksite or on their website and printed materials.

Mr. Speaker, employers play a very important role in protecting the health and safety of workers. I encourage every employer and business owner to participate fully in the Safe Workplace program so that the health and safety becomes a number one priority in every single workplace across the territory. I want to thank the staff of the Workers' Safety and Compensation Commission for establishing this new

program that encourages safe work practices on site. Mahsi, Mr. Speaker.

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

Members' Statements

MEMBER'S STATEMENT 954-19(2): DRUG ENFORCEMENT AND THE OPIOID CRISIS

MR. ROCKY SIMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, this pandemic has been unforgiving. In Canada, to date, there have been more than 36,000 deaths.

The effect of this pandemic has, in part, helped fuel addictions and overdoses in this country. Data from the Government of Canada's document "Opioid and Stimulant-Related Harms in Canada" states that between 2016 and 2021 there has been approximately 24,600 plus deaths throughout Canada. It is mostly impacting those between 20 to 49 years of age, with males accounting for 75 percent of deaths. Without health supports, the result of opioid addiction may well be death.

Mr. Speaker, over the past several months there are families in the NWT who have lost loved ones to addictions and the illicit drug trade. They did not have to die. They found themselves caught up in a situation that they were unable to control on their own. I know many people with addictions who, I believe, are good people and who do reach out in their own way for help. It is up to us to recognize that call for help and be there for them.

I take personal responsibility for not listening more and not recognizing those cries for help. I know I must also be stronger in my argument for treatment and aftercare supports for those that need it.

Mr. Speaker, as the opioid crisis in the NWT grows, we know it requires, as with any business, supply, distribution, transportation, customers, and payment. In our small tight-knit NWT communities, most people know who is transporting, who is selling and who are using, and ask why law enforcement are not making arrests. The answer is that legislation and Charter rights prevent law enforcement from arresting persons based only on assumptions or hearsay. To keep drugs off the street, it is important that law enforcement follow proper procedure when collecting evidence. Failing to do so is a common defence to possession or trafficking charges.

Mr. Speaker, the community of Hay River is asking for enforcement to curb the influx of illicit drugs into the community. The means to accomplish it will be on the shoulders of experienced law enforcement.

However, enforcement is only part of the solution. Education, prevention, treatment, and family are the first lines of defence. When we do call in enforcement, that is when we know we are losing the battle.

Mr. Speaker, I will have questions for the Minister of Justice at the appropriate time. Thank you.

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

MEMBER'S STATEMENT 955-19(2): ONLINE SECURITY

MS. NOKLEBY: Mr. Speaker, as a child in BC in the 80s, I was one of the first to take part in CARE, an innovative program to raise awareness in young children about inappropriate touching and sexual assault. At that time the messaging around "stranger danger" was the caricature of the flasher in a trench coat lurking in the local park, something that happened to my sister once near our home and to me along my paper route as an 11-year-old. Fast forward decades and our young people now face a new "stranger lurking in the dark" in the form of online cyber predators.

Mr. Speaker, since the election, I have made 1200 new friends on Facebook from across the territory. And I love this. It gives me a glimpse into places I never get to, allowing me to better understand life for our residents. However, since that time I have had some disturbing messages come from strangers via the internet. And on Saturday night while relaxing at home, I received a series of messages from someone who wanted to meet me. When they received no response, the messages escalated, eventually leading to a pornographic photograph and vulgar language about what the sender wanted.

Mr. Speaker, this isn't the first time.

Ever since I ran for MLA, I have received unwanted attention online, including photographs such as this one. Last year on my birthday, just as I was waking up, I received a very shocking inappropriate video from a stranger as a "gift".

Mr. Speaker I often use humour as a coping mechanism so yesterday I took to social media and posted about what had happened. The response was overwhelming and, frankly Mr. Speaker, quite disturbing.

Numerous women responded that they too experience online sexual harassment on a regular basis. A friend private messaged about a recent post in which numerous young women in the NWT shared their stories of a repeat predator in their community. This person is known to police however no action is

ever taken, even though he is known to contact girls online as young as 14. Sexual assault is never ok. Sexual assault is any sexual contact or behaviour without consent, and it is a crime.

In 2019, the NWT had the highest rate of sexual assault in the country, at seven times the national rate, and is a major cause of suffering, pain, and trauma for our residents.

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

---Unanimous consent granted

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the law is clear, an indecent act includes exposing someone to one's private parts without consent no matter how that exposure occurs, including photography. However, Mr. Speaker, given my experience over the weekend, I don't think that the message is getting out there and I am worried about the impact on our vulnerable youth if we don't hold people accountable for online sexual assault. I will have questions for the Minister responsible for the Status of Women at the appropriate. Thank you.

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

MEMBER'S STATEMENT 956-19(2):
LIFTING OF COVID-19 RESTRICTIONS AND
MESSAGE OF APPRECIATION

MS. MARTSELOS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, tomorrow is March 1st and will mark a very special day for the people of the NWT. We have reached a point in our fight with COVID-19 as we transition from dealing with this as a pandemic into an endemic illness.

It was announced last week that the public health emergency will be coming to an end very soon in the NWT and with the public health orders and, with that, public health orders will also be revised. Among the changes coming into effect tomorrow include no limits on large gatherings as well as a discontinuation of vaccine passports.

Mr. Speaker, after two years of restrictions, this moment has been a long time coming for the people of the NWT. Having said that, I would also like to thank all the healthcare and essential workers who have worked tirelessly to keep us safe and have kept the flow of essential goods and services continuous into our communities over the last two years.

Mr. Speaker, I would also like to acknowledge all school and education staff who have worked under very uncertain circumstances as they continue to serve our young people and our communities amid this pandemic. Similarly, I'd like to recognize all students both in Fort Smith and across the territory

for their perseverance as they navigated this pandemic while also going to school and trying to complete their education. I know this pandemic has been hard on the mental and emotional health of students, educators, and parents.

In addition, Mr. Speaker, I want to thank my colleagues in this House for their cooperation through these troubling times. I would also like to thank our Chief Public Health Officer for all her work and dedication in keeping the people of the NWT safe. Thank you as well to the Premier and the COVID Secretariat for enforcing the public health restrictions and providing oversight during the pandemic. And thank you to Minister Green and the Department of Health for keeping our jurisdiction among the lowest of deaths due to COVID-19. Mr. Speaker, I seek unanimous consent to conclude my statement.

---Unanimous consent granted

In closing, Mr. Speaker, as always, I want to thank all the amazing constituents of the amazing community of Fort Smith for their continued support and strength, especially as we endured COVID-19 the last two years. I also want to give my community team a great thank you for all their work they do in support. You know who you are. I know that my constituents, along with all the people of the NWT, are stronger as we emerge through this public health emergency. I am glad to see the community of Fort Smith and the territories moving forward in a positive direction after two years of restrictions that impacted all aspects of day-to-day life. We are turning the page on this pandemic, and I remain hopeful for our brighter future in the days ahead. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

MEMBER'S STATEMENT 957-19(2):
STRATEGIC OIL AND GAS LIABILITIES

MR. O'REILLY: Merci, Monsieur le President. It's time for another statement on the millions of dollars of preventable liabilities our government will assume from our mismanagement of the Cameron Hills gas field owned by Strategic Oil and Gas.

The field consists of 50 well sites, winter roads, summer all-terrain vehicle trails, a gas and oil gathering system, a central battery, temporary and permanent camps, airstrips, borrow pits, bridges, and a pipeline into Alberta. A class A water licence and a type A land-use permit cover its activities in the NWT. Other authorizations include 15 production licences and 11 of the infamous significant discovery licences in the Northwest Territories.

Production stopped in February 2011. It went into creditor protection in 2019, and finally into receivership in 2020. We accepted this site under the Devolution Agreement without full financial security and without an approved closure plan.

Despite a mandate commitment from the 18th Assembly to develop "a sound financial security system to prevent public liabilities", nothing was done to prevent this.

As far as I can tell, the Mackenzie Valley Land and Water Board gave conditional approval to the fourth version of the closure and reclamation plan in January 2020, and it is still waiting for the significant improvements to be done before final approval. Once the amended plan is accepted, a full reclamation cost estimate will be conducted and financial security will finally be recalculated, although I don't think there is any money to cover it. Surely our government must have some idea by now of how many millions of dollars this mess will cost NWT taxpayers.

The last inspection report by the Department of Lands dated January 2021 shows unacceptable conditions at the site. Emergency spills were required to prevent larger unauthorized releases from the camp sewage lagoon and the surface runoff retention pond.

The last report from the court-appointed receiver is from July 12th, 2021. The report says GNWT payments to the receiver have been about \$2.4 million, and all of the money held as financial security will be used up so the additional costs will be covered by taxpayers. The report also proposes an advisor to try to sell off some of the assets. The bid deadline closed on September 23, 2021 and it's been radio silence ever since. I will have questions for the Minister of Lands later today. Mahsi, Mr. Speaker.

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

MEMBER'S STATEMENT 958-19(2):
NORTHWEST TERRITORIES HOUSING
CORPORATION FORGIVENESS OF DEBTS

MS. WEYALLON-ARMSTRONG: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Today I will follow up from my Member statement I delivered on housing in Whati from February 24th.

Okay, I am concerned that the Housing Corporation is overassessing the value of homes, that the Housing Corporation is signing mortgage agreements with people that do not reflect the actual market value of the house. So people living in small communities already facing higher costs of living and less opportunity for employment and income struggle to pay off their mortgages in their lifetime.

When I questioned the Minister of Housing on these outstanding mortgages, the Minister indicated, I would like to deal with these files and try to close them up before the end of this government. Mr. Speaker, that is a very positive statement. However, the Minister also indicated that writing off any debts has to go through the procedures set in the Financial Management Act.

In this act, we can see the government follows a process through the Financial Management Board to write off Government of the Northwest Territories assets or debts or obligation owed to the government. There is also a process to forgive debts and obligations. Mr. Speaker, this standard of forgiving or writing off debts should apply to the long-term mortgages, housing arrears, as well as property taxes that are not likely to be collected or are financially unreasonable or unjust to the clients.

Mr. Speaker, we know other agency of government such as the Business Development Investment Corporation forgive debts. In a recent BDIC report, annual report, it states that the FMB may approve the forgiveness of debts -- of forgiven debts is removed from the financial management, but from the financial statement as the BDIC is no longer able to collect.

Mr. Speaker, over the last five years the BDIC removed \$4.9 million from their financial statements in support of 21 businesses. I would like to see the Housing Corporation do the same.

According to BDIC annual report -- Mr. Speaker, can I have unanimous consent to conclude, please.

---Unanimous consent granted

According to BDIC annual report, in 2016-2017 BDIC relieved five accounts totally \$840,000. In 2017-2018, BDIC relieved nine accounts at \$3.9 million. In 2018-2019, BDIC relieved four accounts totalling \$420,000. In 2019-2020, BDIC relieved three accounts totalling \$358,000. In 2021, no accounts were written off or forgiven.

Mr. Speaker, I am glad the Minister has committed to reviewing outstanding mortgage debts across the NWT and close them up before the end of this government. I will have question for the Minister of Housing on how we can get this done later on today. Thank you.

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

MEMBER'S STATEMENT 959-19(2):
AMENDING LIQUOR ACT TO PROVIDE
COMMUNITY-BASED DECISION-MAKING

MR. JOHNSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. There is a lot of changes I would like to make to the Liquor Act, too numerous to list in one Member's statement, but the short form would be "see Europe", Mr. Speaker. I dream of allowing minors in pubs and, you know, perhaps being able to share some wine in the park. However, I don't think that those ideas have majority support in this House so my next compromise, Mr. Speaker, would be "see BC" where you have private liquor stores. God, how I dream, Mr. Speaker, of ending the monopoly on liquor and getting rid of the liquor commission.

Additionally, perhaps the Brew Pub could be able to sell some beer at farmer's market or maybe even you could serve some alcohol at a farmer's market. However, Mr. Speaker, I still don't believe that those ideas would have support in this House. So I believe there is a solution and the solution is in community-based decisions. A number of jurisdictions have devolved more and more powers to municipalities. And in fact, in Vancouver, a number of beaches have designated public drinking areas. That was a bylaw passed by the City of Vancouver. Perhaps we could let the City of Yellowknife serve beer and I could have a beer at the main stage at Folk on the Rocks.

A bit of a tangent here, Mr. Speaker, it's actually proven that beer gardens cause people to drink more. And many festivals, when allowed to get rid of their beer gardens, then implemented them again because they before losing sales. When you put everyone in a designated corral and say that's the only place to drink, binge drinking occurs, Mr. Speaker.

However, Mr. Speaker, I think there is a lot of changes and a lot of conversations to happen. Perhaps the liquor store could be open on Sunday. Perhaps it could be open on election day. Perhaps corner stores could sell alcohol, or grocery stores, Mr. Speaker, but I think the way to do this is to allow our communities to make those decision.

Right now we allow our communities to make one decision, and that's prohibition or NWT liquor laws. I think there are steps in between that. In Nunavut, for example, when Iqaluit got its liquor store you were allowed to a limit each day for per person. You actually register your name in the store to make sure that person is reaching their limit. And certain people get cut off at times, Mr. Speaker. Perhaps that is a step that a community that presently has prohibition wants to take on a step in between. I think there is a lot of steps in between prohibition and our current outdated liquor laws. And maybe one community wants to go in a more liberal and maybe one wants to go in a more prohibition minded. But let's let them make that decision, Mr. Speaker. Thank you.

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

MEMBER'S STATEMENT 960-19(2):
GOVERNMENT OF THE NORTHWEST
TERRITORIES COVID-19 VACCINATION POLICY

MR. BONNETROUGE: Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, a week ago today I raised the mandatory vaccination policy. The GNWT has its own, but the thing with the mandatory vaccination policy it stems from the federal government and usually all provinces or territories mirror federal government policies. And so it spread into the Northwest Territories and the Northwest Territories modified theirs and called it COVID-19 vaccination policy. And within that policy, employees were required to be fully vaccinated by January 31st, 2022, or they risk losing their jobs. That's not false; it's there. You just got to read between the lines because it's saying that all over the place. And also, there's also reference to the mandatory vaccinations list. It's like a secret list or something that's within the GNWT. That's also related to termination of GNWT employees who did not choose, because people have a right to choose. They chose not to be vaccinated, and everybody knows the sentiments that were going around at that time, that this was just an experimental drug, Mr. Speaker. And I'm going to have questions for the Minister of Human Resources regarding the policies related to GNWT employees. Mahsi.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, member for Deh Cho. Members' statements. Member for Inuvik Twin Lakes.

MEMBER'S STATEMENT 961-19(2):
EULOGY FOR COLIN ALLEN

MS. SEMMLER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, today I am going to be reading the eulogy of Colin Allen Senior.

Colin Allen Senior was born in Aklavik on December 25th, 1935. He is the youngest child of eight to Colin and Ida Kasoun. Colin's father passed away before he was born so his Mom took her children and moved back to her parents Minnie Nakamuk and Harry Enakoluk. It was here that he learned his love of living off the land. Around 1942, Colin went to school in Aklavik and while in school, he learned how to read and fondly remembers reading Dick and Jane. He felt that being able to read this book was enough education for him so he left and returned to his grandfather to help work on the land without him allowing himself to get proper education. It was very important to him for his children and his grandchildren to have a good education.

When he was 14 years old, he and Shorty Stanley Gordon worked for the RCMP schooner called St.

Roche and hauled fresh water ice for drinking by dog team. This is where he learned to play crib and later became one of his favorite activities to pass time.

In the spring of 2016 Colin went to Vancouver, BC, and was able to visit St. Roche. He was able to tour the boat and share many stories with the staff and told them exactly what the boat did way back in the day. Colin was very proud of this event. It has provided opportunity for him to share stories, which he was very good at doing.

On June 17th, 1954, Colin moved to East Three from the family trapline at Classic Camp by Shallow Bay. He worked for Dusty Miller for two years alongside of Richard Kendi then went to school in a five twelve in Inuvik for carpentry.

This course was supposed to be four years but he completed it in two. Because Colin got his ticket, he was given the duty as supervisor and supervised a crew to frame the carpenter shop. Once that was finished, him and Andrew Joe put the roofing on it and finished.

With the work ethic he had, he was always asked to do different tasks around town while Inuvik was starting to be built. He worked jackhammer all day testing the ground to begin building East Three, build eight houses at Happy Valley before it became a campground, built the warehouses across from Home Hardware, built the yellow railings around town, foreman to build the Mad Trapper. This is just to name a few. If you took Colin out for a drive around town, he would tell you stories about everything every time, and he was very proud to share how Inuvik became.

In April of 1955, Colin was one of many supervisors cutting brush to help make the road from town to the Inuvik airport. In the winter, he helped cut the trail from Inuvik to Aklavik and moved three tent camps as they went to make the winter road. It was never used as the government made an ice road instead.

In 1958, Colin worked for Poole Construction building Sam School, Grolier Hall, Stringer Hall Chapel and benches as an apprentice under Jim MacDonald. It was at this job site where he met the love of his life, Rita Rogers.

Rita and Colin were married on April 19, 1960. Together they had eight children - Clara, Timothy, Dorothy, Darlene, Donna, Don, Dixie, and Colin Junior. Having a full house of children, it was busy but lots of love. Their priority was to ensure that their children were taken care of by working hard and to provide teaching them to live on the land as much as they can and by making sure all the kids went to school every day. Education was very important during these years.

Rita and Colin took in many others who were attending school at Grolier Hall and Stringer Hall. After their children moved out and had families of their own, Rita and Colin took in teenagers through social services and tried to get them to finish school and learn to live on the land as well.

Some of Colin's favorite things to do was watch baseball, check the river, play bingo, play cards, jig, waltz, and call out square dances.

Within the last year, Colin was in and out of the hospital. As things were changing quickly with his health and physical wellbeing, he would mention that he was not sure how much longer he was going to stay with his family as he began to feel sickly and no longer could a lot of the things that he enjoyed. During the last few months his body was deteriorating, he never complained once about the pain.

Mr. Speaker, as this was read by two of his grandchildren and they all called him dad, I will use the words as I read their closing.

Dad, your laughter, prayers, stories, love, and support will always be greatly missed by all who knew him and loved him. Until we meet again. Thank you, dad, from your entire family.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Member for Inuvik Twin Lakes. Our thoughts and prayers continue with the family and the community at this time. Members' statements. Member for Kam Lake.

MEMBER'S STATEMENT 962-19(2): MUNICIPAL FUNDING GAP

MS. CLEVELAND: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, on the final day of the 18th Assembly, the government quietly tabled a study. The study was a strategic response to the municipal funding gap. It contained some dire findings. Specifically, it showed that from 2014 to 2019, despite increased GNWT funding of over \$8 million, the municipal funding gap was basically unchanged at \$40 million. Communities' cost to maintain and replace infrastructure grew faster than the GNWT's funding. And that study showed that from 2014 to 2019, community infrastructure costs increased by an average of \$2.7 million per year.

In comparison, in the 19th Assembly the government has the mandate commitment to increase community government funding by \$5 million over four years. That's an average of only \$1.25 million per year. It's clear that the government is not actually reducing the municipal funding gap. While the mandate commitment for \$5 million is a lot of money, it's not keeping up with rising costs. Mr. Speaker, it's not even keeping up with the rate of inflation today.

The persistence of the funding gap is disappointing and has real costs on people's lives. Aging water infrastructure in Behchoko is case in point. Residents have brown water and frozen waterlines. Even the school has had to close, Mr. Speaker.

Addressing the gap is also an opportunity. According to the Conference Board of Canada, closing the funding gap would create an additional 220 jobs in infrastructure, construction, environmental services, municipal government services, and infrastructure repair. This kind of investment creates jobs, generates economic activity, and supports the overall health and wellness of Northerners.

I want to conclude by returning to an exchange I had with the Premier on the floor of this house. At the very beginning of this Assembly when we were choosing our Premier and Members could ask questions, I asked two. The first was about holding leadership accountable. And the second was about the plan to address the municipal funding gap.

In the Premier's response, one remark stood out. She said, and I quote: It might not be a popular thing within government but I think that at some point we're going to have to redo that study and see where we stand.

I agree, Mr. Speaker. It's time for the government to develop a costed plan to actually reduce the municipal funding gap for the economic health and social wellbeing of our communities and residents. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Member for Kam Lake. Members' statements. Returns to oral questions. Recognition of visitors in the gallery. Replies to budget address, day 5 of 7. Member for Frame Lake.

Replies to Budget Address

REPLY 14-19(2):
MR. O'REILLY'S REPLY

MR. O'REILLY: Merci, Monsieur le President. I love taxes. I can and want to pay more taxes to help those in need here in the Northwest Territories, in Canada, and elsewhere in the world. I just wish there were others in this House that believed the same, especially on the Cabinet side.

"Taxes are what we pay for civilized society", so said American Supreme Court Justice Oliver Wendell Holmes Junior in 1927. If we truly want better programs and services for the residents of the Northwest Territories, a more sustainable financial future, a just and compassionate society, and a planet we can pass on to our children, we must be willing to raise and pay more taxes. A good government does its best to ensure an equitable distribution of resources. I'm sorry to say we have

collectively failed and this budget does very little to move us in the right direction.

I had to push very hard to get the Minister of Finance to prepare and then post a revenue options discussion paper last year. The paper was finally released just two or three days before the public engagements that were held on the 2022-2023 budget that is before us. The current budget offers this throw-away statement with regard to taxes: "We will continue to monitor the data on who is paying taxes in the territory and on what kinds of income. At the moment, we have only a small number of individuals who could potentially be in a higher tax bracket." The other reason for not adding a higher income tax bracket is the "substantial risk to our competitive position". Let's look at the facts, Mr. Speaker.

The finance minister's revenue options paper shows that the Northwest Territories is one of only six Canadian jurisdictions that have less than five income tax brackets. We have got three.

We had the second lowest combined top marginal personal income tax rates in the country, more than 5 percent below the average. If the GNWT brought in a new high income tax bracket of 16 percent for those earning \$200,000 or more taxable income, it would affect 420 taxpayers - the top 1 percent. It would raise their taxes on average about \$2200 a year and bring in another \$1 million in revenue. That's not a lot but it should be the beginning of a more serious look at tax fairness, something this Cabinet started with a reduction in small business taxes that cost our government \$1.4 million with no effort to replace those revenues.

Another high-income tax rate bracket would also help to replace the corporate resource giveaway earlier in the life of this Assembly when the ITI minister gave a 15-year significant discovery licence to Husky Oil, with no rental fees, costing us \$21 million in lost revenues.

What other opportunities are there to raise more revenues?

The promise of devolution and more resource revenues has been a dismal failure. Low commodity prices and financial uncertainties are partly to blame but our chronically low resource royalties are the biggest problem. ITI contracted a report that applied an internationally-accepted framework for managing natural resources in 2017. That study gave our fiscal regime for mining a failing grade in terms of revenue generation. "The NWT has one of the world's most charitable fiscal regimes for the mining sector, one that captures 20 to 30 percent of economic rents from mining projects, net of costs. This is compared to between 30 to 35 percent in South Africa, 45 to 60

percent in Peru, and 50 to 80 percent in Western Australia."

A more recent study commissioned by the Standing Committee on Economic Development and Environment found that "the NWT sells its nonrenewable resources more cheaply than most other jurisdictions in the world" and "we find that the after-cost share of revenues to the government (the government take) is around 36 percent, with 22 percent for the NWT and 14 percent for the federal government.

The International Monetary Fund suggests that a government should expect 40 to 60 percent from a mining project. We are simply giving away our resources when we should be maximizing the benefits. The recently released discussion and research papers on mining royalties are so vague and biased that it is hard to see how any meaningful public engagement is going to take place. Regular MLAs and the public have yet to see a real plan and schedule for the development of regulations under the Mineral Resources Act. The snails-pace development of royalty regulations by this Cabinet has little chance of being completed during our term and resources will simply continue to be shipped out of here without maximizing revenues and benefits for NWT residents, let alone future generations.

Other new revenue resources our government needs to more seriously consider include a capital tax on financial institutions. We are only one of five jurisdictions without such a tax in Canada. Our wildly fluctuating corporate taxes are a lousy way to capture benefits from resource development and should be supplemented with a resource tax or capital investment tax.

There is no mention in the entire budget of any efforts to stabilize or increase any revenue sources. We need to start to have a real public debate about options to raise revenues, including an updated territorial formula funding arrangement that allows us to keep more, if not all, of our own source revenues.

Some, and perhaps many, will say that a pandemic is not a good time to introduce new taxes or increase taxes but our current path is completely unsustainable and we need to have that debate. I would argue now is the best time to examine our core values of sharing, justice, equity and whether these are truly reflected in our revenue efforts as we recover and rebuild.

Another way to spend more on our programs and services for those that need them the most is to reduce our capital spending. I won't go on too long about this as I covered a lot during the debate on the capital estimates. There is no use trying to spend money on projects during a pandemic when about half that money is carryovers from previous years,

and we still don't have significant improvements in our procurement process to better retain benefits.

The spending priorities in the capital budget, especially on questionable projects such as Taltson Expansion and the Slave Geological Province, do not reflect my priorities or our collective needs such as housing. Treat housing like it's a mega-project, and provide the jobs we say we're pursuing with the big projects. We can't do it all and we need to focus on people and their housing needs, not mega-projects with no funding, no business cases, and no buyers. We simply cannot afford them all at once, even if the federal government gave us or other potential partners all the money. There would be lots of costs in simply managing these projects after completion. Just look at the \$12 million a year that the GNWT must pay each and every year for another 25 years for the Tlicho All-Season Road. Those project payments are eating into our ability to spend on programs and services. Stop the spending on these wasteful large projects now and use that funding on housing, education, and healthcare that will make a real difference in people's lives. If Cabinet has to have one mega-project, use a phased approach for the Mackenzie Valley Highway to ensure that we can maximize local benefits.

The government renewal initiative has slowed down and I've yet to see any results. While I support the concept of program evaluation and review, this work cannot possibly find spending cuts to fund our unsustainable path when there is overspending on capital, growing debt, and no willpower to raise more revenues.

In terms of the budget process, I can say that the relationship and negotiations with Cabinet over financial matters have been cordial and respectful, a much different and welcome change from the previous Assembly. I have recommended several times, to no avail, that it would be more helpful to have a meeting with the Minister of Finance and Regular MLAs to discuss priority areas for increased funding prior to the development of a budget. That didn't happen but I would again encourage the Minister to do this next year to ensure Regular MLA input much earlier into the process.

While I appreciate the difficulty of trying to carry out prudent fiscal management during a pandemic, we are facing a fiscal crisis despite anything said to the contrary by the finance minister. We just had our debt limit increased to \$1.8 billion and in this budget we will be at \$1.7 billion.

Debt continues to increase at a pace greater than our revenues and spending. I agree with my colleague from Yellowknife North and others in this House that I had hoped for a substantial increase in the funding for the Northwest Territories Housing Corporation that has failed to materialize in this

budget. Of course we are still waiting for a plan to get our residents out of core housing needs, something I've been waiting for for about five years now.

I believe there are ways to fund more work on housing through the tax increases and other revenue options I mentioned earlier. I also believe that there is room to reduce some travel expenditures further and contracted services as well. There are some staffing increases in the Department of Finance that I think we can do without so we can redirect those funds to some of the priorities of Regular MLAs as well.

Much of the funding for the COVID Secretariat functions are likely not necessary given the pace at which the public health emergency is going to be lifted as mentioned even earlier today by the Minister of Health and Social Services.

I can support some of the new funding in this budget for healthcare, reducing the municipal funding gap even if the additions don't keep pace with inflation, the support for vulnerable populations, education, and childcare. Some of the economic initiatives could be better focused on diversifying our economy.

I am increasingly worried at the lack of progress on completing the ongoing Indigenous land rights negotiations and implementation of the agreements already in place. There is apparently around \$1 million for new work on barren-ground caribou although I am eagerly awaiting details, especially to see if this government is finally going to do something about habitat protection.

There is little to no mention of the untapped potential of arts and culture to diversify the economy. This is no-brainer in my opinion, and there isn't even a whisper of it in this budget. The vague arts strategy should have been used to help identify opportunities for investment and spur on economic recovery but there is nothing in this budget for that work.

I will be happy to work with my colleagues on this side of the House to push for changes to the current budget. We still have more work ahead of us to ensure that the priorities of Regular MLAs are more clearly reflected in the budget but I am confident that working together we can reach a reasonable compromise and a better balance. Mahsi, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Members, we will take a short recess.

---SHORT RECESS

MR. SPEAKER: Replies to budget address. Acknowledgements. Oral questions. Member for Hay River South.

Oral Questions

QUESTION 944-19(2): INCREASE IN DRUG ENFORCEMENT

MR. ROCKY SIMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, will the Minister of Justice confirm if there has been, throughout this pandemic, any measured rise in drug trade in the NWT and has it resulted in a corresponding increase in drug enforcement or staff? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Member for Hay River South. Minister responsible for Justice.

HON. R.J. SIMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. So during 2020, we saw an increase in drug trade, and there's been a trend over the last number of years of increases in that trend. That being said, there are, you know, new resources in this proposed budget for the RCMP. There have been new RCMP in Hay River in the last few years, and we have more RCMP per person than anywhere else in Canada. We have twice as many RCMP per person as most places in Canada. So I'm not sure that the issue is something we can arrest our way out of, but we definitely have a significant amount of enforcement already in the territory. Thank you.

MR. ROCKY SIMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, will the Minister confirm if the direction this government is taking to combat the drug trade in the NWT working; do we need to reevaluate the department's approach and the RCMP's approach? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

HON. R.J. SIMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. If anyone's familiar with the war on drugs in the United States, I think they've spent about a trillion dollars over the past number of decades and they have more people incarcerated for, you know, possession of drugs than anywhere else in the world, and they still have problems. So if this is -- like I said, this isn't something we can arrest our way out of. Now that being said, the RCMP are well aware of the situation. I know a lot of people measure the success of the RCMP by, you know, the number of maybe drug dealers in their communities. But the fact is that if there's a drug dealer who's arrested and put away, there's going to be another one who takes their place because there is a market. If there is someone who wants to buy drugs, there's going to be someone to sell them those drugs. So the investments that we've seen, not just in the territory but around the world, that have made the most difference are investments in things like helping people who are vulnerable in overnight shelters, in, you know, providing services for people who, you know, might be addicted or at risk of being addicted. So those are the types of investments that we need to focus on. Enforcement is, of course, an important part but it really is those social aspects that we need to focus on. Thank you.

MR. ROCKY SIMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, when I talked to persons addicted to drugs, or those that are dealing for that matter, I let them know that I'm willing to work with them to help them move away from that lifestyle. I also let them know that not changing their lifestyle or dealing with the addiction problem would result in one of three things happening, which is being murdered, overdosing, or being incarcerated.

Can the Minister tell me what emphasis is placed on education by law enforcement to convince people that selling drugs in the NWT is not a career path? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

HON. R.J. SIMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. And I don't have examples of, you know, RCMP giving talks in the schools but the RCMP does do a lot of community outreach. It's a little more prevalent I think in smaller communities where they have more opportunity to have the -- those one-on-ones. But I think that it should almost go without saying that it's not a great career, being a drug dealer. And it's not just the RCMP's job to instill that in people. Everyone needs to do that. And so in the education system, we can't just say don't be a drug dealer. We need to say here are some alternatives, these are things you can do. It's one thing to just say no, it's another thing and more successful if you give someone an alternative. So we are working on that as well. Thank you.

MR. ROCKY SIMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the community and residents of Hay River are very concerned with the events over the last several months that resulted in a number of overdoses and alleged drug offences. It has become a crisis.

Can the Minister confirm that he is willing to have his department set up a meeting with the RCMP, Town of Hay River, and NGOs, to discuss solutions to address the issue of the drug trade? Thank you.

HON. R.J. SIMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. And I was just on the phone with the mayor today of Hay River to talk about such a meeting where we bring together those organizations, and I'm happy to do that.

As well as MLA, I've had constituents reach out to me in Hay River, and they would like to have a public meeting with the RCMP so that they can ask questions. A lot of people wonder, you know, I know that there's a drug dealer in this house, why haven't you arrested them. And sometimes there's some valid reasons and we need to have that dialog. We need the public to know what the RCMP is doing so that they can support them. This is a community issue. It's not an enforcement issue. It's not an education issue. It's a community issue. And so we need the community to sit down together and start an open dialog. And so as MLA, I've invited the

sergeant, and whoever he would like to bring, to a constituency meeting and he's open to that as well. So in the coming weeks, perhaps after this session, we can set something like that up in addition to getting all of the community groups together, like the town, like the RCMP, in trying to figure out a path forward as well. So yes, we are working on this on a number of different levels. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

QUESTION 945-19(2):
ONLINE SECURITY

MS. NOKLEBY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my questions are for the Minister responsible for the Status of Women.

What are the laws in the NWT that help to protect our residents against cyber sexual assault? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Member for Great Slave. Minister responsible for the Status of Women.

HON. CAROLINE WAWZONEK: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the main provision of laws would be under the Criminal Code, and so there's quite a number obviously of potential areas where, depending on the nature of the events, someone who is a victim, or believes themselves to be a victim, could certainly go to the RCMP to take that route if they choose to, and anything ranging from harassment to threatening behavior to invitation to sexual behaviours, child pornography for another one, for instance. So there's quite a number of potentials, and it would certainly depend on each instance.

That, of course, is assuming that an individual wants to go the route of reporting to the RCMP, which certainly not every victim may want to do so, in which case there may in some circumstances be civil actions that an individual can take. At that point, Mr. Speaker, they may be well placed to reach out to an advocate like the Status of Women who I know can help connect people to the right tools depending on what they need. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MS. NOKLEBY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. And Mr. Speaker, I thank the Minister for that response, as she is not the Minister of Justice so I do appreciate that her background does allow her to know those answers.

My next question is that the Status of Women Council has created a safety planning tool that can be found at SafePathwayNT.com for those experiencing sexual violence.

Can the Minister speak to what these tools are, how they were developed, and how will be they be

distributed in order to reach all the vulnerable communities? Thank you.

HON. CAROLINE WAWZONEK: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I became aware of the unfortunate incident, the sexual violence that my colleague experienced. In doing so, I went myself to the Status of Women's page. I appreciate the plug that we've just had. They do have an incredible resource on there, quite innovative, that is trying to take a different way of looking at how women -- too often women, but anyone would be able to safety plan.

That information is only just starting to come out. In fact, having followed up I'm aware that they're putting packages together for MLAs right now, and we'll certainly be undertaking to circulate that to all colleagues here so that we can get it out to residents and information will be sent to all 33 communities, both in print form but then also -- I will also follow up and make sure that we're utilizing any and all other channels that we can use, Facebook and social media for instance, so that we can get that information out so that -- given that safety planning, unfortunately, remains a reality, that we can get information about how to do that out there. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MS. NOKLEBY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, risk factors that increase the risk of experiencing sexual violence in Canada include being a young woman or girl living in a remote or northern community, being Indigenous, an immigrant, or black, being disabled, or identifying as gender diverse or 2SLGBTQ+.

How is the work being done by the status of women being -- sorry, executed in order to specifically reach or help the most at risk? What accommodations are being made or steps being taken to protect those at risk given the small town nature of the Northwest Territories? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

HON. CAROLINE WAWZONEK: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. And Mr. Speaker, while I'm responsible in name for the status of women file, I'm not directly responsible for the functioning of the Council for Status of Women. But -- and I know that they are doing a number of initiatives and I'm -- you know, certainly will take whatever opportunity I can to table documents here to let people know the work they're doing.

In terms of the GNWT's work, I can say, Mr. Speaker, that we are an active member at a federal-provincial-territorial table looking at a national action plan for gender-based violence, and part of our role on that table is to call attention to the fact that there are certain risk factors that, frankly, do attach to so many individuals in the North at a much higher rate as already detailed here by the MLA,

MLA Nokleby. So quite well aware that those are realities. They are reflected, as I say, when we advocate on a national level, because bringing that attention will hopefully bring not only attention but more funding to attach to those specific groups of individuals who are at greater risk. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

MS. NOKLEBY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and I have been using my questions to sneak in a few more stats. So sexual violence is very underreported. Only five percent of sexual assaults are reported. Last year, I spoke about Clare's Law.

Is the NWT any closer to adopting this law to protect Northerners against intimate partner violence? Has there been any progress regarding GNWT process or procedures to ensure greater safety for our people dealing with sexual assault and violence? And I do recognize that's probably just a lot of the same responses as my last question. Thank you.

HON. CAROLINE WAWZONEK: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, this is one where I think both my colleague, Minister of Justice, and I would have some relevance just to speak to this issue.

From the perspective on the status of women, we certainly are following and monitoring what's happening with Clare's Law. This is -- it's a piece of legislation that would allow police to disclose someone's -- if an individual has prior intimate partner violence in their history, in their past, then they could certainly disclose that to a new partner or to a third party, like a parent for example. So that's happened in some jurisdictions in Canada, not all, and there are some concerns, or at least unawareness right now, as to whether that would be as effective in a jurisdiction that is smaller where communities are much more interconnected and where the realities of violence may well be very normalized in those communities and what the reactions then would be and whether that would actually produce more safety or not. So again, I can say that the status of women file, we are following it, we're looking at what's happening elsewhere and wanting to see its effectiveness and if this is something that brings -- that has attention in the Northwest Territories it may well come then to my colleague, the Minister of Justice, to consider from that perspective. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

QUESTION 946-19(2):
STRATEGIC OIL AND GAS LIABILITIES

MR. O'REILLY: Merci, Monsieur le President. My questions are for the Minister of Lands, who seems to have primary responsibility for the former Cameron Hills production area held by Strategic Oil and Gas.

Can the Minister tell us whether there's been any successful bids for the assets at Cameron Hills and if not, what is the next step in managing this site? Mahsi, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Member for Frame Lake. Minister responsible for Lands.

HON. SHANE THOMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the receiver is working through the results of this sale process. There is one bid for a portion of the site. The department is reviewing the bid and will provide comments back to the receiver. However, it is in the hands of the court and the receivership process. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. O'REILLY: Merci, Monsieur le President. I want to thank the Minister for that, though those bids closed in September. So several months. Although there was a conditional approval given for the fourth version of the closure and reclamation plan for the Cameron Hills site, the receiver's not yet submitted a final version with numerous changes required by the land and water board. It's been over two years now, and this plan is needed to do a cost estimate and calculate financial security.

Can the Minister explain why a final closure plan has not yet been submitted and give us a date as to when it's going to come? Thanks, Mr. Speaker.

HON. SHANE THOMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the receiver has not submitted a reclamation plan because they're awaiting for the outcome of the sale process. A process for the plan will begin once the sale process is completed and, unfortunately, the receiver hasn't provided a timeline for the conclusion of the sale process. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. O'REILLY: Merci, Monsieur le President. I want to thank the Minister for that. Seeing as we seem to have some leverage with the receiver, maybe we can suggest that they speed that up a bit.

In my statement, I noted that the financial security held for this site was totally inadequate and has probably run out by now. Can the Minister confirm that the financial security has run out and tell us how much additional money our government has paid to the receiver for the compliance and limited reclamation at the site? Mahsi, Mr. Speaker.

HON. SHANE THOMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The security for the land use permit and water licence is at \$2.9 million. In addition, OROGO

holds an additional \$1 million as proof of financial responsibility. The financial securities that have been converted to cash are being held in trust accounts. To date, the receiver's costs have been approximately \$3.0 million which has been funded fully by the Department of Lands. 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. The full cost for implementation of the close and reclamation plan that's not yet finished does not appear on the public record anywhere but our government must have prepared some sort of estimate by this point.

Can the Minister provide that cost estimate and its calculation to this House? Or if he has to give it to me on a confidential basis, I'd be willing to take that. Mahsi, Mr. Speaker.

HON. SHANE THOMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, there has been some very high level work completed around estimates for the cost of reclamation. However, due to the lack of information about the conditions of the wells and the site infrastructure, it is not possible to accurately establish the cost at this time. One of the next steps, once the sale proceeds is complete, will be to better understand the conditions of the ground, its strategic, and complete work so the government can actually estimate the cost to fix this issue. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

QUESTION 947-19(2):
AMENDMENT TO LIQUOR ACT

MR. JOHNSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In my statement today, I spoke about a number of possible changes to the Liquor Act. I guess one of my hopes is that in the Liquor Act, we will revisit the current liquor commission monopoly and perhaps looking at options of private stores or allowing beer and wine in grocery stores.

I'm wondering if that's something the Minister can consider and perhaps update this House of whether we will see a Liquor Act in the remainder of this Assembly? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

HON. CAROLINE WAWZONEK: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I'm going to ask -- answer the second of the two questions first. I have recently spoken to the department and reiterated the importance of getting this piece of legislation moving

along. It's a large act. It hasn't been updated in a long time and it's now in a state with lots of different pieces in it. But that is still my goal to see that it does -- is ready for introduction during this Assembly. And I'll continue to update Members accordingly.

Mr. Speaker, right now, there's not any consideration to expanding the current retail model that sells liquor. That is not something I'll be doing at this point and obviously if, or hopefully when, the Liquor Act comes before the House, certainly then we'll be open to hearing what all Members have to say and see how they may want to treat that piece of legislation at that time. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. JOHNSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My hope in getting that change made is that in Yellowknife presently there's two liquor stores. The licence to that is in 2025, and I was hoping that in place by -- for 2025 when we go out to some sort of competitive process, I had some issues with the last one that -- well, it would be a competitive process that would allow, you know, some different options of who would run the liquor store possibly, and I was also wondering if in 2025, when we put that out under possibly a new Liquor Act, whether the possibility of an additional store in Yellowknife would be considered. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

HON. CAROLINE WAWZONEK: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, a lot of hypotheticals at this point given that we're still under the current act and given that the tender hasn't even been begun; that process hasn't even begun yet. But right now, the way it's set up under the act is, of course, that it has to go through a system whereby the official retailer would have to be designated. And even before getting to that point, Mr. Speaker, when considering what the procurement process would look like, and there's an analysis that's done by the NTLCC, the liquor commission, that looks at whether or not more stores are needed, whether the current quantity and type of store is, in fact, working. And as I say, again, at this stage we're still a little bit early given that we're three years out. But those are the kinds of considerations that go into determining who or what type of procurement takes place. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. JOHNSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Yeah, I think there's a lot of work that could be done in opening up the Liquor Act, and I think one of the big areas that I would like to see is delegating some more powers to communities and I think they could set things such as store hours, whether they want a store, whether they want to set limits on how much alcohol can be sold, how alcohol can be served at festivals and events, how licences can be obtained. There's actually -- I'd basically like to give the whole act to communities, Mr. Speaker. But I'm wondering if in the planned changes that we are hoping to get

done in this Assembly whether delegating some authority on liquor to communities is at all being considered. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

HON. CAROLINE WAWZONEK: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, communities have a lot more power than just prohibition or not. They actually can hold plebiscites here across the Northwest Territories to determine what type of system they want, what kinds of rules they want, the nature or degree of prohibition they may want. And there are powers within the act for some of the liquor licence sales that they may want to see on different properties within the community. So there actually is quite a bit in there already community to community. I certainly -- again, though, this is, indeed, the kind of question and the kind of area that is under consideration for the Liquor Act and ways in which to continue to make it flexible and responsive because the MLA's quite right that this is an area where is quite a great divide between the different communities in trying to find that balance to allow everyone to make the choices that they think are appropriate for their community's going to be a difficult one. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

MR. JOHNSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I think another area where there's quite a great divide is open beverage. And I think it's no surprise that many people, they drink their beer at a softball game in Yellowknife but when the police come we all run and we throw our beer cans away so as not to get arrested, yet then when you go downtown it's no surprise to see a bunch of people drinking in public already. And I mentioned in my statement that, you know, we mandate beer gardens presently. You can't ever have alcohol being drank around minors such as at festivals and events. I'm wondering when we go out for this engagement on the public Liquor Act whether open beverage is one of those conversations we can have? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

HON. CAROLINE WAWZONEK: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the question of public consumption was one of the questions that was part of a recent consultation in preparation for the Liquor Act review and that "what we heard" report is coming, I believe, later this session. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

QUESTION 948-19(2):
COVID-19 VACCINATION POLICY

MR. BONNETROUGE: Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. On the issue of the mandatory vaccinations policy, or

COVID-19 vaccinations policy, the mandatory vaccinations list, I note that from the amended vaccination policy guidelines, that the definition of COVID-19 is the coronavirus. That was at the beginning of the whole outbreak in 2020. This has not been updated to include the omicron variant and the science behind the omicron variant. There's nothing. I've never seen it since the omicron came out. There's no science to say what will work to cure it except to stay home. And it didn't distinguish, and I say it again, between vaccinated or unvaccinated people. It didn't. Vaccinated people were the ones that got -- you know, they were sicker than anybody else. And it's been known and it's shown around. I'm not sure where the science is behind all that, behind that there. You know, they're putting in new -- revising the implementation or putting new public health orders. They're not new. They're still the same. You know, it was in there already, work with vulnerable -- you know, people have to have proof of vaccination. That's what it's saying. We haven't changed anything. We're just reiterating what was already there. We're still marginalizing our people. People still need vaccine passports to get into facilities and everything.

But I'm wondering on the employee side, since I'm addressing this to the human resources Minister -- I didn't want to give her any science stuff because I'll be directed somewhere else -- whether there would be some considerations, because we're in a bubble ourselves too in our small communities, we have settlement maintainers who work with everybody. And our communities, I've said before, we intermingle, and nobody is getting sick. I'm wondering if the requirement for, you know, regulated federal RCMP facilities can be worked on by people that are vaccinated in headquarters that come into our communities so this requirement is taken away from the settlement maintainers but also the overall issue about proof of vaccinations? Mahsi.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Member for Deh Cho. Minister responsible for Finance.

HON. CAROLINE WAWZONEK: Well, Mr. Speaker, let me maybe just explain, again, what the vaccinated policy is for the Government of the Northwest Territories. I think that's what the question was.

Vaccines have, and continue to be, the most effective way of preventing not only transmission but also serious illness. And Mr. Speaker, I have the pleasure of sitting with the Chief Public Health Officer where she has reiterated that science to us repeatedly, that this is the single best way of preventing severe illness. We've obviously realized with omicron that the nature of the COVID virus is changing, it's evolving, as viruses do. And that is where we were seeing a change in the approach from the public health agency and, as a result, a

change in the approach by the Department of Finance on behalf of the public service.

Our vaccine policy was not mirrored on the federal policy. Our vaccine policy was done in keeping in mind the advice of the Chief Public Health Officer here and in looking at the approach of other jurisdictions all across Canada.

As we've seen the change in the Chief Public Health Office and the health approach here in the Northwest Territories, so we too at the Department of Finance are modifying our vaccine policy, which is something I know I have committed to doing several times.

So at present, or rather starting imminently now, what we're going to be suggesting as of tomorrow is that it would be proof of vaccine is required for individuals who work with vulnerable members of the public in healthcare, educations, and corrections. This is just to continue, as we are coming down the wave of the omicron variant, to ensure that those who are most vulnerable, either themselves or working with most vulnerable, are still given the best possible form of protection and those working in federally-regulated work sites.

Mr. Speaker, I have no jurisdiction to change the rules of the federal government, for instance with respect to airlines, and those individuals, therefore, have to continue to be vaccinated. The alternative, it's never been a mandatory policy here in the Northwest Territories other than for those who are those federally-regulated sites. Employees who aren't within the vulnerable sectors can continue to be tested and wear PPE. If you do have to attend a federal work site, again, Mr. Speaker, that is out of my hands, and at that point they have to comply with the fact that the federal government will continue to have mandatory policies for them. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. BONNETROUGE: Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. Mahsi to the Minister for that. I think we can argue this all day if we wanted. But anyways, I think my question was can we make any allowances for the settlement maintainers in the small communities who aren't vaccinated, you know, to not work in the RCMP facilities but to have people from the regional centres come in to do those duties? Because even what she's saying, I'm just not clear yet, you know. I'm not sure if I read somewhere where we're getting rid of the vaccine passport for travel. I don't know why they would do it there. But I don't know if she can reiterate if that is the case and if she can answer if the vaccine passport has been -- is going to be done away with. Mahsi.

HON. CAROLINE WAWZONEK: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I have not heard anything from the federal government directly in terms of how employees are being dealt with, that there's been

any change in their approach right now. And as such, to the extent that an employee has an obligation as part of a bona fide work requirement to travel or to attend a federally-regulated space, then they will continue to have to apply by -- or to apply those rules.

With respect, again, to our own policies, right now, Mr. Speaker, there are only 326 employees of the public service who are undergoing either the enhanced testing approach or -- and who may therefore be having to get testing and PPE. It's a very small number. The vast majority of the almost 6,000 employees of the GNWT's public service have actually been able to comply with this policy. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. BONNETROUGE: Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. I wasn't quite clear on what the Minister stated about the unvaccinated population, whether they're given the options to do all the testing regardless of the facilities that they would have to enter. If I could get that clarity. Mahsi.

HON. CAROLINE WAWZONEK: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. So Mr. Speaker, again, so there's 326 employees that departments have asked for testing materials, meaning the amount of materials required for -- to do the proof of -- or do a COVID test and to wear PPE rather than comply with providing a proof of vaccine.

Now, Mr. Speaker, for the handful of those who are attending federally-regulated places, for instance having to travel, I cannot tell the federal government that I'm choosing to not follow by their policy, nor can anybody else. If the federal government has a policy that requires people to be vaccinated to get on an airline, that applies to me just as much as it does to a public servant, and those individuals would be in a circumstance where they'd probably be on leave without pay at this point, or they'd be looking for other opportunities. But I can't control the choices that they might make. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

MR. BONNETROUGE: Mahsi, Mr. Speaker, and mahsi to the Minister for that answer. My concern here is, and I mentioned it several times, because one of the requirements is it's saying to work in a RCMP facility, it's federally regulated all right. I know about the flights and that; I wasn't alluding to any flights. But for the facilities, like in my community we have a facility the settlement maintainer can't go into there. But employees out of Hay River who typically and normally, perhaps on a weekly basis, do come into our communities anyways. I'm just wondering if those employees can cover that facility and still have our own settlement maintainer stay employed? Because I've talked about marginalization at length

a lot of times because a lot of our employees are longtime Northerners and many are Indigenous and they have, you know, mortgages, payments, and all this stuff, and what we're doing is imposing our will upon others, to people that choose to have a right to do what they want with their bodies. And, you know, I don't want to say any more about the government in this regard at this time. But, you know, I'm just wondering if there would be any allowances made that can be relayed to Infrastructure to make these happen? Mahsi.

HON. CAROLINE WAWZONEK: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, if an individual cannot do their job and their job requires them to attend a location that is federally regulated, then they -- then that -- there's not much that can be done about that. People have bona fide job requirements and job duties and if they have to attend a location regulated by the federal government and the federal government has put on a policy saying that they have to be vaccinated, that will apply to them as much as it applies to me.

The GNWT, unlike many jurisdictions, did not have a mandatory policy. Most -- many jurisdictions did. We've allowed -- in fact, specifically, I allowed and insisted that we ensure that there's the ability for testing, that we allow the ability for testing and PPE. But when the handful of individuals run up against a federal policy, there's not much I can do to change it.

Mr. Speaker, I certainly took a lot of criticism when we didn't have a mandatory policy because a great number of people in the Northwest Territories have been severely impacted by -- not -- by COVID-19 and all its variants, went out and did everything they could to protect themselves and at this point we are rolling that back, modifying the approach, and being responsive to this disease as we have been from day one, from the first instance, to try to be at the front end of what is happening. If the federal government makes a change to their rules, we will continue to adapt our rules accordingly. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

QUESTION 949-19(2):
MUNICIPAL FUNDING GAP

MS. CLEVELAND: Thanks, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my questions are for the Minister of Municipal and Community Affairs today in regards to the municipal funding gap.

The Minister, as well as the Premier, have previously indicated that lands have been transferred worth about \$405,000 to municipalities to help reduce the municipal funding gap. I'm wondering if the Minister can speak to any additional funding outside of the

municipal funding gap funding formula that has been provided to municipalities to help close that gap? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Member for Kam Lake. Minister responsible for Municipal and Community Affairs.

HON. SHANE THOMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the department works with the federal government to try to identify funding pots there. Unfortunately, it's a one-time shot that we were able to get money from the federal government, but it doesn't help shrink the funding gap.

The Member talked about looking at transferring land. We are working with the Department of Lands. We've reached out, developed a process that was looked at by the City of Yellowknife. They accepted it. So we are working with the City of Yellowknife to transfer land. Not bulk land, but small chunks to help them move forward. We're also move that process when we sent it to NWTAC and we are working with them to look at that as well as transferring that process to those small communities, including the tax-based communities besides Yellowknife. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MS. CLEVELAND: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, last week a colleague of mine tabled written questions in regards to the municipal funding gap specifically asking for the status of that gap and specifically also by community.

I'm wondering if the Minister responsible will commit to tabling actuals of the funding gap on an annual basis by community as this is a question that has come up annually since our term has begun. Thank you.

HON. SHANE THOMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, it would be a process, and we are working on that. So whatever information we have we can share it with the committee. We could also table it moving forward. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MS. CLEVELAND: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. And I'm sure that the Minister will appreciate less written questions for that one as well then in the future.

Mr. Speaker, my next question is in regards to support for municipalities. One of the things that we hear over and over again is that we have to decide where we're going to put our money as a government and that we have a very specific amount of money for new initiatives. The problem with that is that this is an invoice to the government from municipalities. This is money that we owe based on our own formula that currently exists. So this isn't new initiatives. This is simply paying our bills.

Right now, within the GNWT, we have over 5,000 employees. And so I'm wondering if the Minister of MACA will dedicate some of these employees from within his department that can specifically help source additional funding to increase the size of that pie and help municipalities access funding through the federal government, even if it is one-time funding, but a lot of times what we hear is that there just isn't the -- the same people available to do those funding agreements with the federal government in different organizations around the territory. Thank you.

HON. SHANE THOMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the community operation division is the one that works with us. Again, we have 15 staff there but it's not all 15 are allocated to that one specific topic. But the Member has to understand, and the people have to understand, this is a shared responsibility through other municipal and community affairs. Divisions, like the community governments, sport and rec and youth, corporate, but also other divisions which is Infrastructure and Finance. So it's a government approach to working trying to get funding from the federal government. We work together. It's just not one division specifically. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

MS. CLEVELAND: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the municipal funding gap is something that you hear all Members talk about. And one thing I think that we can all agree is there's huge gains to be made by closing that gap from a community level. I'm wondering if the government will commit -- or when the government will commit to providing committee with a draft plan to reduce and address the municipal funding gap once and for all? Thank you.

HON. SHANE THOMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the department is working to update the funding policies in this fiscal year, 2022-2023. We were actually going to do 2023-2024. And we will review the data from the 2014 funding review as part of that process.

The Legislative Assembly, I need to reiterate this, we committed \$5 million of the 25 initiative funding. I recognize there is a funding gap. However, these funding gaps exist virtually in all levels of government, including the GNWT. It is not realistic to expect the government to cover the cost to close the gap considering today's economy and economic situation and our current fiscal situation. But we're willing to work with AOC on this. We are willing to work with NWTAC on this. We're trying to find unique and different ways of doing it. But we also need to, you know, work together on this. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

QUESTION 950-19(2):
FORGIVENESS OF DEBT UNDER FINANCIAL
MANAGEMENT ACT

MS. WEYALLON-ARMSTRONG: Thank you. Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Okay, question for the Minister of Housing. Can the Minister provide a list that details the value of all outstanding mortgages owed to the Housing Corporation by communities -- by community in the Tlicho region? Thank you.

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

HON. PAULIE CHINNA: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I will meet with the MLA for Monfwi to discuss those mortgages and have those conversations going forward as I know that this is quite a concern for the region as well too, but it also opens the opportunity for homeownership as well too. So we could describe and explain what those outstandings look like and if we're able to transfer those units over to the constituents of Monfwi. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MS. WEYALLON-ARMSTRONG: Okay, thank you. Can the Minister explain the process that the Housing Corporation follows in order to request the Financial Management Board to write off or forgive debts owed to the Housing Corporation? What criteria is in place to allow the Housing Corporation to write off or forgive debts? Thank you.

HON. PAULIE CHINNA: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We have an extensive process that we do follow when we're working with the outstanding and any debts owing to not only the Housing Corporation but the Government of the Northwest Territories where that's how these debts are considered. We do have -- the corporation does have legal counsel as well too with those constant, you know, communication in between the client and the corporation. If we're not successful with those conversations with the attempts, there is direction for the client to follow up with the legal counsel for the Housing Corporation to pursue either refinancing agreement payment plans or what further we can do to try to work and recover those debts owing.

But I also want to explain as well too that the mortgages that the Housing Corporation does have for these clients is that they're subsidized mortgages. So we don't look at the -- with the 100 percent mortgage owing, that we do have the refinancing amount, and we do have the subsidized mortgages as well too that I would like to further explain to the Member once we're meeting face-to-face. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MS. WEYALLON-ARMSTRONG: Thank you. Can the Minister provide a list of all the home mortgages that have been written off or forgiven in the last five years? Thank you.

HON. PAULIE CHINNA: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We have approximately 17 files throughout the Northwest Territories that we have forgiven those mortgages, and it would either be attempts that we were -- we didn't see -- we didn't receive any payment, and there have been surrenders as well too to those mortgages, and some that we had to deal with with the estates of for those clients as well. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

MS. WEYALLON-ARMSTRONG: Okay, thank you. Has the Housing Corporation ever reassessed a mortgage based on market value assessment? Can the Minister commit to reassessing the value of home mortgages in the Tlicho region based on the market value assessment? Thank you.

HON. PAULIE CHINNA: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We do take into consideration the market value for these homeownership units but we are a social -- we are a social program. So our refinancing and our mortgage rates are offered at a subsidized rent, quite similar to how we administer our public housing units as well too. And just for the Member as well, that when we are looking at our rental rates as well, that we -- there is a comparison and we do take into consideration that if the client can actually afford the unit, we don't want to set anybody up for failure, but we want to make sure that they're financially secured to receive and to enter into a -- at that time, a mortgage client that is able to afford the subsidized mortgage rent. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

QUESTION 951-19(2):
PROCESS FOR DEBT FORGIVENESS

MS. WEYALLON-ARMSTRONG: Okay, thank you. Final questions. But I think -- I know the Minister has said it before, we don't want to set anybody up for failure twice. I think it is up to the people to decide, that they should work with the people on that. So does the Minister -- does the Housing Corporation have a process where clients can have -- can apply to have debts forgiven? Can the Minister commit to creating a process where clients can apply for debts forgiven or write off? Thank you.

HON. PAULIE CHINNA: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. There is a process that the Government of the Northwest Territories does follow. We could put forward those recommendations, but we are also

binded by Canada mortgage and Housing Corporation as well too. So looking at the extensive process that we do follow, we could make the recommendations but we have to really display that we have tried every single attempt to collect the money that is owed to the corporation and then we'd also have to follow the Financial Administration Act as well too to making sure that we are doing things correctly and fair.

But I do want to inform the Member as well too that the Housing Corporation does an extensive amount of outreach with the clients in order to try to collect the outstanding mortgage that is due, and it could be as well too as outstanding rental arrears as well that they do follow a process. But there is encouragement for those individuals to work with the Housing Corporation and just not avoid us, that we do have registered mail that does go out and the majority of the times, they're not picked up. But we're wanting to work with the clients and making sure that they do become successful homeowners. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

MS. WEYALLON-ARMSTRONG: Thank you. With reference to arrears, I think the Housing needs to take responsibility in this area because they did not intervene within the first few months of people missing payments and etcetera. I think it's -- the onus should be on the Housing Corporation, not the tenants, and then taking actions after that. I think the Housing Corporation should be responsible for that. So I just wanted to say that comment. Thank you.

HON. PAULIE CHINNA: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I do agree with the Member as well too, that we should have had more of a stronger outreach to these clients. And these are older mortgage programs that we did have with the access unit in the homeownership and the help as well too. And I've been put the -- I've working within my department to work with these files. There's approximately 268 mortgage files throughout the Northwest Territories, and I'm determined to work with these files. I would honestly like to see them closed and to see the homeowners throughout the Northwest Territories become successful. But I'd like to thank the Member for that, that, you know, we should have contacted those clients at that time should they have missed the mortgage payments to 30, 60, 90 days. But it's something that we're improving within the corporation. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

MS. CLEVELAND: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I have a few questions for the Minister of Health and Social Services in regards to community wellness.

I'm wondering if the Minister can speak to how the Department of Health and Social Services works with communities to identify community wellness gaps? 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, each community provides its own wellness plan that is developed itself. The department has a staff of three community development and wellness planners who work with the communities and their wellness plans to support their actions and priorities which reflect their own preferences. The community plans are now a few years old. So there is going to be a territory-wide renewal process of the community wellness plans in the next fiscal year. And so that will give communities a chance to review what their priorities are and change them if they see fit. Thank you.

MS. CLEVELAND: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the Minister's response. I've taken a look at the community wellness plans, and they range from anywhere from three pages to some are 20 plus pages. So they are very different, depending on what community that they come from. Also taking a look through them, I've noticed that not every plan contains mental health as a community wellness priority, for example. And while I know that perhaps there are competing priorities within communities, mental health and mental wellness is definitely a priority across the board for every single community in the Northwest Territories. I think we definitely hear that every single sitting that we're together here.

And so what I'm wondering is how the Department of Health and Social Services reviews those plans, identifies some gaps like potentially mental health counsellors or other supports that can be available, maybe it's youth sport and recreation, and how they work with other departments within the GNWT to identify what they're seeing as far as gaps for mental wellness within the communities? Thank you.

HON. JULIE GREEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. That was quite a number of questions. What I want to say is that the communities develop the community plans, and they are uneven in length and content and scope. The point of having the community development and wellness planners in the department is that they go over these plans with the communities according to their -- this is a community-driven process. So according to the

amount of interaction that the community wants to have. They are not obliged to engage with this.

We, of course, recognize that mental health is an issue across the territory, and it makes sense that they be in the mental -- that they be in the community plans but there isn't an absolute obligation about what these plans should contain. And so my hope is that having been through this process once, communities may have a better developed idea of what these plans can accomplish for the renewal that's going to take place in the next fiscal year. Thank you.

MS. CLEVELAND: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Yeah, I do admit that I'm sometimes longwinded when I try to ask a question. That, I will take as a pointer for the Minister. Thank you.

But the point I'm trying to make is that we have a responsibility -- or the GNWT has a responsibility to provide options for mental wellness so that our mental health professionals aren't overburdened and how can we support as a whole-of-government approach mental wellness in communities.

For example, the government has the child and youth mental wellness action plan, and within that, there is an objective in there to support community-based organizations to deliver programs, and there's funding for the mental wellness plans that come along with that. But is there -- do the mental wellness plans support funding applications, then, from there? Are they a driver of funding to communities? Thank you.

HON. JULIE GREEN: Yes, thank you. In addition to the community wellness plans and that pot of funding, there are of course a number of different funds that communities can apply for. Those include addictions and aftercare supports, peer support, suicide training -- suicide intervention training, and so on. So they can be linked to the wellness plans or they may not be linked to the wellness plans. But when there is a deadline available for funding to a community on one of these particular subject areas, then I write to the community governments, Indigenous governments, and make them aware of this opportunity, and then they choose how they want to respond to that. People within the -- staff within the department are aware that capacity is an issue in some Indigenous governments, and they assist those governments in making sure that their application forms are complete so they can be considered for funding. Thank you.

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

MS. CLEVELAND: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, another priority of Health and Social Services was to streamline application and

reporting processes for various funding opportunities. In speaking with different NGOs, I know that there is a struggle out there for some of the expectations on some of the applications and reporting situations. Procurement does have a red tape working group and a mechanism for businesses to come back to the government and let them know what is lengthy or overburdensome and I'm wondering if health has the similar process. Thank you.

HON. JULIE GREEN: Yes, thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the priority of the Department of Health and Social Services, with the funds I mentioned, is in fact to ensure the money is taken up by Indigenous governments and communities governments so that they can spend it to the benefit of their population. And as I mentioned, there are staff in the department who work with those organizations to make sure their applications are complete.

We have, in the past, revamped our application process to make it as simple as possible, balancing that with the accountability around what is the money going to be spent on, what are the program outcomes expected, and what is the total amount of money that is required. So while we don't have a formal red tape working group of the kind that the Department of Finance has, we are always looking for ways to make sure that people are able to access the money we have on offer with our help. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Minister. Oral questions. Written questions. Returns to written questions. Replies to Commissioner's address. Petitions. Reports of committees on the review of bills. Reports of standing and special committees. Tabling of documents. Minister responsible for Education, Culture and Employment.

Tabling of Documents

TABLED DOCUMENT 577-19(2):
AURORA COLLEGE ANNUAL REPORT 2021-
2022

HON. R.J. SIMPSON: Mr. Speaker, I wish to table the following document: Aurora College Annual Report 2021-2022. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Motions

MOTION 49-19(2):
REFERRAL OF MINISTER'S STATEMENT 202-19(2) AND Tabled DOCUMENT 567-19(2) TO COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE,
CARRIED

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

WHEREAS Minister's Statement 292-19(2): Annual Status Report on the Mandate of the Government of the Northwest Territories 2019-2023 was delivered, Tabled Document 567-19(2): Annual Status Report 2019-2023, Mandate of the Government of the Northwest Territories February 2021-January 2022 was tabled in this House;

NOW THEREFORE I MOVE, seconded by the honourable Member for Hay River South, that the Minister's Statement 292-19(2): Annual Status Report on the Mandate of the Government of the Northwest Territories 2019-2023, and Tabled Document 567-19(2): Annual Status Report 2019-2023, Mandate of the Government of the Northwest Territories February 2021-January 2022 be referred to the Committee of the Whole for consideration. Mahsi, Mr. Speaker.

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

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Question.

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

---Carried

Tabled Member's statement 292-19(2), Tabled Document 567-19(2) will be moved into Committee of the Whole. Thank you

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, Bill 38, Tabled Document 561-19(2), with Member for Inuvik Twin Lakes in the chair.

---SHORT RECESS

Consideration in Committee of the Whole of Bills and Other Matters

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): What is the wish of committee? Member for Frame Lake.

MR. O'REILLY: Merci, Madam la Presidente. Committee wishes to consider Tabled Document 561-19(2): Main Estimates 2022-2023, with

Northwest Territories Housing Corporation. Mahsi, Madam Chair.

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

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, committee. We will take a recess and resume with the Housing Corporation.

---SHORT RECESS

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): I now call Committee of the Whole to order. We are reviewing -- sorry, we've agreed to consider Tabled Document 561-19(2): Main Estimates 2022-2023, and we are considering the estimates for the Northwest Territories Housing Corporation. We are in the section of executive.

I'm going to ask the Sergeant-at-Arms to escort the witnesses into the Chamber.

Minister, will you introduce your witnesses, please.

HON. PAULIE CHINNA: Thank you, Madam Chair. I have with me here today president of the Northwest Territories Housing Corporation, Ms. Eleanor Young, and vice-president of the Northwest Territories Housing Corporation, Jim Martin. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Did you have other witnesses that you were wishing to change out at some point today, or these are the -- just the two?

HON. PAULIE CHINNA: Depending on the section, I also have with me associate deputy minister Jamie Fulford. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Okay, thank you. Just make sure that you let me know through the chair when you want to switch out the witnesses so I can have the Sergeant-at-Arms -- all right. So welcome. And we are on the executive. And I'm going to give the floor back to Member for Frame Lake for the remainder of his time.

MR. O'REILLY: Thanks, Madam Chair, much appreciated. I'm trying to remember exactly where I was on Friday. It seems like a lifetime ago, but, I guess I was trying to figure out how the Northwest Territories Housing Corporation determines when to go to the Financial Management Board for more resources. And I think I heard that there was two areas of forced growth that the corporation sought additional funds for, and looking back at Hansard from Friday, was for property taxes and incremental costs associated with expansion of public housing programs.

So I know that -- we all know that inflation is going to be probably around 5 percent for the current year.

How has the Housing Corporation accounted for inflation in, or what we know, in all of its operations and why just these two areas for forced growth? Thanks, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Member. Minister of Housing -- NWT Housing Corporation.

HON. PAULIE CHINNA: Thank you, Madam Chair. I'll have president Young respond. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, President Young.

MS. YOUNG: Thank you, Madam Chair. So when looking at our budget and pressure points, as the Member speaks to, you know, we take a look at each forced growth cycle comes up, look at the areas where there are uncontrollable costs or controllable costs that we need to address. When it comes to inflation, of course inflation hits us first off in our capital area and so when we're looking at our capital plans, we take a look at current operating costs, what our tenders are coming in at, and wherever possible we try first to deal with those pressure points from within and then if they cannot be dealt with from within, then of course we have the conversation with our colleagues at finance about what opportunities or approaches may be available to us to look at.

Similar with our retrofits, we have a budget. We do our planned work every year. We start with that. Then as we start to get costs in, if we need to make adjustments we first look within and then, you know, if that doesn't provide the opportunity then we use the annual cycle through -- through our colleagues to apply for and look for opportunities for relief if it's an uncontrollable matter. Thank you, Madam Chair.

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

MR. O'REILLY: Yeah, thanks, Madam Chair. I guess I just want to encourage the Minister to come forward to the Financial Management Board more often for requests for additional funding, especially with regard to forced growth but also to expand the programs that they offer to finally get our housing out of core need.

So lastly, if I could ask very quickly, when are we going to get this plan to get our housing out of core need? Thank you, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Minister of NWT Housing Corporation.

HON. PAULIE CHINNA: Thank you, Madam Chair. I'll have President Young respond as we are working on that report and just for the -- when that report will be ready. Thank you, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, President Young.

MS. YOUNG: Thank you, Madam Chair. Our target is to have the report finalized by the end of March.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Member for Frame -- sorry, no more time. Member for Kam Lake.

MS. CLEVELAND: Thank you very much, Madam Chair. And I appreciate the comments on both Friday and today from my colleague from Frame Lake in regards to funding for the Northwest Territories Housing Corporation. And one of the things that was said on Friday struck me. It was in regards to the process for requesting funding from the Financial Management Board Secretariat and the process of budgeting for the government, which is where the Housing Corp sticks to the standard of budgeting that is expected of them for the main estimates process and that they're essentially playing by the rules for the government. But the problem that I see with that is that if we look at the increases to funding over the last ten years for the GNWT, the increases to funding for the GNWT main estimates have gone up by 51 percent over the last decade whereas the increases to the Housing Corporation have gone up on average of 31 percent for the last decade. So already the GNWT has far exceeded the increases to their main estimate budgets than the NWT Housing Corporation has.

If we think about what's happened in housing for the same amount of time over the course of the last decade, the state of housing in the Northwest Territories has also declined. And so while the funding is not keeping up, the state of housing in the Northwest Territories is going down, and I kind of wanted to speak about that a little bit. And I know that this is about the budget as a whole for the NWT Housing Corporation but I think that this is a really important conversation to have in this section given that it is executive, and so I appreciate the indulgence of committee, if I may.

When I was sitting and doing some research on the weekend in regards to Housing Corporation and our assets, we have 2500 public housing units, and if we take a round number of about \$600,000 per public housing unit in the Northwest Territories, that would mean that the NWT Housing Corporation has an asset -- or has about \$1.5 billion of assets in housing, which is pretty remarkable and pretty impressive. But the problem we get to is that industry standard says that the annual payout for O and M that public housing should see is about 2 percent annually, and so that brings us to \$30 million for O and M for those 2500 public housing units. And then industry standard also says that to replace units, it's also a standard of about 2 percent a year. That's also \$30

million. So that means that we need \$60 million just to maintain the housing stock that we currently have.

So if we look at the \$11 million that we're putting into housing from the GNWT main estimates that we're looking at right now, that puts at a \$49 million deficit annually. And if we forecast that forward to when our CMHC funding declines, that puts us at a deficit of approximately two-thirds of a billion dollars. And I know I'm using up a lot of my time but I want to make a point here.

We're not giving housing the money that they need to actually maintain their stock that they have today. And that doesn't even include the infrastructure deficit that we're looking at already. So if we don't start putting more money into housing today, we're going to have a much bigger problem on our hands down the road. And so the 19th Assembly won't be the only Assembly talking about housing; they'll be screaming about housing years down the road. And so if we don't start putting money into it today, we're going to have a much bigger problem on our hands.

So I'd like to know, again, how come NWT Housing Corporation is not asking for more money in this budget? Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. Minister responsible for NWT Housing Corporation.

HON. PAULIE CHINNA: Thank you, Madam Chair. And I hear my colleagues from the other side, and I just -- you know, that we -- the process that we do follow, we follow it diligently and requesting more funding, I know that, you know, we've really lobbied the federal government in order for us to get additional funding here in the Northwest Territories and, you know, they request for us to -- to continuously go back to FMB. I would like to have president Young elaborate on the response as well too because it's quite -- like, I hear the colleagues from the other side. It's -- you know, we are running a deficit. Our infrastructure is aged. We do have housing -- homeownership units as well too that need to qualify and they need our attention, and there's such a huge review going on within the corporation. But funding is significant as well too that, you know, we -- we're strategically trying to address that. But I'll have president Young elaborate on the response as well too. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. President Young.

MS. YOUNG: Thank you, Madam Chair. And I think with some of the analysis that we're doing and bringing forward as part of the core need conversation, you know, I think we will be elaborating on this quite a bit. The issue's not housing alone although housing, of course, because of the nature of business, it draws attention to it but the issue of

infrastructure deficits is something that I've seen in my previous life with communities. It's something that I've seen with the GNWT overall. It is absolutely an issue that governments as a whole are struggling to contend with. And, you know, I think that housing historically has done what it can within the available funds that are there, and they've been very successful at securing federal funding. But I think one of the comments I heard earlier today, which I think is very true, is we can't do it alone; we do need to work with partners at all levels to be able to solve this problem. We will be part of the solution, but we do need to work with all of our other partners as well, from federal to local governments and everybody in between to be able to solve this. It's not just a funding to Housing Corporation that's going to -- going to solve this one. But I do hear the Member's, you know, conversation that we do need to be better positioned to explain this situation that we're in so that we can be fairly -- get a fair opportunity at access to any funding that does become available. Thank you, Madam Chair.

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

MS. CLEVELAND: Thank you very much, Madam Chair. Yeah, Madam Chair, I -- and I absolutely agree with the president, that the Housing Corporation cannot do it alone, that it is going to take partnerships in order to be able to pull the NWT out of the housing crisis that it is currently in.

But that being said, the federal government isn't funding O and M. The federal government is putting forward funding for building new capital. We even saw that in the rapid housing initiative money that came out that was due -- I believe the applications were due at the end of December. That application process mandated that people needed to have access to O and M for a certain number of years in order to even access the funding for the capital to build -- to build the units.

So we still have to as a housing corp -- or sorry, the government still has to as Housing Corporation ensure that they have the dollars available for O and M for these units. And so even without their revision to the mandate -- or sorry, mission that Housing Corporation is working through, they already had a mandate within their organization to build, acquire, and maintain housing. And the money that they're asking for doesn't even allow them to keep up with their old mandate because they don't have the funds available to actually do the O and M and replace units, for 2500 units, which was what they already had. And I'm so thankful that we're getting more units, but we need to have the serious conversation about keeping up -- doing the upkeep on them. That's part of the fiscal responsibility of the Housing Corporation. It's not just to secure the funding, which

is a great thing and is a very good news story, but we also have to take care of these units.

In looking, we always say from this Assembly that housing is our top priority and that housing is our number 1 priority. We even heard the Minister say that on the other side, I believe, in the last session, which I was very thankful that she said.

But the 18th Assembly passed a -- a budget, sorry, for capital funding for the Housing Corporation in 1920 [sic] that was \$18.2 million. In 2020-2021, the budget passed for the Housing Corporation was 11.6. And now we're looking at a budget of 10.6. And so we keep saying that housing is our priority but the budget that we're putting forward for housing is consistently going down. So how can housing be our priority if we're not putting our dollars behind our words? And so I just -- I really want to stress that, and I don't really feel like -- I feel like we're essentially sitting on this side of the House begging the Housing Corporation to ask for more money and it's beyond me that we're actually, on an annual basis for the third time now, begging them to take money. In the first -- the first budget that we passed, we actually pushed more money at Housing Corporation. And so I really, really want to stress that Housing Corporation needs to ask for more money.

With my last 45 seconds, I just want to ask, I see there's a budget increase to the president's office policy and planning combined for about \$300,000. Is that enough money for the NWT Housing Corporation to rework the policies that they intend to do as part of their renewal strategy? Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. Minister of NWT Housing Corporation.

HON. PAULIE CHINNA: Thank you, Madam Chair. And I hear the Members from the other side and, you know what, I -- I recognize the decline that we actually do have and the declining of our CMHC funding, and you know, really depending on what we're able to receive from the federal government, looking at our bilateral agreements that we do have with the federal government in trying to be -- trying to strategize within the corporation and do things different. I'll have president Young respond. Thank you, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. President Young.

MS. YOUNG: Thank you, Madam Chair. And that budget increase I think we mentioned on late last week that it is for the associate deputy minister who is leading the work on the renewal and the policy change, and he is doing that work in partnership with the Council of Leaders working group and a number of other engagements with organizations such as our local housing organizations. So at this point, our plan

is to do that work that way through the budget, and we don't anticipate needing any additional money to complete the policy and planning review. Thank you, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. Are there any further questions from Members under the executive? Member for Hay River South.

MR. ROCKY SIMPSON: Thank you, Madam Chair. And you know, when it comes to housing, we all know how important it is. And the Minister -- you know, we heard the number, you know, \$20 million thrown around the other day. We heard the Minister say that, you know, we're upwards of maybe \$500 million we need. And I guess what I would like to hear from her is, you know, when she's through that \$500 -- 500,000 -- or \$500 million number out there, what would that get us? Thank you, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. Minister responsible for NWT Housing Corporation.

HON. PAULIE CHINNA: Thank you, Madam Chair. And I just -- I want -- I'm going to, you know, have vice-president Jim Martin elaborate on the response. But that was a number that was provided to me and given to me that if we were to address the whole of the housing need throughout the Northwest Territories and at that time, that's what it would have taken. But looking at the increase of -- of material costs, delivery, capacity within the Northwest Territories, those numbers will probably end up changing and become a lot more higher as we just -- as we continue to go forward. Thank you, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. Mr. Martin.

MR. MARTIN: Thank you, Madam Chair. Well, the \$500 million would certainly go a long way to addressing the Housing Corporation's infrastructure deficit. We indicated that, you know, previously the projected 20-year deficit was in the range of about a billion dollars, and we did mention that previously. So that would certainly keep us on pace to deal with a significant portion of that. It would also help us to deal with our deferred maintenance expenditures as well. Thank you, Madam Chair.

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

MR. ROCKY SIMPSON: Thank you, Madam Chair. And you know, it was mentioned as well is that, you know, the Housing Corporation can't do this on their own. You know, we need private sector. We need an economy. We need Indigenous governments. We need communities. We need land. We need -- you know, we need hopefully cost of goods and material to decrease a bit, because right now when I look at it, I know we're probably south of a billion dollars to

fix this issue, easy. And, you know, with the cost of -- just cost of material, when you look at building and you look at what it's cost us to build a unit, then you've got land development on it, and then if you -- then if you -- in a small community, if you go and increase, you know -- you know, the -- the housing units by a third, then you may have to again start increasing the power to -- to run those houses. So there's -- so there -- it just -- it snowballs. So I think that, you know, we can throw a few dollars here and there at it but I think what we have to do is it has to come from -- it has to come from the federal government, mainly, if we expect anything, it's got to come from the Indigenous group, and we have to be there to put all this together and support them.

So I guess I'd ask the question is what is the -- what is the executive doing to -- to maybe look at an approach like that, because at the end of the day it's federal dollars, or we're -- we're not going to count on the few tax dollars that we raise or anything like that. It has to be -- it has to come from the feds and we need Indigenous buy-in on it as well. But at the same time, you know, like I said, we need -- we need an economy because -- I'll give you an example here of, you know, how things can turn so quick.

Hay River, we have a -- you know, we've got probably 60 or 70,000 -- 70 people on the waitlist. Well, we got a 42-unit apartment building going in. The high-rise which I tried to get the -- convince this government to buy was sold to a private sector group, which has probably worked out for the best anyway. There's 122 apartments. So now, you know, we have 164 apartments that hopeful will be available within the next year to two years. And, you know, we may not be able to fill them. So what I would hope is that at the end of the day that we can encourage more people to come to Hay River and move to Hay River and locate there, and we can see more government jobs going there.

So, you know, what -- you know, besides working with the federal government, what are we doing to also work with the private sector to encourage this type of quick turnaround?

You know, again another example is the 24 apartment building, unit apartment building you guys bought here. Like, if -- things can change so fast. So -- and I think that, you know, we got to look at that as well. Thank you, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. Member -- or Minister responsible for NWT Housing Corporation, do you want to respond?

HON. PAULIE CHINNA: Thank you, Madam Chair, and thank you for those comments as well, because one of the -- the biggest thing for me is partnership, and like you had said and like the Members have said as well too, that the Housing Corporation cannot

do this alone and also looking at the capacity throughout the Northwest Territories as well. But when I first got the portfolio, the main thing that I was really looking at was the co-investment and for the corporation to become very strategic in trying to explain and try to demonstrate what is -- what is co-investment, how do we access those federal dollars. So for us to create a position to be working directly with CMHC was really opened a huge line of communication with us that we're able to work directly with them, but also through that initiative that the -- those employees have been able to travel together, CMHC and the corporation, and to introduce these federal programs and applications going forward and with the funding that I did receive from the government as well to see those applications move along.

The other barrier that I've noticed is the application process is so slow when it comes to the federal government, that the criteria and what they're expecting for the Indigenous governments to provide and the timelines is not realistic for the territories, that we do have -- you know, we have winter road seasons, we have barging seasons, and if we're not able to put in those materials and order them this year, our projects are going to be a carryover. And just also recognizing those as well too. And looking at the private sector, that I'm open to having those conversations as well too and also introducing them and working with them to apply for the federal funding.

But not only that, you know, looking at the purchase that we ended up being very successful with here in Yellowknife, that was something that was very rare, and I just thought for the purchase of a 24-unit building, that was, you know, something that I was very happy and excited that we're able to acquire. But that is what the corporation is looking for and trying to get the Indigenous groups involved as well too.

I've travelled throughout the Northwest Territories and did meet with them face-to-face. Some of the Indigenous groups did have a lot of uptake. Some of them haven't. And -- but really stressing the need to work with that waitlist in the smaller communities, and the corporation cannot do it on its own. But those federal engagements and conversations continue. Thank you, Madam Chair.

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

MR. ROCKY SIMPSON: Thank you, Madam Chair. I guess the reality is that we know this isn't going to happen overnight. It's not going to happen this month. It's not going to happen this year. It's probably not going to happen within the next five years. But what can happen is that we have to develop a plan, a long-term plan, to ensure that we're

looking at the whole -- the whole of the issue and make sure that that plan is in place, because, you know, we're going to be short -- you know, to make this happen, we don't have -- we don't have the resources. We don't have the labour here. You know, we don't have the infrastructure probably to put the number of units up that we need in a short time.

So it has to be long term, or it -- you know, somewhat long. But it's got to be -- there's got to be a plan with some -- you know, with some measurables in there and something that we can follow.

But at the same time, we've got other issues, and those issues are -- you know, the M and Is are for -- you know, for, say, a private dwellings, like we're so short on funding for that. I know in Hay River, there are a lot of people -- or a few people there went without, you know, just because there was no money there. So what are we doing to ensure that -- that we're also addressing that? Again, that's another long-term plan but we need -- we need a plan. We need something that we can follow and while we're working on trying to put out fires. Because if we don't do that, all we're going to do is put out fires, we'll never get ahead, and I know that in four years from now, five years from now, they're going to still -- we're going to still be talking about it. You know, if it comes down to it, maybe what we have to do is to dissolve the NWT Housing Corporation, we have to turn the assets over to those who need them the most, and that's Indigenous peoples, and allow them to manage the assets regionally or in the community. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Member. Minister responsible for NWT Housing Corporation, did you want to respond to that or just take it as a comment? Okay, go ahead.

HON. PAULIE CHINNA: Thank you, Madam Chair. And thank you to the Member for that, for all of those statements as well too because, you know, that's something that I'm really interested in is working with the Indigenous groups and trying to support and help them should we have any unit transfers or any interest in any of our units to be transferred over to the Indigenous governments. I'm open and I'm willing to do that. And what -- the uptake that we've had so far has not been as progressive as I thought it would possibly be. And also looking at, you know, supporting them as well too and looking at they're going to end up having the -- the operation and maintenance issues as well too, the same thing that we have for the corporation. I want to make sure that we know we are working with those Indigenous groups and they're provided adequate funding to deliver these programs.

One of the things that, looking at the local housing authorities and the board memberships as well too and reaching out to the Indigenous groups, are they

wanting to pilot? Are they wanting to run those offices as well too, and really giving them the opportunity.

But the other is that working with them strategically and very closely to -- for them to acquire the federal funding, but what is expected of the corporation, what I've recognized is that some Indigenous groups don't want us to be in there; they don't want us to be owning their assets; they don't want us at the tables. But some Indigenous groups are most inviting and we end up in very successful partnerships. So taking on this initiative is quite -- it's different, and you know, and they're taking a risk as well too because I don't want to see the -- anybody run into acquiring any sort of deficit at the ground level as well, but we continue to work with those Indigenous groups. We continue to try to make some significant movement with them as well. Thank you, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Minister. Are there any further questions from Members under the executive? Member for Thebacha.

MS. MARTSELOS: Thank you, Madam Chair. It's really easy to say you want to work with the Indigenous groups but there's no follow up. You know, there's a lot of red tape. There's lack of communication. I mean, as an ordinary MLA, I even have trouble getting answers to my emails. I've gone from July 2020, some of the things that I've brought up I still haven't got answers to or conclusions to from Members that I feel are -- is -- they're very -- you know, they are in dire straits. I keep on going back and forth, and then I list a whole bunch of emails that haven't been answered and sent to this department, and I don't get an answer. So working with Indigenous groups, you have to have better communication than that. And which Indigenous groups, I wonder. Are there a select few? I'd like to know that because, you know, I've been an Indigenous leader, and housing is the most important thing and that is why with the previous Assembly, we had a working relationship with the Minister at the time for the Salt River First Nation, and it was an excellent working relationship, but at least I could pick up the phone and speak to someone. I don't see that happening anymore. And I'm not taking anything away from the housing authority because right now, I think there's -- finally, they've got a decent board in place; they have an excellent person that's running the office there. I've never met her yet, but I hear nothing but good things. But there's always this other thing on the side, and the main thing is -- I mean, two houses and 12 retrofits for a community that size when I have 212 people on a waiting list, that is unbelievable and unacceptable.

And I just want to know from the Minister, how is she going to fix that? I went with her for a problem last

week. I thought by Monday, if I have one positive thing I'd be happy. I still have no answer. There's going to be a followup. I never get the followup. I want to know what's going on. Thank you, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Member. Minister responsible for NWT Housing Corporation.

HON. PAULIE CHINNA: Thank you, Madam Chair. And, you know, I just -- I really want to stress, like, through the corporation, like, I got to do things fairly. If I do something in one riding, I got to make sure that I do it consistently throughout the rest of the territory. And I can't -- looking at the policies that we do have and if we have specifics that are there and we try to work outside of those policies, I got to make sure that what I have done is equal to what I'm doing throughout the territory. And it's just -- if it's not identified in there, that is a problem for us to try to -- making sure that we are doing things right and appropriate.

But the other thing too is working with the Indigenous groups, like I want to stress that we're not always -- you know, we put out those invites; we've got the Council of Leaders working group that we did establish. We have some Indigenous groups that did participate; some of them haven't. Some of them have questioned us and wanting to get involved or else just not wanting to provide input towards what it is that we're trying to strategize. But this is the table that the Indigenous groups are able to look at every single program that we do have, every single policy review, and every bit of change that we need to establish throughout the Northwest Territories, and that table is still open to every Indigenous group throughout the Northwest Territories that want to be a part and involved with that. But at that table as well too and encouraging those -- those federal applications going forward, that's -- I can say that within the time of this government, that's possibly the way to go and the continued advocacy with the MP, with the federal government as well, with the territorial asks going forward and hoping to see those results. And I know that housing is quite challenging in the North, but I think as a corporation we have made significant progress. And looking at our 90-unit delivery and looking at another application good forward and trying to be fair and consistent throughout the Northwest Territories while we are placing those units on the ground. Thank you, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Minister. If you could be more precise with your answers to the Member, just because of the time. Thank you. Member for Thebacha.

MS. MARTSELOS: I know I'm very emotional on this because I feel like, you know, how could the

board -- we have an excellent board in place now. We've got the office straightened out at housing finally in this -- we're in our third year. You know, and I have a lot of respect for the people that are on the board and the people that are running the office right now. But we also have to have positive -- positive responses from this office with some of the problems that these people faced. Most of the people that I've come -- that I brought forward to the Minister about different issues and couch surfing and all these things, none of them have been answered. Oh, I'll follow up, she said that in the last time when we were on -- on the phone there with -- well, I'll follow up. Well, she never followed up. If I don't follow up, I will get no answers. And I think it's -- you know, and the monies that were allocated by the federal government to -- there's a few Indigenous groups. I think there was five or six of them, how did that come about? Like, I'd like to know why they chose those five or six groups that are getting direct Indigenous housing from the federal government, because that's the way that the Indigenous groups want it anyways. And I'm happy that they got it. But what about all the rest? You know, because I remember sitting at a table with the Akaitcho Chiefs, and all of a sudden 59 million's going to the -- to the territorial government, and we never saw a penny of it. And, you know, so it goes on. There's a lot of history to this stuff that I'm saying. And I thought once I sat here, that if my -- my answers, I'd at least get a yes or no answer and be -- and I don't expect special treatment. Absolutely not. I'm not a type of person that expects special treatment. I just want to make sure that my members get housing, that they could stop couch surfing, they could have pride in what they have and they could start changing their lives. That's all I'm asking. And, you know, it's really unbelievable that I have to bring this to the floor, but I have to, because my members in the community of Fort Smith, expect this, and I expect it for them. Everybody has a right to have a house, to have food, and to have the necessities of life, especially the people that usually go into public housing. So with that, I want you to -- I want to know when I'm going to get some of the answers to all my emails. Thank you, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Member. Minister responsible for NWT corporation.

HON. PAULIE CHINNA: Thank you, Madam Chair. I'd have to review that with my -- with my department as well. But the specific one that the Member possibly could be referencing is that it's out of our policy and I'd have to really take a look at that and -- and see what it is that we can do. Thank you, Madam Chair.

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

MS. MARTSELOS: I don't think it's the only one that I brought forward. I brought forward many, many emails to you, and I never get answers. I remember the two ladies that decided they had to move to Fort Smith to a larger community, and they're both Indigenous, and they were from the Fort Simpson area because of health reasons, and I went back and forth here all -- I went back and forth every day with emails, and they finally decided to go back south where -- where they were before because -- because they never got an answer of getting a house. And one of them -- both of them had problems, you know, and I never got an answer. Never got an answer for anything. So I'm going to stop write to the housing department. I'll start sending -- stop sending emails. What for? If you're just going to say well, this and that and never get a direct answer, it's a real problem. Thank you, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Member for Thebacha. If you have nothing further, I will go -- Member for Monfwi.

MS. WEYALLON-ARMSTRONG: Okay, thank you. I see that the Minister last week in the House submitted the housing mandate, and I believe that's going to be the reflection on -- well, whatever is there, it's going to be the reflection of the housing renewal policy. So I just wanted to ask when is that housing renewal policy is going to be completed?

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. Minister responsible for NWT Housing Corporation.

HON. PAULIE CHINNA: Thank you, Madam Chair. I'll have president Young respond. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. President Young.

MS. YOUNG: Thank you, Madam Chair. As we noted in the strategy, the intention is to have all of the policies reviewed by the end of this government and, actually, the first working group meeting this week on public housing programs and policies is later this week, they start the review of our policies in the public housing area. Thank you, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, president Young. Member for Monfwi.

MS. WEYALLON-ARMSTRONG: Thank you. I know that policy are great concerns for many regions, okay. So how is the people's voice going to be included in this policy, in the process?

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. Minister responsible for NWT Housing Corporation.

HON. PAULIE CHINNA: Thank you, Madam Chair. This -- these policies will be reviewed at the Council of Leaders. All Indigenous groups will have these documents to have the time to develop them and to

review them as well too, and, you know, just looking at the strategy that we had all information right from the ground level, right to headquarters, and right to the reports that we had established and it's -- it's contributing to all of those factors as well. Thank you, Madam Chair.

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

MS. WEYALLON-ARMSTRONG: Is there a date when the meeting will be taking place with the Indigenous governments or Council of Leaders that she's talking about?

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

HON. PAULIE CHINNA: Thank you, Madam Chair. The meetings with the Council of Leaders, I think we just had met in the last couple of weeks. This is an initiative that's driven by the associate deputy minister, Jamie Fulford, and he is engaging with those -- this is what his job and his responsibility is, the renewal and the policies and the engagement with the Indigenous groups, making sure that we make those changes within the corporation. Thank you, Madam Chair.

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

MS. WEYALLON-ARMSTRONG: Yeah, no, yeah, I just wanted to ask about the renewal -- renewal policy, that when it was going to be completed, I just wanted to know the deadline. So I guess we just wait until -- hopefully it's going to be this year. I'm not too sure when, but -- because they didn't say the deadline. So I just wanted to know when. I just wanted to know that, you know, that deadline because -- so thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Member for Monfwi. I know that the president did say by the end of this government. So I guess that's as best answer as we're going to get. Did you have any further questions? Any further questions under the executive? Seeing none. We will -- oh, Member for Tu Nedhe-Wiilideh.

MR. EDJERICON: Thank you, Madam Chair. Again, I want to keep talking about housing and in our community, housing's a big issue, like I mentioned a few days ago. And I can't emphasize enough of it. I used to sit on the AFN housing committee going back to 1999, and at the national level we were about 45,000 housing short across Canada. Here in the Northwest Territories, back then, we were about 4500 homes short. And these numbers had no place but to go up. And I'm not really sure what it is today in that respect. But I wanted to touch on one thing that -- that was talked about here earlier is that -- and I mentioned this the other day too as well.

Right now the state of the affairs of the NWT Housing Corporation with the Indigenous governments in our communities are not looking good right now. The policies that are in place just don't work for us. These policies were never brought to our communities. We were never properly consulted. They said this is how it's going to be. We have the view of these policies are southern policies trying to be put on to our communities that just doesn't work.

Chief Martselos talked about her issues, and I agree with her. It's come to point where in working with Indigenous governments, it's become a trust issue now. And I'm hearing this again here today that it's still a big issue. And at the same time on Friday, I mentioned that we're also completing for same dollars. That don't make sense at all.

Maybe it's time -- you know, the Housing Corporation's 50 years old now. It was born in 1972. If it's not working, then we should have a review, independent review of the Housing Corporation, because they been getting money from Ottawa for a long time but yet in our community, I got tenants; I got constituent members have sewers in their bathtub.

The Housing Corporation policies says you make too much money or you don't make enough. So sooner or later, it's frustrating. We got a lot of vacant houses in the community that are sitting empty because the policies they had created through the Housing Corporation, people -- are in those communities, we have about -- Fort Resolution, we got about 20, 30 homes that are sitting empty. And that's -- times that by 33 communities throughout the Northwest Territories.

So if we don't get this thing right this time, then I -- I'm losing faith, because as a former Chief I'm deeply concerned. And so if we're going to do this and fix this right, then we should actually do a full review, work with Indigenous governments, come up with some kind of agreement as to how we're going to work this problem out, otherwise we're going to be here next year and next year and year after and going to be the same problem all over again.

So it's frustrating for me to sit here and listen to this and then when I go back to my budgets for my community, I got a little bit of money. Then I find out that there's not much there for repair programs.

So going forward, I think I'll be making an approach to the Minister of Housing Corporation that I'm going to be asking for looking at doing assessments of my homes in our communities so that I'm able to come forward next budget and say, hey look, I know exactly what I need in my community for dollars and repair dollars for our homes.

And then I read your document here saying that we're going to look at building affordable homes, and I don't see it in my budget here as well, how we're going to do that. \$20 million is not enough. And I agree, it's going to be between 500 million to a million -- a billion dollars just to try and get these problems fixed.

And the United Nation Declaration on the rights of Indigenous people, it talks about housing too. So if we are going to come together, we should have a big forum as to how we're going to deal with this issue, otherwise we should actually do the review of the Housing Corporation to try and fix the problem.

I just -- I don't want no response, Madam Chair. I'm only expressing what I hear in the communities. I'm expressing as a former Chief -- I'm only expressing what I hear in the communities that I represent. We need to fix these problems. Not tomorrow or down the road; it's got to be today. Thank you, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Member for Tu Nedhe-Wiilideh. Thank you, Members. So now we will move on to finance and infrastructure services beginning on page 338 -- or no, sorry, 383, with information items on 384 and 385. Member for Yellowknife North.

MR. JOHNSON: Thank you, Madam Chair. I see that there's \$955,000 here for debt repayment. I believe -- can I just get an explanation of what that is? Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. Minister responsible for NWT Housing Corporation.

HON. PAULIE CHINNA: Thank you, Madam Chair. I'll have vice-president Jim Martin respond. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. Vice-president Mr. Martin.

MR. MARTIN: Thank you, Madam Chair. This represents the annual payment that we make in terms of principal and interest to CMHC for the social housing agreement debt that we're currently carrying. Thank you, Madam Chair.

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

MR. JOHNSON: Thank you, Madam Chair. I'm going to ask two questions here I think for efficiency. I see that the 2021 actuals were \$355,000. Can I just get an explanation of why there is a \$600,000 increase in the amount we're paying CMHC and what the total amount that we owe CMHC is? Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. Minister responsible for NWT Housing Corporation.

HON. PAULIE CHINNA: Thank you, Madam Chair. I'll have vice-president Jim Martin respond. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. Mr. Martin.

MR. MARTIN: Thank you, Madam Chair. The reason for the difference is that when you look at the expenditures, the 355,000 is related to interest on that debt. The 955,000 is the cash amount that we have to set aside in our budget, our fiscal framework, to deal with both the principal and interest payments annually. Thank you, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Go ahead, Mr. Martin.

MR. MARTIN: Yes, and thank you, Madam Chair. And the supplementary question there was the amount that we currently have for remaining debt balance for CMHC. And that's 30 million at this time. Thank you, Madam Chair.

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

MR. JOHNSON: Thank you, Madam Chair. Can I just get a bit of an explanation of how this all works? We get \$20 million a year from CMHC but then we pay them back a million a year because we owe them 30 million, and I get they're just different agreements. I guess that's why that's happening. But how -- does this number have any relation to 2038? I guess I'll start with that question. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): All right. Member for NWT Housing Corporation.

HON. PAULIE CHINNA: Thank you, Madam Chair. I'll have vice-president Jim Martin respond. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Mr. Martin. Sorry, Minister. I called you Member. Mr. Martin.

MR. MARTIN: Thank you, Madam Chair. Back in 1997 when we entered into the social housing agreement with CMHC, the Housing Corporation inherited ownership basically of all the assets from CMHC, and associated with that was the debt. So there is a component of that debt that we pay each year which is reflected in the main estimates. And in terms of the revenue that we receive from CMHC, that is to support the ongoing O and M operations of the social housing stock. Thank you, Madam Chair.

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

MR. JOHNSON: Thank you, Madam Chair. My other question is does the Housing Corporation have any other debt, or do we take on debt? Is that something that -- I'll start there. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. Minister responsible for NWT Housing Corporation.

HON. PAULIE CHINNA: Thank you, Madam Chair. I'll have president Young respond. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. President Young.

MS. YOUNG: Thank you, Madam Chair. If I could, I'll defer that to vice-president Martin.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. Vice-president Martin.

MR. MARTIN: Thank you, Madam Chair. Aside from our regular accounts payables and environmental liabilities as well as retirement and post-employment leave type benefits that are accrued each year, it is only the loans and mortgages payable to CMHC that we have for debt. Thank you, Madam Chair.

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

MR. JOHNSON: Thank you, Madam Chair. Yeah, I guess I want to get into a bit of a debt debate. Can I -- you know, we had spoke to the Power Corp today. They sure have a lot of debt. They like to take on debt to build all their infrastructure, and they have, you know, a relatively comparable revenue stream to the Housing Corp. I'm just curious why, you know, this crown corporation, which has \$100 million a year in revenue, does not go leverage that and get a bunch of financing. I'm kind of curious, is there -- is that something we shouldn't do, or the reasoning for that? I just think of the way the private sector mortgages all of their housing assets. You know, it's quite common to go out and maximize all of your debt you can when you own housing. Is that something the Housing Corp considered, or is that just a terrible idea? Thank you, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Member. Minister responsible for NWT Housing Corporation.

HON. PAULIE CHINNA: Thank you, Madam Chair. I'll have vice-president Jim Martin respond.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Mr. Martin.

MR. MARTIN: Madam Chair. The Housing Corporation, in order to take on debt, would have to seek the approval of the FMB, the Financial Management Board, recognizing that any debt that the Housing Corporation takes on would be included in the overall debt limit for the government calculations. So that's an important consideration in that process.

And another consideration that we take into account as well, in terms of when it comes to debt, is the interest associated with that debt, and that would

also generate additional O and M expenditures for the corporation that would have to be addressed annually as well within our current fiscal framework. Thank you, Madam Chair.

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

MR. JOHNSON: Thank you, Madam Chair. Yeah, I -- you know, to one extent, I wish that the Power Corp and the GNWT had the -- had the debt that the Housing Corp had, but I just -- it seems a little odd that the Housing Corp seems to be playing a different -- completely different game than everyone else when it comes to debt.

I'm curious, you know, if we, for example, were to look at Yellowknife, where we are spending a lot of money on leasing and we could go to a bank and borrow the money to build public housing, I think it's been made quite clear multiple times we don't actually have the capital on hand to build public housing. But other than approval from the FMB, is there any reason to not simply go and borrow money to build public housing, especially when we're already paying rent on it? Thank you, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. Minister responsible for NWT Housing Corporation.

HON. PAULIE CHINNA: Thank you, Madam Chair. I'll have vice-president Jim Martin respond. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. Vice-president Martin.

MR. MARTIN: Thank you, Madam Chair. Yeah, so as was noted, the Housing Corporation certainly does lease units in addition to its own units to support its public housing program operations. We have looked at cases in the past on a case by case, and it has been shown in the past that ownership was, in fact, cheaper in these particular case studies that we looked at versus leasing. So the Housing Corp going forward will continue to look at these opportunities on a case-by-case basis. Thank you, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, vice-president Martin. Member for Yellowknife North.

MR. JOHNSON: Yeah, thank you, Madam Chair. I -- I think I'll probably ask some more questions about the potential of the Housing Corp taking out mortgages. I'll also note that they're different than any other government debt because if we build a building and a bank will mortgage it and we decide we don't want it, we could sell it. You know, the bank's not going to give us a mortgage if the asset we build is not worth something. It seems like a different category of debt that we should be leveraging, in my mind.

But I wanted to get one question in about 2038. Can I just get an update on -- my understanding is that in 2038, we will stop having the \$20 million a year from the Housing Corp, and it is slowly declining up until then but there's an interim agreement that is preventing it from declining. Can I just get a bit of an update on what's going on with 2038? Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Member. Minister responsible for NWT Housing Corporation.

HON. PAULIE CHINNA: Thank you, Madam Chair. I'll have president Young respond. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. President Young.

MS. YOUNG: Madam Chair, and yes, currently the agreement with CMHC is in play for 2038, that operations and maintenance funding will be decreased on a sliding scale down to the point of not receiving any O and M funding effective 2038.

We currently have a bilateral agreement in place with CMHC which they allowed us to use some of that funding to mitigate the reduction of the O and M funding, and so we were able to from now until I believe it's 2028, Mr. Martin can correct me if I'm wrong, have balanced off those declining funds through the bilateral agreement, and this of course is one of our number 1 issues as part of our conversation with our federal colleagues on addressing that long-term situation. Thank you, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, President Young. Did you want Mr. Martin to -- no? Okay. All right. Member for Kam Lake.

MS. CLEVELAND: Thank you very much, Madam Chair. I'm going to start off by turning the page. And so we've got about \$4.2 million in homelessness initiatives across the NWT. I'm wondering if the Housing Corporation has a number of people that that serves? That might be too detailed for right now but if it is, I'm willing to wait for the answer as well. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. Minister responsible for NWT Housing Corporation.

HON. PAULIE CHINNA: Thank you, Madam Chair. I don't have that amount of detail at the tip of my fingers right now, but we do have several different programmings as well. The one that comes to my head immediately is our Northern Pathways as well too that deals with homelessness and troubled clients in the smaller communities. We do work in conjunction with health and social services as well too providing the asset and health and social services providing the programming. So I don't have

those numbers of how many people we serve throughout the territory. Thank you, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Minister. Would you be able to provide those to us?

HON. PAULIE CHINNA: Thank you. Yes, I will. Thanks.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Member for Kam Lake.

MS. CLEVELAND: Thank you very much, Madam Chair. And I'll narrow it down, and the Minister might not have the question -- or the answer, and I will admit I didn't provide the questions to her in advance and I understand that this is quite detailed.

The one that I'm really after is the amount of people served by the emergency shelters funding number of 2,997, and I'm wondering if that is -- given it's more specific of a number request, if that's one that the Minister has?

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Member. Minister responsible for NWT Housing Corporation.

HON. PAULIE CHINNA: Thank you, Madam Chair. I'd have to get back to the Member because like I said that when we're addressing homelessness, I do work with my colleague for health and social services as well too. Thank you, Madam Chair.

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

MS. CLEVELAND: Thank you very much, Madam Chair. And I think without even seeing the number, that we can all probably agree that housing people on an emergency basis is generally far more expensive per person than it is to keep people housed, which is what I'm looking -- the question I'm looking to answer there with that number.

And so I want to just kind of put in a plug here for the work that is being done by the Housing Corporation as far as renewing their mission, vision, values, and the policies that go with that, and what I'm hoping that we see is a system that values keeping people housed over evictions and finding solutions. And I think that that will -- we will see the repercussions of that in the bottom line of the GNWT across departments. And so I appreciate the work that the Housing Corporation is doing on that one.

Back in 2018, the Housing Corporation committed to a homelessness strategy for the GNWT as a whole-of-government approach, and I'm wondering if the Minister can let us know when that strategy will be done and presented to the Standing Committee on Social Development. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Member. Minister responsible for NWT Housing Corporation.

HON. PAULIE CHINNA: Thank you, Madam Chair. I'll have president Young respond. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. President Young.

MS. YOUNG: Thank you, Madam Chair. Our hope had been to do this one in March as well. I've not had a chance to update the Minister. I do think it's going to take a little bit longer now just to piece all of the final pieces together, and we'll be able to provide a more detailed update in a few weeks, and we can have the Minister follow up with committee after that. Thank you, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, president Young. Member for Kam Lake.

MS. CLEVELAND: Thank you very much, Madam Chair. And I understand that president Young has, you know, only recently come in to the Housing Corporation. So I know that she has adopted a lot of the work that was already being done, but I just wanted to point out or ask of the Minister that it is the expectation that this is an all-of-government approach and that the strategy will include participation of other departments. So can you Minister confirm that other departments participated on this and that it is an all-of-government approach? Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Member. Minister responsible for NWT Housing Corporation.

HON. PAULIE CHINNA: Thank you, Madam Chair. I will have president Young elaborate on the process because it does have to be submitted to committee as well too and to Cabinet and for their comment as well. Thank you, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you.

HON. PAULIE CHINNA: Wasn't sure if I said that.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): President Young.

MS. YOUNG: Thank you, Madam Chair. And yes, I can confirm I've been working quite closely with my colleagues at health and social services, ECE, justice, and others working on this so that it will be an all-of-government approach coming back. Thank you, Madam Chair.

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

MS. CLEVELAND: Thank you, Madam Chair. I know that health and social services is also currently working on a supportive living review, and I just

wanted to clarify, do the two documents speak to one another and work in conjunction together so that they are -- are collaborative, I guess, in that sense?

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Member. Minister for NWT Housing Corporation.

HON. PAULIE CHINNA: Thank you, Madam Chair. I'll have president Young respond. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. President Young.

MS. YOUNG: Thank you, Madam Chair. And that will be our goal, yes. We know that there's transitional housing and other issues that are being worked on across government that all link to the homelessness issue that we're addressing. Thank you, Madam Chair.

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

MS. CLEVELAND: Thank you very much, Madam Chair. I just wanted to -- I have one last question just on page 383 at the bottom there is utilities, and I note that the actuals for 2020-2021 were at 398 and that the main estimates for 2022-2023 come back down to the standard we see every year of 232. And I'm just wondering if the Minister can confirm why the jump in utilities and why that's expected to come back down to the main estimate number. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. Minister responsible for NWT Housing Corporation.

HON. PAULIE CHINNA: Thank you, Madam Chair. I'll have vice-president Jim Martin respond.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. Vice-president Martin.

MR. MARTIN: Thank you, Madam Chair. This increase in utilities, it's associated with our -- our commercial properties, basically our nonresidential properties that we lease to others for other revenues. And we have reviewed this area. We believe there is some opportunities for cost savings in the coming year, but this will be an area that we'll look at more closely in the coming year, and if needed, make an appropriate budget adjustment going forward. Thank you, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, vice-president. Are there any further questions under this section? Member for Great Slave.

MS. NOKLEBY: Thank you, Madam Chair. I guess I just wanted to sort of reiterate a little bit of what my colleague from Kam Lake is saying around just these numbers around the homelessness initiatives.

As I'm looking further into the housing issues in my riding, one of the things that's coming -- becoming

apparent to me is that the lack of support services for the homeless and vulnerable populations then impacting the housing clients that are now in those apartments that are neighboring the downtown core, and so at first I was under the impression it was other people within the building but now I'm sort of getting the picture that it's often just people wandering in from off the street that really don't have a connection in the building. So I guess I'm just a little bit disappointed to see that we're not really increasing our homelessness initiatives by that much. I mean, there is an increase but is there a plan to expand these services in the next fiscal year after this, or are we going to see sort of a status quo budget for homelessness in the next while? Thank you, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Member. Minister responsible for NWT Housing Corporation.

HON. PAULIE CHINNA: Thank you, Madam Chair. You know, just with the -- when I had gotten the portfolio, my -- one of my goals was to establish a homelessness initiative throughout the whole of the Northwest Territories. The only two ridings that don't have any homelessness initiatives is Nunakput and the Sahtu, and we did establish one in Hay River and one in Fort Simpson and just trying to look at providing those services outside of Yellowknife but also recognizing our nonprofit organizations do exist here, our volunteers do exist here, and they don't necessarily have them set up yet in the -- in the smaller areas. But for the -- for further -- further response, I'll have Jim Martin, vice-president, respond. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. Vice-president Martin.

MR. MARTIN: Thank you, Madam Chair. So as our Minister and president alluded to earlier, the Housing Corporation is working on a homelessness strategy and a component of that certainly will be looking at emergency shelters and the support services in that area, and recommendations will follow from there. Thank you, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, vice-president. Member for Great Slave.

MS. NOKLEBY: Thank you, Madam Chair. I guess I'm just a little bit worried about a strategy that's going to take a while and then it'll take a bit more time to implement, and I'm just worried that in the meantime the people in the downtown core are falling further and further behind, as well too the impacts and social impacts on families living in the downtown core is huge when I hear 7-year-olds tell me that they're scared to come home or walk into the building with their mom, that's worrisome to me, or a mother with a four-month old that's not even living in

her unit because she doesn't want to bring her child around that. So I know this is all stuff that the Minister and the department is aware of, but I just wanted to take a moment to reiterate that this is really quite concerning and I think we're spending -- like my colleague says, spending more money on bandaids solutions than we are on, I think, long-term permanent solutions for our people. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Member. I didn't hear a question in there so I'll just leave it as a comment. Are there any further questions for the Minister under the finance and infrastructure services? Member for Hay River South.

MR. ROCKY SIMPSON: Thank you, Madam Chair. I'm just looking at, on page 384 is the transitional rent supplement program. I see there was 749 -- 749,000 and nothing after that. Is that something that was affected by a subset, or is it just something that's not required anymore? Thank you, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Minister responsible for NWT Housing Corporation.

HON. PAULIE CHINNA: Thank you, Madam Chair. Of course I cannot find this, but I know we did have an increase in intake for this program and we do have an agreement with the federal government, which is a 50/50 cost share, but I'll have vice-president Jim Martin respond further. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Vice-president Martin.

MR. MARTIN: Thank you, Madam Chair. The transitional rent supplement program is a program that has sunset in 2021-2022 -- or 2022-2023 -- no, 2021-2022. And that program was replaced with the Canada NWT housing benefit providing affordable rental assistance for the NWT residents. Thank you, Madam Chair.

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

MR. ROCKY SIMPSON: Thank you, Madam Chair. Just looking at the line item emergency shelters, we see roughly a \$376,000 increase from the revised estimates. I guess what -- what caused that to -- that increase to happen? Thank you, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Minister responsible for NWT Housing Corporation.

HON. PAULIE CHINNA: Thank you, Madam Chair. We have the GNWT initiative funding for Hay River and Fort Simpson homeless shelter and where we were able to get funding, but we did sunset the -- the prior year for the budget for the Hay River homeless

shelter. So now we actually have it built into our budget. Thank you, Madam Chair.

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

MR. ROCKY SIMPSON: Thank you, Madam Chair. I guess just talking about homelessness initiatives and a plan, you know, it's something that's been going on for years. If it wasn't for this pandemic, we probably wouldn't have seen much change. I think we would have saw people still outside in the wintertime, you know, trying to find places to live, but -- so, you know, the pandemic, even though it was bad, it did bring to light some of the gaps that we have. And, you know -- and I don't think -- and I don't think we can -- you know, it -- it's not right to forget what those gaps are, and we got to move ahead.

You know, the cost to -- the cost to house somebody that's homeless right now and -- an estimated cost was probably I would say maybe 7 to \$10,000 a month, and -- and that's just being conservative whereas if we were to be able to find a place for them, we're looking at maybe \$1500 a month. So it's a big -- it's a big difference. And I guess what I'd like to see is that, you know, we -- we take a serious look at this and find ways that we can actually provide people without a home, provide them with some type of home. And when I say that, you know, we always see ads; we see articles; we see news stories on -- you know, on tiny homes, you know, clustered for seniors, for people who are -- for veterans, and even for homeless people. And I think that's something we have to look at. We have to -- we have to make that a priority in the communities, priority of this government. And, you know, we got to make sure that lands are available and set aside for something like that. Is that a -- is that something that the Minister's department is looking at for any time in the future? Thank you, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Minister responsible for NWT Housing Corporation.

HON. PAULIE CHINNA: Thank you, Madam Chair. Just I -- you know, I like this question that's being asked as well because we're -- one of the things I would like to have homelessness initiatives outside of Yellowknife so we could have people housed in their home communities as well. And just looking at what we have had in throughout the Northwest Territories, we've got Northern Pathways in Behchoko. We've got another one in Aklavik. We've got one in -- in Fort Good Hope, and also looking at those supported housing homelessness initiatives. But the thing that I've noticed as a Minister is finding the -- the nonprofit organizations outside. You know, they do exist here within Yellowknife but there's -- there's so many of them here that it's just trying to find those initiatives going forward. But we

still continue to be working with my colleagues as well too. Thank you, Madam Chair.

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

MR. ROCKY SIMPSON: Thank you. Thank you, Madam Chair. And, you know, if it wasn't for, you know, the NGOs in the communities, you know, like in Hay River we got the Soaring Eagle Friendship Centre; we have the Women's Resource Centre; we have the Council for Disabilities. You know, they all contribute. They all -- they all go, you know, beyond. They're always, you know, hamstrung by -- by funds. They use a lot of volunteers. And, you know, if it wasn't for those type of organizations, we probably wouldn't be doing what we are in the communities. So, you know, it's great that we -- we have them, and we have to support them.

I want to just talk about this all-government approach, because I hear it; it's a nice term. You know, it feels good. What it does, I'm not quite sure. You know, I can see that, you know, we've got several departments. I see them sitting down talking about what's best. But it's when they go away, and -- you know, and I expect that the Housing Corporation is left holding the bag and is expected to do all the work. So, you know, what I'd like to know is what comes out of this all-government approach? How is that -- how is that delivered in -- at the ground level in the communities? Does it include participation from each department? Is there still ongoing discussion after the fact? Or is ever -- it's just each on their own?

For instance, health has -- you know, they look in Hay River; they provide funding for the day shelter. They -- the Housing Corporation provides funding for the night shelter. So, you know, so there's a little bit of a disconnect there, whether they talk together, I don't know. So I just kind of wondering there what the -- you know, how do we translate this all-government approach into what's actually happening on the ground, and if there is actually some type of coordination and buy-in? Thank you, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Member. Minister responsible for NWT Housing Corporation.

HON. PAULIE CHINNA: Thank you, Madam Chair. I'll have president Young elaborate because this is what the housing strategy is for, and this is what -- with all those conversations happening amongst departments and what is our plan going forward and who is responsible for what. And I hear you as well. There's so many different pots of funding that comes together and we end up with -- with these non-profits and trying to fund them for services that

they could provide on our behalf. Thank you, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. President Young.

MS. YOUNG: Thank you, Madam Chair. And, yes, very quickly, the whole goal of this is to not have somebody left holding the bag but to continue to work together after we come up with a strategy and how we -- how do we have that happen, because I think one of the things that we as housing have noticed is -- is the issue is not just a housing issue. In some cases, it's a poverty issue. In some cases, it's an addictions issue. And there's lots of other reasons why there is an issue that's creating the homelessness situation and we need to continue to work together to support that individual. Much along the same concept as the integrated surface delivery. So, you know, at this point, it's all levels. We're working at my level; we're working at the VP level; we're working at the operational level and trying to find a way to make this work all the way down. And challenging our staff to be creative and innovative on how to find some solutions here that will work with their partners because they know their communities better than anybody else about what those working relationships look like and how to make the solution work for their community. So we're trying to take advantage of all of that skill and knowledge of all the different folks we work with and build it into something that will translate into a program that will work. So that's -- that's why it's taking us a little bit more time, is building those relationships and that framework that we want to have happen. Thank you, Madam Chair.

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

MR. ROCKY SIMPSON: Thank you, Madam Chair. And just a quick comment. You know, I'm pleased to hear, you know, all the -- all the right terms and all the right words with -- with the direction that -- that the department's going and working with other -- with other departments as well because, you know, for myself, I'm on the ground in Hay River. So I'm talking to the people that are affected. I'm talking to the people that are providing the service. So, you know, I can gauge what's being done and what's not being done. And, you know -- and I'll make sure that, you know, when I see any gaps or anything, any issues, that I'll let you guys know as well because I'd rather tell you and hope it could get addressed than having to bring it in the House and, you know, it goes around in circles. Thank you, Madam Chair.

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

MS. WEYALLON-ARMSTRONG: Okay, in the budget here, it says shelter enhancement fund,

victims of family violence. So the actuals in 2021 was 201. And after that, 2021-2022, like, the revised on the main estimates still stayed the same at 100. There's a decrease. And down to the 2022-2023, you still have the same. Why is there a big decrease in almost half in that -- for the shelter enhancement?

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. Just remember to redirect the chair. Thank you. Minister of NWT Housing Corporation.

HON. PAULIE CHINNA: Thank you, Madam Chair. That was additional funding that was allocated due to the COVID-19 response. Thank you, Madam Chair.

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

MS. WEYALLON-ARMSTRONG: Yeah, yes, we -- we know that -- well, the reason why I mention this is that the victims of family violence, we do need shelter in lot of regions. There are some regions that don't have women's shelter. For example, in Tlicho region, we don't have a shelter. We don't have a place for women and children to turn to. And if we don't -- since we don't have a place, they go to Yellowknife. They relocate to Yellowknife. And most of the time, it's because -- well, there's no program for them and due to housing, no housing. So they do -- we -- you know, they go somewhere else. And sometimes they're not too happy. They're -- you know, like, the families are not happy. The kids are not happy but they have no choice. They don't -- because there's not enough housing in our regions. And I heard this from various women. They said we need a women's shelter in Tlicho region. So it just that I think this enhancement program, she said COVID, but I just -- you know, the emergency shelter, it's, like, 2.7, and it went up to 2.9 from the actuals.

When you look at the statistics, and even one of my colleagues mentioned too, that Indigenous women, women in the NWT, they're -- you know, like, they're likely to be the victims more, ten times more, and 98 percent of the time women admitted into the shelters are Indigenous as well. Not to dismiss we need shelter for the young boys, young men as well, because they do need help as well. So we need more emergency shelter, family shelter, family violence centre for both. You know, for the family and for the young men as well. So I just want -- it's just that it's -- there's a big -- there's an increase in emergency shelter from 2.7 to 2.9. Why we don't have enough shelters in the Northwest Territories for the most vulnerable that we've been talking about? Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. Minister responsible for NWT Housing Corporation.

HON. PAULIE CHINNA: Thank you, Madam Chair. Again, you know, that I just want to talk as well too because my riding, I come from a small community too. We don't have a homelessness initiative in my home community, and we don't have shelters as well too. But also looking at the assets that are on the ground, if there's an interest from that riding and that Indigenous groups, then I would like to work with them and being able to work with my colleague with the Department of Health and looking for funding to see how we could establish these shelters. But once again, the thing that I notice that we run into is the nonprofit organizations when they're established and who's going to run them. You know, we could provide the funding, here you go, but who's going to establish the programming. So but I could follow up with the Member if there's any assets that she may be interested in speaking with her Indigenous group about. Thank you, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Minister. Any further questions? Member for Monfwi.

MS. WEYALLON-ARMSTRONG: I would love to discuss this further with her after, yeah. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. Are there any further questions under finance and infrastructure services? Seeing none, we'll move on to programs and district operations beginning on page 387, with information items on page 388 and 389. Are there any questions? Member for Hay River South.

MR. ROCKY SIMPSON: Thank you, Madam Chair. Just looking at the contributions and seniors aging in place retrofits and repairs 800,000. I know that with the number of -- of repairs that were -- or allocations that went into Hay River, it's severely underfunded, that program. And, you know, we talk about keeping seniors in their homes as long as we can. You know, and part of it is that we will provide, you know, funding for retrofits and repairs. We'll also provide home care and those type of things. And we just don't -- you know, we're just not putting enough money into it. And looking at it here, you know, it hasn't changed. So that tells me that, you know, either -- either there's just no chance at getting any money or it's something that's really not taken seriously by the department. And I'd just like to ask them if there's any -- you know, if there's something we can do to -- to increase that number, because I know that, again in Hay River and in probably -- and in probably in every other community, there's a demand for that -- for that program. So I'd like to see what we can do to -- to increase that number. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Member. Minister responsible for NWT Housing Corporation.

HON. PAULIE CHINNA: Thank you, Madam Chair. We ended up with a -- with more applications than we were -- than we were budgeted for. I'll have president -- vice president Jim Martin respond. Thank you, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. Vice president Martin.

MR. MARTIN: Thank you, Madam Chair. So as the Minister mentioned, the Housing Corporation has observed an increase in applications. This was driven partially by COVID's impacts and also there on April 1st, 2021, there was some modifications made obviously to our homeownership programs that did result in an increase uptake in this area also.

The Housing Corporation does continue to monitor this closely. It is managing within the existing budget at this time but will certainly look for other funding sources as well, such as the federal government. Thank you, Madam Chair.

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

MR. ROCKY SIMPSON: Thank you, Madam Chair. You know, this program I think is very important to -- probably more so to Yellowknife and the regional centres where there is market housing and, you know, private homes. And I think it's very important that we look -- that we look at trying to increase -- increase that amount and trying to put more out there.

When we look around the Northwest Territories and like again Yellowknife and Hay River, you know, Inuvik and Simpson and Smith, there's a lot of modular units; there's a lot of trailers out there, and they seem to -- you know, they seem to have a lot of problems, and -- you know, with leakage and, you know, windows and things like that. So we have to make sure that if we expect seniors to stay in place and age in place, we have to provide that money to help them maintain their homes. So I would just ask the Minister to hopefully direct her department to -- you know, to look a little -- a little harder at that number and actually, you know, try and find some funds to increase it. Thank you, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. Minister responsible for NWT Housing Corporation.

HON. PAULIE CHINNA: Thank you, Madam Chair. And the department is working on that right now presently because we did see a huge intake of the program during COVID as well too, and, yeah, we're working within our department, because we've seen a lot of the programs oversubscribed I want to say during -- within the last couple of years. Thank you, Madam Chair.

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

MR. ROCKY SIMPSON: Thank you, Madam Chair. And I guess the same thing with the emergency repair program as well, like that's a very important one. I'm dealing with some clients who, you know, needed some repairs right away and, you know, when you look at it, it's an emergency repair. So that means it has to be done quickly. And a lot of times what happens is that -- that I find is that the application process and when the work has to be done just don't match up. And what I tell clients, and maybe it's the wrong thing to do, is I say just go get the work done, send me the bills and I'll send them in and I'll talk to the Minister and she'll cut a cheque. So that's -- maybe it's not that easy but, you know, that's what -- you know, that's what we have to -- we have to work within the communities. And even the staff I think in the communities, you know, say sometimes just go through -- go through your MLA as well. And, you know, it's not trying to circumvent the system. It's just trying to ensure that something that is an emergency is actually dealt with in relatively short times. So I would just ask even the Minister to -- you know, to look at that program as well and to maybe look at the way it -- the application process unfolds and the timeliness of it. Thank you, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. Minister of NWT Housing Corporation.

HON. PAULIE CHINNA: Thank you, Madam Chair. And I just -- you know, like we're going through a policy review as well too and looking at -- you know, looking at fairness and consistency throughout the Northwest Territories and making sure that, you know, we're reaching the clients that are not able to financially I guess contribute to their emergencies at that time. So I just for the Member, that we are reviewing these policies as well too. Thank you, Madam Chair.

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

MR. ROCKY SIMPSON: Thank you, Madam Chair. I guess what it comes down to, like, you know, as we talk about housing, it just comes down to dollar and cents. There's just not enough money there to go around, and, you know, with what we have, we going to have to, you know, make better use of it. With the increase of, you know, materials and labour and that, like, it's just driving the cost up where, you know, a million and a half dollars just doesn't do anything anymore. You know, in Yellowknife here, it'd probably eat that up in no time and people would still be -- you know, there'd still be a lot of people looking for help. So I think that's very important that -- you know, that we -- that we look at those areas when it

comes to seniors and emergency repairs. Thank you, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Member. Did you have any further questions? Are there any further questions under programs and district operations? Member for Frame Lake.

MR. O'REILLY: Thanks, Madam Chair. Just -- just a couple questions about some line items here.

So on page 387 program detail, programs development and implementation went from \$3.6 million in 2020-2021 to \$11.6 million, then for 2022-2023, it's down to \$10 million. What's going on with this line? Thanks, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. Minister of NWT Housing Corporation.

HON. PAULIE CHINNA: Thank you, Madam Chair. I'll have vice president Jim Martin respond. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. Mr. Martin.

MR. MARTIN: Thank you, Madam Chair. So looking from 2021 actuals to 2021-2022 mains, there was an increase there of approximately \$7.9 million, and that was primarily a result of an additional \$5 million being added to our budget to support cost sharing for National Co-Investment Fund projects. So that was added in that area.

There was also a new Canada-NWT housing benefit program that was added to our budget in that year in 2021-2022, and that was \$1.75 million.

And in 2021-2022, the Housing Corporation set aside two additional funding sources for cost sharing the Hay River Family Support Centre and the Spruce Bough Co-Investment Fund projects in that year. Thank you, Madam Chair.

Oh, sorry, there was one other change. Thank you. And then the change from the 2021-2022 mains to the 2022-2023 mains, that change represented a decrease and the primary reason for that is that the money that I alluded to earlier that was set aside for the Spruce Bough and the Hay River Family Support Centre projects, that was set aside in 2021-2022 and it sunset in 2022-2023. Thank you, Madam Chair.

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

MR. O'REILLY: Okay, thanks. I guess I start to ask questions and I got some more. So yeah, well, the Regular MLAs will take credit for the extra \$5 million and that line item. I think it's over just two years, unfortunately, so it's going to go back down again unless we do something else about that.

But can someone tell me, then, where -- is there any funding in 2022-2023 for Spruce Bough as they continue to operate, and where would that funding be found? Thanks, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. Minister responsible for NWT Housing Corporation.

HON. PAULIE CHINNA: Thank you, Madam Chair. I'll have vice president Jim Martin respond. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. Vice president Martin.

MR. MARTIN: Thank you, Madam Chair. The dollars that are set aside to support the capital cost sharing for that project when that is approved, we have dollars set aside in the 2021-2022 budget. Thank you, Madam Chair.

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

MR. O'REILLY: Okay, sorry, so how much is set aside for Spruce Bough, and is it in this line here? Thanks, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. Minister responsible for NWT Housing Corporation.

HON. PAULIE CHINNA: Thank you, Madam Chair. I'll have the vice president Jim Martin respond.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. Mr. Martin.

MR. MARTIN: Madam Chair, yes, it is in that line item, and it's broken out on page 388, community housing support initiative co-investment fund line item, and that's where those dollars are at the moment. Thank you, Madam Chair.

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

MR. O'REILLY: Thanks, Madam Chair. How much is set aside then for Spruce Bough in 2022-2023 in the current main estimates? Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. Minister for Northwest Territories housing corporation.

HON. PAULIE CHINNA: Thank you, Madam Chair. The original set aside was 650,000 but they did end up -- they may have adjustments through their co-investment application, and we haven't gotten those numbers yet. Thank you, Madam Chair.

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

MR. O'REILLY: Okay, thanks. On the same page, 388, then, the new home program, just seems like it was a 2021-2022 program, \$767,000, and then there's nothing before and nothing afterwards. What's happening there? Thanks, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. Minister responsible for NWT Housing Corporation.

HON. PAULIE CHINNA: Thank you, Madam Chair. This was a program that we were going to initiate throughout the territories, but the cost to build these homes came out a lot higher than expected. It is with the corporation to come up with a new design for this initiative. Thank you, Madam Chair.

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

MR. O'REILLY: Yeah, thanks, Madam Chair. Yeah, \$767,000 might be able to get, if you're really lucky, two homes out of that. What was the original design? Is it to provide some sort of subsidy to new home owners, or what was wrong with the original design, and how's it going to get fixed because there's zero dollars in 2022-2023 for this? Thanks, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. Minister responsible for NWT Housing Corporation.

HON. PAULIE CHINNA: Thank you, Madam Chair. This was quite a huge project that was supposed to happen. It was to support elders aging in place, I mean with the family. So it was a generational home, I would say, is that they have the family members living in the home and it would be -- there would be an elders suite for the elders to remain in the community. Just with that design, it came out quite significant. The program and the intent was something that we were looking at but with the price coming in at a lot higher than expected, it's being brought back to the corporation for a different design. Thank you, Madam Chair.

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

MR. O'REILLY: Okay, thanks. So and when -- when is this new design going to come forward? Because there's zero in the main estimates, is there going to be a supplementary appropriation? Thanks, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Minister responsible for NWT Housing Corporation.

HON. PAULIE CHINNA: Thank you, Madam Chair. I'll have vice president Jim Martin respond. Thank you, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. Mr. Martin.

MR. MARTIN: Thank you, Madam Chair. As the Minister mentioned, the Housing Corporation is in the design revisit phase here, and we do have dollars set aside for the design work that has to be undertaken in this area. We're also looking at the program aspects related to this investment. The multigenerational home is a four-bedroom home. The program outcomes certainly look attractive; however, we're not quite sure it's really aligned to the appropriate program. Right now, it's targeting homeownership and an investment of that size might not necessarily be the right solution for a single-family home. So we're looking at other program options as well in this process, and we expect to provide committee with an update later in the coming year. Thank you, Madam Chair.

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

MR. O'REILLY: Nothing further, thanks, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. Are there any further questions under programs and district operations? Member for Yellowknife North.

MR. JOHNSON: Thank you, Madam Chair. I'm looking at the page 390 lease commitments, \$14 million. Can I just get clarification whether the Housing Corporation in order to enter into leases has to go to FMB for approval and whether this \$14 million commitment applies to our debt line? Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. Minister responsible for NWT Housing Corporation.

HON. PAULIE CHINNA: Thank you, Madam Chair. I'll have vice president Jim Martin respond. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Vice president Jim Martin.

MR. MARTIN: Thank you, Madam Chair. Right now, these leases are of a shorter term in nature. Like, they go up to about five years in a number of cases, and they are considered operating leases at this time. So they are reflected as an O and M expenditure. They're not a longer term capital lease scenario and if that was the case, then that would have affected the debt calculations of the corporation and then ultimately the debt calculations for the GNWT. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Rocky Simpson): Thank you. Member.

MR. JOHNSON: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I guess before I leave, I just want to get a bit into this problem of, you know, we go out, we design a house for homeownership; it comes in far above the budget

and a problem that is likely not getting better. I was hoping I could have the department speak to whether that design process was modular or stick-built and perhaps just generally whether we are heading in the direction of doing all modular building. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Rocky Simpson): Thank you, Minister.

HON. PAULIE CHINNA: Thank you, Mr. Chair. The design was stick-built. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Rocky Simpson): Thank you, Member.

MR. JOHNSON: Yeah, and I know the Housing Corp traditionally, and I understand, had a preference for stick-built. We're seeing a lot more modular units because, you know, with stick-built, you can kind of train apprentices and train more people. But can we get some updated figures on, you know, what it costs to deliver modular housing versus stick-built housing? Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Rocky Simpson): Minister.

HON. PAULIE CHINNA: Thank you, Mr. Chair. One of the things that I was able to discover with the -- between the stick-built and the modular was the maintenance and the efficiency of it. We've delivered modular units to Nunakput and ended up with significant damages because of the houses being delivered by barge on the ocean. We've seen where we've had them up in the High Arctic communities where there's -- the weather conditions are -- are stronger, I guess, and we end up with a lot more operation and maintenance for those units.

And the Member is right as well too, that if we're looking at stick-built there is an opportunity there for education and training as well. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

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

MR. JOHNSON: Yeah, thank you, Mr. Chair. No, I appreciate the Minister's comments there. But I know at times there have been different public numbers kind of reported. I was hoping to just get some updated figures. I know with the 90 housing unit delivery, the vast majority are modulars is my understanding; in fact I think that was a requirement of the federal rapid rehousing program. So I'm just wondering if we could get -- you know, if we build something modular, how much does it cost versus stick-built, a figure. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Rocky Simpson): Member. Minister.

HON. PAULIE CHINNA: Thank you, Mr. Chair. There is a significant difference in building the

stick-built, but it's also the operation and maintenance and the climate that we're actually building those units in and if we're placing those modulars in those specific areas. So it depends on where the delivery will be taking place, north or south of the territory. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

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

MR. JOHNSON: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Yeah, I'll try another time to get a numerical value there.

I guess my other question is I expressed earlier some concern about what LHOs do verse -- well, the Housing Corporation, and I think I would express those same concerns with what district -- sorry, what -- I don't know what to call it -- offices do verse LHOs. I get at some point, we want to have people in the community who are making decisions about housing and we want to have jobs in communities. But, you know, in Yellowknife, for example, we have a North Slave office, and we have a headquarters office, and then we have the Yellowknife Housing Authority office. And I really don't think we need all three. In fact, I think we probably just need one where you could go and talk about housing instead of three spots. And they all come with duplicative costs. I see there's multiple line items for their leases for their offices here. And I've had people go to the housing authority and say hey, can I have access to this program and they say, no, no. You go to -- you go to the North Slave office. And then they go to the North Slave office and they say no, no, you go to headquarters for that. So I -- I guess as part of this review, the Housing Corporation, my understanding does not need to organize itself like a department at all. It doesn't need to follow north and south and Slave and all of the ways that departments organize, and it doesn't need LHOs if it doesn't want to have them. Can look into whether there's some efficiencies on having both, you know, a district office and an LHO doing relatively similar things; is that something on the agenda? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Rocky Simpson): Member. Minister.

HON. PAULIE CHINNA: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I am -- you know, I'm more in support of having these positions in the smaller communities and building capacity at the smaller community level. We are in a different I want to say time of this government where we see Indigenous groups coming forward and looking at their self-government agreements. I look at this as an opportunity if they were wanting to draw down jurisdiction, I'm wanting to entertain a pilot project with them as well too. But the difference of having the LHOs, those are specifically for public housing and those administrations at the smaller community level, but the district offices are emergencies and programs and they do support the

LHOs as well too. But in our review, we will be looking at the whole -- the whole function of how we deliver housing throughout the territory. But I could reassure the Member that the local housing authorities are an asset to our delivery, and they are an asset to how our program is being delivered. They are the face-to-face for us at the ground level. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

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

MR. JOHNSON: Yeah, thank you, Mr. Chair. Can I get an explanation of -- I see that the regional offices are responsible for maintenance, but I know that the LHOs are also responsible for maintenance. And, you know, if I'm in a housing unit and I want something -- want some maintenance, which one of those two should I go to in which scenarios? Thank you.

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

HON. PAULIE CHINNA: Thank you, Mr. Chair. And like I had said, the local housing authorities are for public housing. The district offices are programs and maintenance. So if you're a homeowner, you would go to the district offices. They provide the support for the LHOs and the LHOs are strictly are for public housing. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Rocky Simpson): Member.

MR. JOHNSON: Thank you, Mr. Chair. And then I -- also in this kind of realm of who does what, there's a capital plan coming forward and this year's -- this budget's capital plan doesn't build any new houses, but it does quite a bit of major retrofits. My understanding is that major retrofits is the decided by headquarters in their capital plan, and then minor maintenance would be the responsible of the LHO. Can I just get a understanding of when maintenance belongs to an LHO verse would have to go through the headquarters capital planning process. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Rocky Simpson): Minister.

HON. PAULIE CHINNA: Mr. Chair, the maintenance would be for the public housing units but if we have something like a boiler needs to be fully replaced, we have a major freeze-up where we need the certification of plumbers and OBMs to be in the communities, then we're looking at the major retrofits compared to -- sorry, I forgot the other term. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Rocky Simpson): Thank you, Minister. Member. Ms. Nokleby? No? Ms. Semmler?

MS. SEMMLER: I want to ask questions under the next section.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Rocky Simpson): There's no further questions. Okay, no further questions. So there's additional information on page 390 which is lease commitments. Any questions? Ms. Semmler.

MS. SEMMLER: Thank you, Mr. Chair. My questions are, you know, during the beginning of the week I talked about in my Member's statement on the amount it cost to lease the units in the one apartment building, and then looking at the lease commitments in the Inuvik for the housing, there's 36 units and one unit -- on one line, and then there's ten units on the next line. And that total for the two is about \$970,000. And it says the 2022-2023 main estimates. But then it says future lease payments, and there's 20 -- 2.9 million and .98 million, which is a total of 3.8 -- 8 million. Can you clarify this year, is that our total cost for those 45 units that we're leasing? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

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

HON. PAULIE CHINNA: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I'll have vice president Jim Martin respond. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Rocky Simpson): Mr. Martin.

MR. MARTIN: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Yeah, so those two line items, the current year annual operating costs for those in 2022-2023 is 726,000 as noted, and 245,000 for the second building. The amount shown in future lease payments is the projected total cost over the life of those leases. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Rocky Simpson): Thank you, Mr. Martin. Member.

MS. SEMMLER: Okay, thank you, Mr. Chair. So can you clarify what's the total life of those leases? If that's a year by year? Does it end at our fiscal year? Is this a five year? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

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

HON. PAULIE CHINNA: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I'll have vice president Jim Martin respond. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Rocky Simpson): Mr. Martin.

MR. MARTIN: Thank you, Mr. Chair. For the first item, it's under five years. And the second one, it'd be about approximately four years. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Rocky Simpson): Thank you, Mr. Martin. Member.

MS. SEMMLER: Yeah, thank you, Mr. Chair. So my -- and I think this is the issue that I've been raising, and I know that the Minister had mentioned in the House that there's no capital, but then this gets

really confusing for -- I'm not a finance person. So we've got a crown corporation but we -- the buildings that we want to -- if we want to house people, we need -- we need the houses. So those become capital but we're paying, you know, a million dollars a year to house 40 -- you know, to have 45 rental units just in Inuvik. That's just in Inuvik, which is double the cost of the -- then I think in Yellowknife, if you look at it, 65 units is 1.2 for 65 units. You know, so we're paying -- we're paying some crazy amounts for rent up in the North and, you know, my colleague from Yellowknife North has mentioned this over and over again about how we're giving all the money to these southern companies, and I just feel that, you know, with the amount of units that we're spending this O and M money that we could potentially in the future have a building because we also have the college who's leasing units for residents that are coming in -- families that are coming in for the college.

So will the Minister explain, like, what's the -- with these leases and with the future plan of trying to come up with a plan in -- especially in my community of Inuvik where we have a hundred people still on the waitlist yet we're leasing for 45 families units, what's the plan and how are we going to continue to, you know, pay for this when we're renting out whole apartment buildings instead of -- it's cheaper to own and operate an apartment building ourself. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Rocky Simpson): Member. Minister.

HON. PAULIE CHINNA: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I just want to comment that, you know, the total for our main estimates here is \$5 million and a little bit there. But, you know, we don't have -- if we were to build a 45-unit complex, I don't know what that amount would be but we don't have an additional 50 million just sitting there that we can go ahead and we could -- we could construct a 45-unit building in Inuvik. And what I've -- you know, within the department, it would be cheaper for us to lease but then over the duration of time, we actually could be possibly owning those units if we're operating and maintaining them. So it's a question that I have here and -- within the corporation and also being challenged here in Yellowknife as well with all of our Northview leases. But we don't have that substantial amount of money coming in that we're able to look at entering into a project such as that. And I'll have vice president Jim Martin respond as well too. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Rocky Simpson): Thank you, Minister. Mr. Martin.

MR. MARTIN: Thank you, Mr. Chair. So, again, as the Minister mentioned, we certainly look at these items on a case by case basis. Right now in terms of

the Inuvik buildings, we have lease opportunities in the community. If we were to have purchase opportunities, we would certainly look at that, again on a case by case, and look at the cost benefits of either option. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Rocky Simpson): Thank you, Mr. Martin. Member.

MS. SEMMLER: Thank you. And you know, with all the money -- like, the announcement that the Minister had mentioned and that I raised during my Member's statement and question period with all of the Indigenous governments, you know, and I know that this government has really been working with Indigenous governments. So I'm really hoping that, you know, there's a lot of money that's going to be going out to Indigenous groups throughout Canada, you know, for housing, and I'm sure hoping that this government will try and build some -- build many units, even if it's apartments, for the residents in Inuvik and for some of the college families that will be -- now that, you know, with everything moving forward and COVID restrictions, you know, people are going to be -- start applying for college and wanting to go to school in the different communities, and we're going to need places for them to stay. So just more of a comment but I'm just hoping that housing is working together with ECE to make sure that we're -- we're securing that now. Thank you.

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

HON. PAULIE CHINNA: Thank you, Mr. Chair. But with the announcement with all the Indigenous -- with Indigenous groups receiving the funding, this is federal funding, and we don't have -- we haven't had that conversation and we haven't been provided with the numbers that they would be receiving. And also the plans of how they're going to be spending this money and if they're interested in wanting to know what it is that we do have looking at our numbers, looking at our waitlist, what it is that we actually do own in the smaller communities. But I really want to emphasize that this is federal money. It -- we weren't apart of that distribution and how that money was getting distributed throughout the Northwest Territories. But we're here as a corporation, and we're wanting to engage. And hopefully once they receive their announcements and we see it publicly as well too, that we would be able to meet with them through the Council of Leaders working group as well too. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Rocky Simpson): Thank you, Minister. No further questions? Any further questions on lease commitments? Nothing. Thank you, Members.

Please return now to the Housing Corporation summary found on page 70 -- or 373, with

information items on pages 374 and 375. Any kind of questions? Nothing. Thank you.

Does the committee agree that consideration of the Northwest Territories Housing Corporation -- oh sorry, Mr. O'Reilly.

COMMITTEE MOTION 192-19(2):
TABLED DOCUMENT 561-19(2), MAIN
ESTIMATES 2022-2023 – NORTHWEST
TERRITORIES HOUSING CORPORATION –
DEFERRAL OF DEPARTMENT,
CARRIED

MR. O'REILLY: Thanks, Mr. Chair. I move that this committee defer further consideration of the estimates for the Northwest Territories Housing Corporation at this time. Mahsi, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Rocky Simpson): Thank you, Mr. O'Reilly. The motion is in order. To the motion?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Question.

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

---Carried

Consideration of the Northwest Territories Housing Corporation 2022-2023 Main Estimates, operating expenditures, is deferred.

Thank you, Minister, and thanks to the witnesses for appearing before us. Sergeant-at-Arms, please escort the witnesses from the Chamber.

Mr. O'Reilly

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

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Rocky Simpson): The motion is in order. Non-debatable. All those in favour? Opposed? Motion carried.

---Carried

---SHORT RECESS

Report of Committee of the Whole

MR. SPEAKER: Order. May I please have the report of Committee of the Whole. Member for Hay River South.

MR. SIMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, your committee has been considering Bills 23, 29, and 38; Tabled Document 561-19(2), Minister's Statement 202-19(2), Tabled Document 567-19(2), and would like to report progress with one motion adopted. And Mr. Speaker, I move that the

report of the Committee of the Whole be concurred with.

MR. SPEAKER: Do we have a seconder? Member for Inuvik Twin Lakes. All those in favour? All those opposed? Any abstentions? 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, March 1st, 2022, 1:30 p.m.

1. Prayer
2. Ministers' Statements
3. Members' Statements
4. Recognition of Visitors in the Gallery
5. Reports of Committees on the Review of Bills
6. Reports of Standing and Special Committees
7. Returns to Oral Questions
8. Replies to the Budget Address (Day 6 of 7)
9. Acknowledgements
10. Oral Questions
11. Written Questions
12. Returns to Written Questions
13. Replies to Commissioner's Address
14. Petitions
15. Tabling of Documents
16. Notices of Motions
17. Motions
18. Notices of Motions for First Reading of Bills
19. First Reading of Bills
20. Second Reading of Bills
21. Consideration in Committee of the Whole of Bills and Other Matters
 - Bill 23, An Act to Amend the Public Utilities Act
 - Bill 29, Resource Royalty Information Disclosure Statute Amendment Act
 - Bill 38, Miscellaneous Statute Law Amendment Act, 2021

- Tabled Document 561-19(2), 2022-2023
Main Estimates
- Tabled Document 567-19(2), Annual Status
Report – 2019-2023 Mandate of the
Government of the Northwest Territories,
February 2021-january 2022
- Minister's Statement 202-19(2), Annual
Status Report on the Mandate of the
Government of the Northwest Territories,
2019-2023

22. Report of Committee of the Whole

23. Third Reading of Bills

24. Orders of the Day

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Clerk. This House stands adjourned until Tuesday, March 1st, 2022, at 1:30 p.m.

--ADJOURNMENT

The House adjourned at 2:05 p.m.