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**LEGISLATIVE  
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**HANSARD**

**Friday, March 4, 2022**

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**The Honourable Frederick Blake Jr, Speaker**

# Legislative Assembly of the Northwest Territories

## Members of the Legislative Assembly

### Speaker

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

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**Hon. Diane Archie**

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

**Mr. Ronald Bonnetrouge**

(Deh Cho)

**Ms. Caitlin Cleveland**

(Kam Lake)

**Hon. Paulie Chinna**

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

**Hon. Caroline Cochrane**

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

**Mr. Richard Edjericon**

(Tu Nedhe-Wiilideh)

**Hon. Julie Green**

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

**Mr. Jackie Jacobson**

(Nunakput)

**Mr. Rylund Johnson**

(Yellowknife North)

**Ms. Frieda Martselos**

(Thebacha)

**Ms. Katrina Nokleby**

(Great Slave)

**Mr. Kevin O'Reilly**

(Frame Lake)

**Ms. Lesa Semmler**

(Inuvik Twin Lakes)

**Mr. Rocky Simpson**

(Hay River South)

**Hon. R.J. Simpson**

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

**Hon. Shane Thompson**

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

**Hon. Caroline Wawzonek**

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

**Ms. Jane Weyallon-Armstrong**

(Monfwi)

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**YELLOWKNIFE, NORTHWEST TERRITORIES**
**Friday, March 4, 2022**
**Members Present**

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

The House met at 10:04 a.m.

**Prayer**

---Prayer

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

**Ministers' Statements**

MINISTER'S STATEMENT 221-19(2):  
**ADVANCING ENERGY INFRASTRUCTURE  
 PROJECTS**

**HON. DIANE ARCHIE:** Quyananni. Energy is crucial to everyday life in the North, whether it's turning the lights on, TV to operating computers or equipment to get work done, residents and businesses in the Northwest Territories depend on access to reliable and affordable electricity. That is why the Government of the Northwest Territories has made it a priority to increase the use of alternative and renewable energy to help stabilize the cost of power.

The GNWT is making progress on key energy infrastructure projects that will assist us in meeting the needs of the NWT communities, residents, and businesses. To do this, we must continue to invest in the energy infrastructure that we already have to ensure we can continue to provide reliable and affordable electricity.

The overhaul of the Snare and Taltson hydro systems are two such projects. The Northwest Territories Power Corporation, which is a Crown corporation of the GNWT, is taking the lead on these two important projects.

Components of the Snare and Taltson generating facilities are approaching or have exceeded their expected lifespan. We need to upgrade these facilities and we need to do it now. This work will ensure continued reliability of these systems and avoid unexpected shutdowns that would result in burning diesel power to communities served by the Snare and Taltson, instead of using renewable hydroelectricity. The NWT has committed to reducing greenhouse gas emissions by 30 percent below 2005 levels by 2030.

In addition to the Inuvik Wind Project there are three other energy infrastructure projects that the GNWT is advancing to help meet these commitments identified in the 2030 NWT Climate Change Strategic Framework and the 2030 Energy Strategy are the Fort Providence-Kakisa Transmission Line, the Whati Transmission Line, and the Taltson Hydro Expansion Project.

Both transmission projects would essentially eliminate the use of diesel for electricity generation in these communities and displace up to 4,000 tonnes of greenhouse gas emissions per year. The proposed 170-kilometre Fort Providence-Kakisa Transmission Line Project would use surplus hydropower from the Taltson system and \$45 million in federal funding, in addition to the \$15 million in GNWT funding, which have been secured to build it. We plan to submit a land use permit application for this project with the Mackenzie Valley Land and Water Board this spring.

As for the Whati Transmission Line Project, the proposed 60-kilometre transmission line will tap into the surplus hydropower from the Snare system in the North Slave. This transmission line would be located almost entirely on Tlicho lands and Tlicho government to support the project. The GNWT is committed to partnering with the Tlicho government on this project and a key next step is to develop a technical study that will identify an acceptable transmission line corridor for the project.

The GNWT also continues to work with Indigenous partners on the Taltson Hydro Expansion Project. The proposed project would connect the Taltson system to Yellowknife's Snare and Bluefish hydro systems as well set the stage for energy corridor providing clean and new existing industrial customers north and south of the Great Slave Lake.

The GNWT has signed a MOU with the Akaitcho Dene First Nation and NWT Metis Nation and work is progressing on a preliminary business case for the project and transmission route options.

These projects will help meet the energy needs of our territory by using clean renewable resources right here in our backyard.

As we enter the final two years of this 19th Legislative Assembly, the GNWT is committed to

advancing energy infrastructure projects in partnership with communities, Indigenous governments and organizations, and in a way that maximizes benefits for Northerners. Quyananni.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Minister. Ministers' statements. Minister responsible for Lands.

MINISTER'S STATEMENT 222-19(2):  
TRANSFER OF LANDS

**HON. SHANE THOMPSON:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, building a strong local economy has been a significant focus of this Legislative Assembly. Making more land available to community governments means more business opportunities that help build stronger local economies.

This past December, the Department of Lands shared a process guide for transferring land within municipal community boundaries with the Northwest Territories Association of Communities. This was the essential step in support of this mandate commitment to reduce the municipal funding gap. This guide is also being shared directly with all NWT communities.

Mr. Speaker, the Department of Lands initially created a process guide for the transfer of public land to the City of Yellowknife. That document has now been adapted for use by all communities in the Northwest Territories. As we know, each community's capacity to administer and manage land is different. The Department of Lands and the Department of Municipal and Community Affairs will continue to work together to ensure communities are set up for success.

Mr. Speaker, the value of land that has been transferred to community governments from 2017-2021 is approximately \$5.2 million. Under the Land Pricing Policy, the GNWT transfers selected public land, for a nominal fee, to community governments. This is done so the maximum benefit of the land value can be realized by the community.

The GNWT understands and respects the importance of land selection when negotiating Aboriginal rights agreements. For this reason, the Department relies on interim land withdrawals and our consultation process to protect land selection and land interests.

Mr. Speaker, this process guide will help both community governments who can already accept land transfers, as well as those communities who are hoping to do so in the future. It is a supportive document that explains what is to be expected and outlines the process and the timelines. In some cases, there will be additional work needed before land transfer can happen, such as ensuring

community plans are in place and bylaws are up to date. The Department of Lands works with other GWNT departments to ensure that parcels of land can be transferred as requested to community governments.

Mr. Speaker, in closing, we transfer the land for a nominal fee but the value is certainly not nominal when it comes to reducing the municipal funding gap. The Department of Lands looks forward to working with all community governments so we can better understand their land needs and interests. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

### Members' Statements

MEMBER'S STATEMENT 989-19(2):  
CANADA-NORTHWEST TERRITORIES  
CHILDCARE AGREEMENT

**MR. O'REILLY:** Merci, Monsieur le President. Since our last sitting, we've received the good news that a Canada-NWT Childcare Agreement has been reached promising \$10 a day childcare for parents across the Northwest Territories. Excellent news, but how's it going to actually work?

The first big issue is putting money in the parents' hands who have continued to pay for childcare since the deal was signed. Ottawa requires that money under the agreement flow to the childcare providers. So how does it move on from there on to the parents who pay the childcare invoices? How will this affect the GNWT's existing funding agreements with providers? Will this create an administrative burden for licensed childcare providers?

Another big issue is infrastructure. Can any portion of these funds be spent on the construction or remodelling of facilities to create new childcare spaces? This agreement is only as good as the space available for the programming and we still have many communities without quality childcare. What's the story with this agreement and whether it includes infrastructure funding?

Roll out to communities is another area of uncertainty and possibly a source of real inequity. In the larger communities, it may be possible to retool existing spaces but in smaller communities, surplus or any space may be lacking. How many years will it take to ensure equitable access to childcare across all the communities of the Northwest Territories and will this new agreement actually help?

And finally, the long-term. The last Assembly committed in its original mandate to a plan for universal childcare before 2019 then rolled that

commitment back halfway through the Assembly term and I was the only MLA to speak against this rollback.

The 2015 feasibility study of universal affordable daycare in the Northwest Territories pegged the cost of universal childcare, at that point, at \$20 million a year. It's not clear whether GNWT's committed to maintaining the universal and affordable childcare after this five-year agreement ends. I will have questions later today for the Minister of Education, Culture and Employment and how we make this a truly good news story. Mahsi, Mr. Speaker.

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

MEMBER'S STATEMENT 990-19(2):  
SALVATION ARMY

**MR. JOHNSON:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I've now been in this role long enough that I've seen many of my constituents break the cycle of addiction and break the cycle of homelessness. And, Mr. Speaker, I cannot thank the work of countless staff in our non-profits who have helped my constituents along this journey. But, Mr. Speaker, our non-profits and NGO, who provide services that are essential to government, are stretched so thin you can see through them. And sadly, when we ask our non-profits to run these services, they are struggling to get staff as many of their staff are leaving for higher GNWT wage jobs, Mr. Speaker. We continue to see an uptake in clients needing mental health and recovery programs in the post-COVID world, Mr. Speaker. And many of our non-profits are picking up the slack on this, and we need to support them.

Today, on my statement I'd like to focus in on one nonprofit, and that is the Salvation Army, Mr. Speaker. The Salvation Army, they have the mental health program which helps the needs of 24 people with very complex mental health needs, and I know if this program didn't exist it's inevitably a bill that the Department of Health and Social Services would have to pick up at a much higher cost. However, Mr. Speaker, they have not seen an increase in funding for that program in eight years.

Just up one floor, they have their withdrawal management service, Mr. Speaker; a program that is essential in helping people get off alcohol, go to a southern treatment centre, and they've recently expanded it to have six months of support after. I know the priority of aftercare in this government, but that is another program that has not changed funding in over seven years, Mr. Speaker.

We can't keep asking our non-profits to run programs without an increase in funding and with support.

And if you go one building over, Mr. Speaker, there's the Bailey House. The Bailey House provides three years of transitional housing support. I have seen many of my constituents use the Bailey House as support to get into permanent housing and end homelessness. However, Mr. Speaker, that program has not seen an increase in funding since 2009.

Mr. Speaker, this is not just one nonprofit. This is how many of their budgets look. We do not increase their funding with inflation. We do not review these contracts. And at some point, if someone has been providing a service for over a decade and we know it's working, we need to turn that into block funding, guarantee it, and make sure it increases every year along with inflationary pressures. I'll have questions today for the Minister of Finance on how we can accomplish that goal. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

MEMBER'S STATEMENT 991-19(2):  
ARCTIC INSPIRATION PRIZE

**MS. SEMMLER:** Mr. Speaker, tonight I'll be tuning in to watch the Arctic Inspiration awards. Due to COVID, their event will be held virtually again.

Mr. Speaker, for those who do not know what the Arctic Inspiration Award is, if you look to their website it states the AIP is the largest annual prize in Canada by celebrating and providing SEED funding to northern teams with innovative projects. The AIP supports Northerners in bringing initiatives to life that bring about the changes they want to see in their communities.

The Arctic Inspiration Prize is by the North and for the North and is a community of people and groups including Indigenous organizations, academia, governments, nongovernmental organization, industry, philanthropy, media and arts, culture and organizations who share a common goal - to recognize northern innovation and excellence and encourage team work for the betterment of the life in Canada's north.

Every year, they have a million dollar prize awarded. Up to four awards for 500K and up to seven youth awards for \$100,000. This year, there are two finalists for the \$1 million prize - one from the Yukon and one from Nunavik. Good luck to them.

What I'm really excited is to watch the NWT projects. There are two youth finalists in the youth category, and they are both NWT projects:

- Treaty Talks; and
- Indigenous Youth River Guide Training.

In the AIP 500K category, there are six finalists with four from the NWT:

- Support Well-Being;
- Hope House;
- Fish Camp at Happy's Landing;
- Tuktoyaktuk Community Climate Resilience Project.

I'd like to say good luck to all the candidates and all the finalists.

Mr. Speaker, some of the laureate past winners that some may recognize and have made huge impacts in the Northwest Territories are Arctic Indigenous Wellness Project; Foxy, which is Fostering Open Expression among Youth; as well as Western Arctic Youth Collective, who's right now having a youth conference in Inuvik; Dene Heros Publication, just to name a few.

So make sure you tune in tonight and support our NWT finalists. Good luck to all, and I'm sure any project that wins will have a meaningful impact. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

MEMBER'S STATEMENT 992-19(2):  
RAISING THE ROOF NON-PROFIT  
INVOLVEMENT OF SARA MORRIS

**MS. NOKLEBY:** Mr. Speaker, today I rise to acknowledge outstanding Youth Ambassador Sara Morris, who proudly represents Raising the Roof. Raising the Roof is a non-profit whose vision is that all Canadians have access to a safe stable home and the supports they need to achieve their potential; a goal that is clearly lines up with the priorities of this Assembly.

In this job, where I hear of extreme need and so many desperate stories, Sara gives me hope. She shows me that youth care and want to make their communities better. Sara's passion is to improve the situation for people experiencing homelessness, and in particular youth.

As previously mentioned in this House, in 2018 there were 142 homeless youth under the age of 24 in Yellowknife, mostly Indigenous.

Sara's Support Team NWT campaign has raised \$4500 from the sale of masks and toques to support Home Base Yellowknife. These funds are being used to pay down their operating deficit at their youth centre as there is no funding for that program.

With nearly 300 items sold, Sara now has St. Pat's involved in a fundraiser for Home Base until March 11th. For every toque sold, \$5 will be going to provide emergency shelter for youth and programs for kids who find themselves with no place to stay at night.

Sara has learned that there are many stereotypes about the homeless, both about them as people and about how they got there. Sara has pushed herself to become more engaged about what is happening in her community and how she can make a difference.

Sara is a full-time high school student and advocates for youth in her spare time. She has found the opportunities in the North and through Raising the Roof mind-blowing. Sara knows that there is so much to be done but hopes that her dedication can speed things up. Sara realizes she has a chance to make a change and she is not passing it up.

Sara has always wanted to help and her mother has been an excellent role model, working at the YWCA for years. As a result, Sara spent a lot of time at Rockhill and when it burnt, she was very sad at the loss of the productive safe community space it was. As she gets older, she often thinks of the people from Rockhill and worries about where they're living and if they're safe.

I am so grateful for youth like Sara. Their big hearts and drive for change is what we need to make our territory prosperous and provide opportunity for everyone.

Find out more about Raising the Roof at [www.raisingtheroof.org](http://www.raisingtheroof.org). Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

MEMBER'S STATEMENT 994-19(2):  
SALT RIVER HOMELESSNESS PILOT PROJECT

**MS. WEYALLON-ARMSTRONG:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, today my Member's statement is on growth in public services.

In 2000, a year after NWT and Nunavut split, the NWT had a population of 40,500 people and had a total of 3,548 people in the public service, or approximately one in 12 people work for the Government of the Northwest Territories. Twenty two years later, there is 45,500 people living in the Northwest Territories, and approximately 6,249 people in the public service, or approximately one in seven people work for the Government of the Northwest Territories. Over the past 22 years, territorial population has increased by only 12 percent but we have added 2,701 people to the public service, which is 76 percent increase.

The Government of the Northwest Territories currently spends over \$400 million on compensations to employees. If the Government of the Northwest Territories wants to reduce expenditure, it needs to find a way to control growth of positions. The current model is unsustainable. The Minister responsible needs to come up with a short, medium, and long-term plan. I also want to see decentralization addressed as part of this overall plan. We all know that money spent locally contributes to local economic development.

This government has a mandate to increase employment in small communities and to diversify the economy. Mr. Speaker, move positions into regional centres and smaller communities. This will stimulate growth across the territories.

The Government of the Northwest Territories is the largest employer in the Northwest Territories. Housing is the main problem standing in the way of decentralization. So, Mr. Speaker, this is another reason why the Government of the Northwest Territories needs to address housing stock across small communities. I will have questions for the Minister of Finance later on. Thank you.

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

**MS. MARTSELOS:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, before I start I just want to let my community know that I'm very sorry about the chaos that happened in Fort Smith last night and I'll be home tonight anyways and I'll deal with it.

Mr. Speaker, we all know that homelessness is a huge issue for the NWT and indeed for the country. I mentioned the other day how Fort Smith has 212 people on the housing waiting list who are in line for public housing. Again, some people on that list have been waiting in line for housing for several years with seemingly no end in sight. That is a major problem. And some people fear they will never get to the front of a line to alleviate their housing problems. In fact, I know some people who have given up waiting on that list altogether, and they either moved out of the community or found other situations.

Mr. Speaker, to make matters worse here, there is currently no men's homeless shelter in operation in Fort Smith. There used to be one open before the pandemic but it closed due to social distancing concerns and has not had the funds to reopen.

I sent the Minister of Housing an email on this issue on January the 10th, 2022. And while her staff did acknowledge receipt of that email, I did not receive a formal follow-up about funding for the men's homeless shelter in Fort Smith.

Moreover, Mr. Speaker, Chief Poitras of Salt River First Nation sent a letter to the housing minister on

January the 21st, 2022, outlining a brand new housing proposal - to build multi tiny homes in Fort Smith and seeking funds to get it underway. I was copied on that email and I responded right away to voice my strong support for that initiative to the Minister.

Once again, the Minister's staff acknowledged receipt of the letter but never provided any follow-up. It's now been six weeks since the letter was sent.

Mr. Speaker, yesterday at question period during the exchange with my colleague from Kam Lake, the Minister emphasized the need for the fairness and consistency when delivering housing in all communities. I agree with that statement. I seek unanimous consent to conclude my statement.

---Unanimous consent granted

However, I'm not seeing the sentiment of fairness right now that the Minister speaks of in terms of homeless funding across the communities.

In January, right before MLAs were going over the main estimates for housing, that morning we received a document from Spruce Bough for more funding and Cabinet was quick to provide support. It seems in general the NWT Housing Corporation, along with the Finance department, are quick to provide funding to homeless initiatives in the capitol but they seem to lack any desire to fund outside-the-box initiatives elsewhere. It's almost like if the idea didn't come from them or their team, then it's not considered a valid or considerable cost. That is not acceptable.

Mr. Speaker, I don't take issue with funding homeless initiatives in the capitol. What I take issue with is the uneven consideration of homeless initiatives across the board. I know there is still time during this session to negotiate homeless initiatives in the NWT and I will use that time wisely. I will have questions for the Minister of Housing at the appropriate time. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

#### MEMBER'S STATEMENT 995-19(2): FISCAL RESPONSIBILITY POLICY

**MS. CLEVELAND:** Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I have come into this House as a Member for Kam Lake, and I have watched us creep up against our debt borrowing limit. I recognize we are a small government serving a small population spread over one million kilometers and that our fiscal resources are spread thin to build infrastructure and provide the needed services for our residents.

This Assembly, with approval from the federal government, increased our debt borrowing limit by \$500 million in 2020 and put our total debt borrowing limit up to \$1.8 billion. Currently, we have just over \$103 million in room to borrow before we reach our limit again. With one more fire or flood or other natural disaster, we could be in a very difficult financial situation, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, we have the largest territorial borrowing limit of all of the territories and unfortunately, when compared to our neighbours, our economy is heading in the wrong direction.

Over 2019-2020, while the NWT economic shrank by 10.9 percent, Yukon and Nunavut grew by 5.2 percent and 2.6 percent respectively. Our neighbours are experiencing growth in their economy through mining, quarrying, and oil and gas extraction.

We are a government that is made possible by federal transfers. This has provided stability to our government through the pandemic but, over the long-term, it is concerning as our economy continues to shrink.

Mr. Speaker, we cannot let the GNWT become the NWT economy. We need to make smart investments and be proactive to stimulate growth in the private sector now more than ever. Mr. Speaker, our fiscal responsibility policy is supposed to ensure long-term fiscal sustainability. And while we are in compliance with this policy, I'm concerned whether we are truly headed in a fiscally sustainable position.

The previous Assembly recognized that the GNWT's financial situation was unsustainable with not enough money coming in to pay off growing expenses and debt. And since then, we have only increased our debt, Mr. Speaker.

We entered this Assembly to find out that there was not a lot left over for the priorities of the people we each serve, and I am concerned about the fiscal position we will leave for the next Assembly. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Member for Kam Lake. Members' statements. Returns to oral questions. Recognition of visitors in the gallery. Member for Nahendeh.

### Recognition of Visitors in the Gallery

**HON. SHANE THOMPSON:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. This is probably a Member's statement, and I apologize to my colleagues here today.

I'm very fortunate, thanks to COVID and the regulations changing, my family, my daughter from Calgary, Nancy, and my two grandsons, Jacob and

Brady, came in last night so we went to Bullocks and did the traditional food there. As well as my daughter Jacqueline, her husband Brendan, my grandson Ezerah that's looking through the window there, really -- who's been really, really great. And Brett, my newest grandson is in the back there. As well as my baby -- my personal baby, and that's Steven there. So thank you very much for coming here. I greatly appreciate you being here and spending the weekend with me. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Member for Nahendeh. Recognition of visitors in the gallery. Member for Inuvik Boot Lake.

**HON. DIANE ARCHIE:** Quyananni. I'd like to recognize my deputy minister, Steve Loutitt, who is watching here with us today, as well as his daughter Ellie Loutitt. Thank you for being here with us today and good luck in the Arctic Winter Games, Ellie.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Member for Inuvik Boot Lake. Recognition of visitors in the gallery. Member for Sahtu.

**HON. PAULIE CHINNA:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to recognize Ms. Janelle and Sara Morris. I had the opportunity of being interviewed by Sara, who is a grade 10 student at St. Patrick's High School, very innovative ideas looking and working towards homelessness. It's really nice to see our younger people come forward and also express their interest. And it's a conversation that I'm looking forward to in the coming months. And also hopefully that she'd be working with us during the summer. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Member for Sahtu. Recognition of visitors in the gallery. Member for Great Slave.

**MS. NOKLEBY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm also going to rise to recognize Sara Morris and her mom Jeanette. So I just wanted to say thank you to both of them for their hard work. As I mentioned in my statement, Jeanette has done a lot of work with the YWCA over the years and it's clear that that work has led to her daughter carrying on that for our community. So I'm very grateful to have them here and grateful for the work both of them have done. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Member for Great Slave. Recognition of visitors in the gallery. Member for Yellowknife South.

**HON. CAROLINE WAWZONEK:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I thought the Minister of Infrastructure would leave me one of my constituents but I have the pleasure of noticing that Ellie and Steve Loutitt, who are Yellowknife South residents, are here in the House. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Member for Yellowknife South. Recognition of visitors in the gallery. Member for Kam Lake.

**MS. CLEVELAND:** Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. My apologies, everyone. I added my name to the list before seeing everybody else already recognized them.

I'd like to recognize both Ellie Loutitt and Sara Morris, who I've had the pleasure of knowing for most of their lives. I think that our youth have a very powerful voice, both in this House and in our communities, so it's great to see youth participating here today. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Member for Kam Lake. Recognition of visitors in the gallery.

Welcome, everyone. If we have missed anyone in the gallery today, welcome to the Chamber and I hope you enjoy the proceedings. It's always nice to have an audience here, especially family and friends of our Members. Mahsi.

Acknowledgements. Oral questions. Member for Frame Lake.

### Oral Questions

#### QUESTION 980-19(2): CANADA-NORTHWEST TERRITORIES CHILDCARE AGREEMENT

**MR. O'REILLY:** Merci, Monsieur le President. My questions are for the Minister of Education, Culture and Employment regarding the new Canada-NWT Childcare Agreement.

Since the agreement was signed in December, the clock is ticking on getting this money into parents' hands through the providers, as I understand. How is the Minister going to flow this money now without creating a large burden on the licensed childcare providers? Mahsi, Mr. Speaker.

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

**HON. R.J. SIMPSON:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. So the early learning and childcare system in the territory is less a system and more of a group of partnerships, people working together. The GNWT does not provide early learning and childcare services but it supports those providers. And the way that this new money is going to flow back to parents is similar to what we did in the summer of 2020 with the funding for COVID when we reduced childcare fees.

So those licensed centres, childcare centres, that want to opt in to this program will receive a childcare

fee reduction subsidy. They will then flow that money back to parents. And to ensure that they are supported, we are going to be providing those childcare providers with some administrative funds to help support them in those efforts because we understand it will be a lot of work, and so we're supporting them financially to do that work. Thank you.

**MR. O'REILLY:** Merci, Monsieur le President. I want to thank the Minister for that, and I guess the devil will be in the details.

But my second question is straightforward. Can the Minister tell us whether and how much of the new funding under this agreement is available for infrastructure to create new childcare spaces? Mahsi, Mr. Speaker.

**HON. R.J. SIMPSON:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. So as the Member's aware, we have our own infrastructure fund for early learning and childcare. That's a million a year.

We have the two agreements with Canada. We have a bilateral agreement as well as the Canada-wide agreement, and each of those contain just over a hundred thousand dollars for infrastructure. In addition to our own programming, we have almost \$300,000 in health and safety funding which can be used for upgrades to ensure that centres are compliant with the requirements of the fire marshal. In our bilateral agreement, there's also around half a million for additional grants to support the purchase of supplies that are needed to operate the childcare centre.

So throughout our two agreements, as well as our own funding, we do provide supports for infrastructure, and we've also looked at all of our programs and are determining if there's a need to have more infrastructure funding and how we might be able to repurpose some of the current funding that we have towards that given that we now have a large influx of money from the federal government. Thank you.

**MR. O'REILLY:** Merci, Monsieur le President. I want to thank the Minister for that. I'm always happy to support more funding on the capital side for infrastructure. Even if he wants to bring forward a SUP, I'm happy to support that. As I said, we have an agreement and that's a welcomed thing, but I'm still worried about when these benefits are going to start to flow. I expect smaller communities, especially the 11 without licensed child cares, will not see any benefits under this new agreement for years.

Can the Minister tell us what the plan is for the communities without licensed childcare spaces and how he will make sure there's an equitable approach

across the Northwest Territories? Mahsi, Mr. Speaker.

**HON. R.J. SIMPSON:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. And since we began the Early Learning and Childcare Infrastructure Fund, we prioritized applications from small communities. It's important to note that not all small communities need childcare facilities. In some communities, there's no children under the age of five. And in some communities, there's so few children that they would prefer to be with family. So I don't think we're ever going to have a scenario in the territory where every single community has a licensed childcare centre. There's going to be different options in different communities. But we are supporting -- we are prioritizing those small communities that don't have childcare and we're going to work with the Indigenous governments and NGOs who might be interested in operating childcare facilities. And I have to note that Indigenous governments also have a separate stream of funding from the federal government that they can access to help support the development of childcare facilities. And so we all need to work together and if there is not an organization in a region who's interested in opening a childcare centre, we're more than happy to provide any support we can through our early learning and childcare consultants that we have in all the regions and who do a great job. And they are our boots on the ground. And I recommend that anyone who has an interest in opening a childcare centre, contact them. Thank you.

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

**MR. O'REILLY:** Merci, Monsieur le President. I was getting worried there it was going to be a Minister's statement there. But this agreement promises great things for the next five years but it's not clear how sustainable childcare will be over the longer term.

Can the Minister tell us what the plans are to ensure there's sustainable universal and affordable childcare across the NWT after this five-year agreement ends? Mahsi, Mr. Speaker.

**HON. R.J. SIMPSON:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and I apologize for my long answers. It's an exciting topic, and if the Member doesn't want long answers he shouldn't ask such exciting questions.

We will continue to advocate for longer term funding. We always do that. The federal government has also created an Early Learning and Childcare Secretariat so they really are putting the infrastructure around this system to help ensure that it is stable. And I suspect there's also some legislation in the works from the federal government to ensure that this funding lives on past the current government. Thank you.

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

QUESTION 981-19(2):  
YOUTH FUNDING GAPS

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

We often speak in this room about the many silos within the GNWT and given that there are several supports, several departments that fund programs and supports for youth such as Health and Social Services, ECE, Housing, what is the Minister doing, as the Minister responsible for Youth, to work with his colleagues to ensure that youth aren't falling into the gaps of the GNWT funding? Thank you.

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

**HON. SHANE THOMPSON:** Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker, and I thank the Member for the question. I'm going to try to keep it succinct because this is a very important topic for myself. As well you are well aware, you see my grandchildren in this room here.

So Mr. Speaker, we are having conversations with our colleagues from ECE, Health, Justice, Housing as well. You know, these are conversations we have. We have Cabinet -- a committee of Cabinet. We have those conversations. But we also have the conversation at the department level on how we can work together with our other departments and NGOs out there. So it is very important, and we look to see how we can enhance our existing funding sources to help the youth move forward or start the program. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MS. NOKLEBY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. And actually it couldn't be more timely that the Minister's family is all here while I speak about youth, and I do know that there is a focus of his on that area.

And speaking of which, when we focus on youth and we divert them from a life of poverty, we will actually end up saving ourselves a lot of money in the long run. So can the Minister speak to why the GNWT is not funding Home Base's youth centre given that they are the only organization in the Northwest Territories that is solely supporting youth. Thank you.

**HON. SHANE THOMPSON:** Thank you. For that detail, I'll have to get back to the Member on it. But my understanding is it's an application-based through our youth centres. They can put their applications in and then it's allocated accordingly. But in regards to Home Base, I will have to find out exactly why that funding hasn't been available. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MS. NOKLEBY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. And yeah, that does speak to a lot of what we talk about around making our NGOs and non-profits jump through hoops in order to get our funding versus the core funding that I know my colleagues often push for. So, yeah, more of a comment on that.

I guess my next question is does the Minister commit to joining me and working with me to do a tour of Home Base and have those conversations with the executive director there? It's my feeling that by getting feedback from the stakeholders, we can better inform our processes going forward. Thank you.

**HON. SHANE THOMPSON:** Try to prolong the answer. Yes.

**MS. NOKLEBY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I should have asked a different question then if I was going to get a nice short yes. I will hope to see the Minister supporting increased funding for our NGO stabilization fund that regular Members would like to see.

My last question is given the size of the Minister's family, does he commit to buying them all toques from Raise the Roof in order to help them support their fundraising? Thank you.

**HON. SHANE THOMPSON:** The entire family, I would be poor; I'd have to run for election next year. But I'm more than willing to sit down and talk to the Member and see if I can find toques for the five grandchildren that are here with me today. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

QUESTION 982-19(2):  
FORT SMITH TINY HOMES PILOT PROJECT

**MS. MARTSELOS:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, can the Minister of Housing tell us if she received and has reviewed the letter from the Salt River First Nation dated January the 21st, 2022, regarding the money for the homelessness tiny homes pilot project in Fort Smith. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**HON. PAULIE CHINNA:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and thank you to the Member. The letter was received but the details in the letter had specifically only wanted to work with the Members of Salt River. The Housing Corporation funds funding and projects for everybody in the Northwest Territories. So we brought that back, and we are working with the details that are provided within that letter.

In 2018-2019, we did provide funding to Salt River as well too of \$800,000. In the past year, we have also negotiated contracts as well with the Indigenous groups in the Member's riding as well and really emphasizing on training and apprenticeships and also trying to keep the money for these builds local and for an opportunity for local business to -- that we would be able to work and invest with them as well. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MS. MARTSELOS:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I really would appreciate clarity on my answers; I get confused by the answers.

Can the Minister explain why she has not yet responded to me or to the Salt River First Nation about the tiny home pilot project they are proposing? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**HON. PAULIE CHINNA:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I was trying to provide further information on the investment that we have had in Fort Smith. And looking at the letter that we did receive, the funding and the proposal was for membership. The Housing Corporation provides funding for everybody throughout the Northwest Territories. We don't categorize what our programs would be delivering and the people that we would be serving. We need to include everybody within that proposal. But we're taking it back, we're looking at it, and seeing what we can come up with to work with the Salt River First Nation. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MS. MARTSELOS:** Mr. Speaker, can the Minister tell us if she supports the pilot project idea to build tiny homes, that will be a solution to homelessness in Fort Smith, with the Salt River First Nation? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**HON. PAULIE CHINNA:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The Housing Corporation is always looking for innovative ideas as well too, but the other thing that I'm very cautious of is that we need to provide funding and supports to everybody throughout the Northwest Territories. And homelessness is a huge issue throughout the territory.

Just looking at the notes that I do have, we did look at the tiny homes throughout the territory and that it was brought to us, and looking at constructing them was between 300 and 500,000 each for the territory. But if we're looking at community investment in a small investment project, and if we're able to deliver them at a lower cost, I would need to bring that back to my department. But just to inform the Member, we are trying to calculate those numbers and come up with something that is fair for the Member's riding. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**MS. MARTSELOS:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, will the Minister commit to provide funding to the tiny home pilot project by the Salt River First Nation? If not, can the Minister explain her position. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**HON. PAULIE CHINNA:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. And, you know, we know as a government as well too that funding is quite crucial right now with the housing portfolio as well. But we are trying to be very innovative on what it is that we can address and looking at these proposals coming forward and how we can further work with the Indigenous groups.

One of the things that I've asked the department is looking at the co-investment fund and the federal funding that is available to the Indigenous groups and how can we partner and trying to look at those costs.

I do support the project that, you know, we could support this in several different ways as well too, and looking at the designs that we actually do have, what it is that we've provided so far, the time that we had taken into considering building tiny homes throughout the territory as well.

So just to further on that response as well, I do have two housing employees that will be reaching out to Salt River First Nation that now we're able to meet face-to-face. So they should be going into the community in the next few weeks. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

QUESTION 983-19(2):  
NON-PROFIT ORGANIZATION FUNDING

**MR. JOHNSON:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The GNWT provides over \$50 million to non-profits through a variety of contribution agreements. And as I spoke about in my statement, I think many of these have not seen increases in years despite inflationary costs.

My question for the Minister of Finance is can we review all of our various contribution agreements to non-profits and create some sort of policy that the ones that have not seen increases in, you know, sometimes a decade, Mr. Speaker, get an increase? Because at some point I don't believe we can be asking people to provide government services that don't address the increased cost of living. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**HON. CAROLINE WAWZONEK:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Yes, Mr. Speaker, there has been analysis done. The Department of Finance is involved in

doing exactly that and analyzing where the funding goes.

Mr. Speaker, the \$50 million sum includes not only non-profits. That includes education bodies and Indigenous governments, First Nations in the Northwest Territories as well. So there certainly has been a lot of analysis.

In terms of providing increases, it is possible for a department to decide to include an increase on a contribution agreement. It would be department by department. It may well depend on the type of the service that's being provided and is always subject, of course, to having the departmental budget approved here in the House. So in no case we'd be able to have an absolute blanket just as there's no guarantee for any one department or any one Minister that whatever proposal we might have for a budget agreed to by the Members of this Assembly. But in short, Mr. Speaker, those tools do exist. The solution may well be to make sure that they are better used and better understood. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. JOHNSON:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. And I appreciate the department is looking at this. You know, it's obviously quite a complex array of programs across quite a complex number of departments.

One of the things I would also wonder if the department could look into is changing some of these contribution agreements into multiyear block funding perhaps reducing some of the reporting requirements.

I brought up the example of the Bailey House, which has been in operation for decades, has not seen an increase since 2009. I really just don't think at this point we should be considering the fact that this is going to go out for tender or it's not going to continue to operate. I really think there's many examples of long-standing programs that could see, you know, five, ten-year contribution agreements and give them the security that they can plan for the long-term. Is multiyear funding something we can evaluate when reviewing all of this money? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**HON. CAROLINE WAWZONEK:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the idea of multiyear funding comes up year over year in budget dialogues as well so I certainly want to acknowledge that the NGO sector/nonprofit sector have also been good advocates for themselves. That is part of the reason the Department of Finance has been analyzing those third party agreements.

I appreciate the Member's point. There are already multiyear agreements out there. For example, I know I've signed ones with the Status of Women and Native Women's Association. They're always

contingent of course on the funding being approved here but it does provide some certainty when there's a sense that upon approval here that the funding will indeed continue to flow. So as I've said, again I can and will take back the idea of making that process better known and making perhaps a bit more corporate approach from the Department of Finance to my colleagues so that we are all able to make use of that tool. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. JOHNSON:** Yes, thank you, Mr. Speaker. I think what I would like to see out of this is some sort of policy emerge and in that policy, you know, kind of a mechanism to include inflation. And perhaps it's not true inflation; we probably don't have the money for that. But to make sure that it's flagged when a contribution agreement has been in place for years and has never seen any increase, that the applicable department make sure they come forward and gets approval through forced growth or some mechanism. Can we look at a policy mechanism to build inflation into these variety of contribution agreements? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**HON. CAROLINE WAWZONEK:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, this is consensus government and, of course, the Members over on this side don't have a majority. So this is exactly the right time to be having this conversation. It may well be that in the course of the next week or two weeks of sittings that we are at a point where we can have some discussion about how to better structure the budgets that are associated to third party agreements. I appreciate the flexibility that CPI might not be the best tag, that inflation might not be the best tag, it's rather variable at the moment, but there certainly are other ways that we can look at more incremental increases particularly for those contribution agreements that involve government services.

So again, as I've been saying all the way along, this work's already underway, and I'm taking the point that we might need to move that along a little faster. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

QUESTION 984-19(2):  
OIL SANDS MONITORING OVERSIGHT  
COMMITTEE

**MR. O'REILLY:** Merci, Monsieur le President. I want to ask some questions of the Minister of Environment and Natural Resources.

On February 24th in Committee of the Whole, I asked him some questions about GNWT's seat on the oil sands monitoring oversight committee, and I'd like to know from the Minister whether the concerns of the House have been transmitted to the

Government of Alberta over their rejection of a GNWT seat on that committee? Mahsi, Mr. Speaker.

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

**HON. SHANE THOMPSON:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I can't say exactly if it has or not, but I'm pretty sure we've sent them and given that message to the federal government and the Alberta government that these concerns have been raised in the House and have been raised with our Indigenous organizations and governments that we work with. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. O'REILLY:** Merci, Monsieur le President. I want to thank the Minister for that, and I'm happy to send my remarks directly to the Minister in Alberta if that's going to help move this along. But has there been any change in position from the Government of Alberta about a GNWT seat on this committee? Mahsi, Mr. Speaker.

**HON. SHANE THOMPSON:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, we're still waiting for a response from the federal minister but we have not heard back from the Alberta government except for the letter that we had received and they were saying no to both our requests for both the committee and a technical advisory committee. I think that's the other one as well. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. O'REILLY:** Merci, Monsieur le President. I want to thank the Minister for that. You know, I write letters sometimes and sometimes I don't get answers; I don't get answers to emails. Sometimes the best thing to do, Mr. Speaker, is actually pick up the phone and call someone.

So I'm asking the Minister if he would be willing to be pick up the phone and call our federal minister of Environment and Climate Change Canada and have a personal discussion with the federal minister on this matter? Mahsi, Mr. Speaker.

**HON. SHANE THOMPSON:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, that is in the works. We are working on -- we're trying to wait for that response but we are in the process of looking at phoning not just the federal minister but the Alberta Minister as well to have those frank conversations. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**MR. O'REILLY:** Merci, Monsieur le President. I want to thank the Minister for that. I guess I -- you know, we don't seem to be making a lot of progress on this file. So I'm wondering how is the Minister working with Indigenous governments to try to get them on board as well to put pressure on these two orders of government to finally pay some attention to us and

make sure that we're well represented in this committee and the whole issue of the development of regulations for the discharge of tar sands? So how's the Minister working with Indigenous governments on this file? Mahsi, Mr. Speaker.

**HON. SHANE THOMPSON:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and I appreciate the question from the Member.

Previously we had a face-to-face meeting. Unfortunately, due to COVID, we were trying to have meetings through the phone but we are planning to have our next meeting. We're in the planning process. With the restrictions being released or reduced by the chief public health officer, we are in the process of trying to have a face-to-face meeting with our Indigenous governments. I can guarantee you that our Indigenous organizations and governments have been very upfront and have been bringing forth their concerns just not to myself but I believe to the federal government as well as the Alberta government, but also in the press. They've been bringing forth their concerns and I appreciate the work that they're trying to do to help us resolve this very difficult issue. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

QUESTION 985-19(2):  
LACK OF HOUSING AND POVERTY RELATED  
TO APPREHENSION OF CHILDREN

**MS. CLEVELAND:** Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my questions today are for the Minister of the Housing Corporation.

Mr. Speaker, roughly 30 percent of children in the child welfare system were apprehended due to exposure to domestic violence. But in many of our communities, the shortage of housing means a parent cannot move to a new home. Because of the community residency policy, it also means that a family or a parent cannot put their name on a waitlist of another community. This jeopardizes the safety of families and risks continuing cycles of apprehension.

So my question for the Minister is does the Minister agree that we must prohibit the apprehension of children on the basis of poverty and access to housing? Thank you.

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

**HON. PAULIE CHINNA:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. And thank you to the Member as well too because she has brought this up quite a number of times. And looking at what we do have, the low income housing program throughout the Northwest Territories and

looking at, you know, the apprehension of children as well and looking at the movement and, you know, domestic violence and, you know, how are we going to be working with the -- with the individuals, I have to work in conjunction with my colleague with the -- for the Minister of Health as well too to address these concerns. But also, Mr. Speaker, we have a limited amount of housing units at the ground level. And I'm not wanting to create or look at what it is that we can -- how we can house people at the ground level. I'm trying to work with the department and changing and acknowledging those barriers that we currently do have.

We do have a massive policy review that is going to be coming into effect in the next few months, and hopefully we're able to really look at those documents and being able to pass that in the lifetime of this government. Those policies will be reviewed as well by the Indigenous groups as well. And there's a number of issues that is brought up at that table that is concerning housing as well.

But I want to make it very clear that when it comes to domestic violence that I'm not -- I'm not looking at trying to create more barriers when we're looking at families fleeing from other communities and wanting to be moved into another community. We've got to also think about the waitlists that are there too and those circumstances in each of those communities, they vary in every one of them. But we do have a limited amount of housing units, and we do have a significant waitlist.

I am trying -- I am working with the federal government to address the significant housing need and crisis that we do have in the Northwest Territories. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MS. CLEVELAND:** Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my question was does the Minister agree that we must prohibit the apprehension of children on the basis of poverty and access to housing? Thank you.

**HON. PAULIE CHINNA:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I don't agree with that as well but I don't see where that is -- where we can highlight that within the way that we look at our public housing waitlist and the way that we look at our applications coming forward. I haven't heard of any concerns like that as of today. But I would like to work with the Member should she have a constituent that may be needing those -- needing that addressed in what specific community that she's speaking of. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Minister. I'd just like to remind Members to please take your time here. Our interpreters are having difficulty keeping up so keep that in mind. Member for Kam Lake.

**MS. CLEVELAND:** My apologies, Mr. Speaker. My apologies to the interpreters. I do speed up when I get excited.

Mr. Speaker, I am bothered by the Minister's response of not agreeing with that one. And later this session, we -- well, social development hopes to table a response that shows our social development's feelings on that one.

But I guess my next question then for the Minister is does Minister agree, as the Minister responsible for the Housing Corporation, that Indigenous people must have access to safe housing? Thank you.

**HON. PAULIE CHINNA:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Absolutely. We are going through a whole renewal strategy within the corporation. We are reviewing all of our policies. I take into deep consideration that, you know, we are moving into a social programming department. We are not just only looking at housing people throughout the Northwest Territories.

We have a number of issues why people are under housed; why are they overcrowded. People returning back to communities. We don't have domestic violence programming in each of our communities. We have a lot of people moving around. We've got students that are in and out of the communities. We have incarcerated people that are wanting to come back to their communities as well. And within the corporation, we are working very hard and very strategically on trying to address all of those issues.

I hear the Member as well too when we're looking at women and children as well, and I don't -- I don't believe that any applicant should be penalized whether their children are being apprehended and they're not living with the parent at that time. I think this is a change that we are making within the corporation. We are moving into social programming. And it's more than just providing housing.

And yes, I do support the Indigenous housing in the communities. The majority of our clients are Indigenous. 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 reason I asked the first two questions of the Minister was because those are directly from the MMIWG Calls for justice and the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous People. And I think if this government is truly serious about implementing those, then we need to make sure that our policies don't stand against those.

My next question for the Minister is the Minister told me after the first question that the policies are being

reviewed by Indigenous groups. The Minister said yesterday to me that LHOs decide their own policies. And so I'm wondering, then, if the Minister is talking to Indigenous groups about reviewing these policies; should I be talking to Indigenous groups and not the Minister of Housing? Thank you.

**HON. PAULIE CHINNA:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. And I want to be very clear that I've been challenged as well too to be making sure that we do include the Indigenous groups, and they have provided a lot of feedback and a lot of advocacy as to how we deliver the housing program. We've been high -- we've been very much criticized at the ground level for not making drastic improvements to how we deliver housing. And, you know, we have created a Council of Leaders Working Group, and this is important to the Housing Corporation to making sure that we have that direct partnership, and we are making changes to the policies that we are working with today. And also, I want to recognize the local housing authorities and the service contracts that they provide as well too. We are going through a huge overhaul throughout the Housing Corporation. And I know that a lot of concerns have been brought up, and we are trying to work with them and we are trying to address them. But, you know, we will be following up with committee as well too once we are -- we do receive feedback from the Indigenous groups. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

QUESTION 986-19(2):  
PUBLIC SERVICE POSITION GROWTH

**MS. WEYALLON-ARMSTRONG:** Thank you. It's a question for the Minister of Finance.

Can the Minister explain why the Government of the Northwest Territories has added 2,700 position to the public service while our population has only increased by 5,000 people? Thank you.

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

**HON. CAROLINE WAWZONEK:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I've heard quite a number of numbers and dates coming out of the Member's statement earlier.

I can speak to, Mr. Speaker, the 2022-2023 Main estimates which, for the public service, has a net five people being added. If I include all the public agencies and various special purpose funds, the surface rights board, etcetera, at that point, we have over 6,000 -- 6,200 -- 6,249 public servants. There is a total net increase of 48 this year, Mr. Speaker. So I can certainly go back and look at some of the evolutionary history over the last few years but for

this year, as I've said, the departments here are a net increase of five. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MS. WEYALLON-ARMSTRONG:** Thank you. Can the Minister explain why health, education, and housing outcomes in many small NWT communities have gotten worse while the public service has added 2,700 positions? Thank you.

**HON. CAROLINE WAWZONEK:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, we're always a little hesitant to speak not only on behalf of other departments but on behalf of prior Assembly's so it's going to be difficult for me to say what did or did not happen over the last 20 some years of a government.

Mr. Speaker, I can say that at this point, one of the reasons that we are so focused on -- as some have said, you know, the concerns around they're not being more cuts despite the fiscal situation is because this Assembly has prioritized social wellness; it has prioritized health indicators; it has prioritized education outcomes, and all of our departments need all of their resources to be able to achieve the goals that we've set for ourselves in all of those areas. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MS. WEYALLON-ARMSTRONG:** Thank you. Can the Minister tell us where the 2,700 positions are located and which department they work for? Thank you.

**HON. CAROLINE WAWZONEK:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I think the Member and I are going to have to get our calculators out together. As I've said, I have the main estimates open in front of me. The 2022-2023 Main estimates show 3,900 staff of the departments, or a total of 6,249 public servants including all of the public agencies. So I'm certainly happy to look at what numbers or mathematics are being used and see if we can't figure out a solution. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**MS. WEYALLON-ARMSTRONG:** Thank you for the answer. And, yes, I'm looking forward to the meetings then.

The Minister often speaks about our difficult financial positions, and this is what I'm going to use again: 2,700 positions from the time when Nunavut and GNWT split. 2,700 positions must cost GNWT a lot of money each year. So does the Minister have a plan to control position growth? Thank you.

**HON. CAROLINE WAWZONEK:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, one thing that we have that I've overseen in the last couple of years, and I'm very much looking forward to seeing the conclusion of, is a human resources plan that is GNWT-wide. It might come as a surprise to some, as it did to me, that the

GNWT did not have a GNWT government-wide human resources plan but work is well underway to, in fact, do exactly that. That allows some corporate planning so that we are best achieving the goals of the Assembly's as they come forward but doing so in a way that allows for leadership development, effective recruitment and retention, career pathing, succession planning, and in that sense, Mr. Speaker, we are adding positions where we need them, adding them in a responsible way, and ensuring that we do that to the best use of the people of the Northwest Territories who are being recruited in, trained in, and then able to deliver as public servants. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

QUESTION 987-19(2):  
ARCTIC WINTER GAMES

**MR. BONNETROUGE:** Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. One of the Members mentioned the carnival yesterday and that usually triggers an event within all of us, and everybody gets excited about it. I think the Member got so excited he left yesterday. So I'm just using that as an example there for -- and I've heard about carnivals yesterday and today another event: The Arctic Winter Games. And that triggers a lot of excitement for many of the young people and especially -- well, all ages in fact about sports in the Northwest Territories and getting together of all the different territories and regions to compete, whether it be -- you know, there's dog racing, skiing, probably curling. But many, for the small communities could be like snowshoeing and a lot of different traditional games and stuff like this.

I'm wondering if the Minister could provide an explanation or the path forward regarding the Arctic Winter Games, since we haven't had it for a while, to the House? Mahsi.

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

**HON. SHANE THOMPSON:** Thank you. The Member's right; the games were cancelled last year because of COVID. But my understanding is the games are going to Fort McMurray and the games will be in January of next year. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. BONNETROUGE:** Mahsi, Mr. Speaker, and mahsi to the Minister. So I think last year it was cancelled for the Whitehorse one. So did Whitehorse get written off, or what was the deal here to move to Fort McMurray? Mahsi.

**HON. SHANE THOMPSON:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Nobody gets written off. There's a process.

So the international committee, they decided that, for whatever reason, it's going to be in Fort McMurray but I think it was that's what the cycle was who was supposed to be up. But there is a cycle, and it's I believe Yukon, northern Alberta, Nunavut, the NWT, and Greenland for part of it. We had Russia on there but that has been changed. They have now been removed from the cycle presently. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. BONNETROUGE:** Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. The Minister answered one of my last questions, which I was leading up to, was the elimination of the Russian delegation.

I'm wondering if the Minister can direct his staff, because there's a big lull in our small communities and there's not enough expertise, I should say, in the small communities related to sports training, and perhaps maybe we need to put more funding towards sports training so we get better representative and at the elite level anyway for our Arctic Winter Games participants and whether we can start, be proactive and start the training in all the areas of sports, especially to help the small communities too but to include everyone. Mahsi.

**HON. SHANE THOMPSON:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, as for the responsibility to get our athletes prepared, that's the coaches at the local level. We do have funding programs there. There's been some challenges with the teams and you've seen it in the press. We do have a potential solution. We haven't taken it to committee yet and I want to make sure I take it to committee so that they can get the -- government operations, so they can see what's going on, what we're proposing. Then we will make it public. But right now, we were working with our communities. There's regional organizations called the Mackenzie Recreation Association in the Beaufort Delta. Sahtu Recreation Association as well. They meet, the communities meet, they come up with a plan when they're going to do events. There's also funding available through various Municipal and Community Affairs programs, and there's sport and rec councils, the Mackenzie rec and the BDSARA. There's funding there available that communities can access it. And we've worked on with aboriginal circle as well, building our athletes up. 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. Yes, the department has the funding. The department can get the expertise to help the small communities, especially with coaching. If they can provide the funding so that we can hire expert coaching to help our athletes become elite, you know, athletes, and it takes a fair level of training do and this would really help a lot of

our youths since, you know, post-COVID, you know, with their mental health also. And I really think it's a great idea to really look at this and advance it and then also to think about the dogs, the dog sled racing to be part of the Arctic Winter Games because we do have many events in the NWT, a circuit with dog racing that happens within the Northwest Territories and in northern Alberta and different places. I'm wondering if the Minister could comment on that, mahsi.

**HON. SHANE THOMPSON:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, there's a couple of questions there and I apologize to the Member if I missed the -- miss an answer on -- or some of the questions there.

In regard to get out there and hire specialists and that, we have money available to train coaches. We work with -- there's programs through Sport North. There's the NCCP program. So we try to get out there. We try to get -- that's the -- sorry, National Coaching Certificate Program. I apologize for using acronyms there, Mr. Speaker.

So there is programs out there to help train our local people. We do have the ability to bring people in, various organizations, work with communities to bring people in there.

In regards to dog mushing, my understanding it was still in the Arctic Winter Games and I apologize if it's changed, but my understanding it is unless it's outside Canada. So it's available when northern Alberta, and it's very much youth oriented. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

QUESTION 988-19(2):  
PUBLIC SERVICE POSITION  
DECENTRALIZATION

**MS. WEYALLON-ARMSTRONG:** Thank you. This is to the Minister of Finance.

Can the Minister commit to establishing a decentralization initiative within the Department of Finance to review how and where the Government of the Northwest Territories can put positions into small communities? We need to look at job descriptions and update them to ensure people are used fully and efficiently. Thank you.

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

**HON. CAROLINE WAWZONEK:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, one might recall not that long ago, although certainly several Assembly's ago, when human resources was separate from the Department of Finance. There's been a number of

different times over history where different efforts have been made. There is nothing in our schedule or plans right now or in our priorities of this government for a new restructuring of human resources or formal decentralization.

What I can say, Mr. Speaker, is two things:

Firstly, we have the remote work policy now whereby positions that are located in headquarters or in a regional centre could be occupied by someone who lives in a smaller community or outside of the headquarters. So there is that now as an option.

But secondly, Mr. Speaker, with respect to the job descriptions specifically, that is one of the action items under the Indigenous Recruitment and Retention Framework, and it's one of the first things we will be doing to ensure that we are in fact matching up what the actual needs of the position are so that there's hopefully more people who are eligible and qualified to achieve those roles and so we can make use of the tools like the IGCP. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MS. WEYALLON-ARMSTRONG:** Thank you. Yes, I know that at one time lot of those positions were in the small communities. Now that they took it back, we know that it's going to be -- it's going to take a political will to have most of -- see those jobs transferred back to the small communities.

So can the Minister commit to working with the Housing Corporation or other partners to ensure housing stock is available in the smaller community to support decentralizations and support economic growth outside of the capital city? Thank you.

**HON. CAROLINE WAWZONEK:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I hope I'm not going to far in saying I think this Cabinet does actually work generally quite well together, and certainly when initiatives come forward through, whether Cabinet, Financial Management Board, the kinds of conversations and issues of looking at what impacts there are between one initiative and another, is exactly something that we do all do as a group here.

So with respect to being responsible for the public service, being responsible for, you know, continuing to have the recruitment and retention element, we are certainly going to want to make sure that any new staff have somewhere safe to live. So I can certainly commit to continuing that and try to update Members as we go through those types of processes. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

QUESTION 989-19(2):  
FISCAL RESPONSIBILITY POLICY

**MS. CLEVELAND:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my questions are for the Minister of Finance.

Mr. Speaker, will the Minister of Finance commit to undertaking a review of the fiscal responsibility policy to ensure that it is meeting the intention of guiding the GNWT into a financially sustainable position? Thank you.

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

**HON. CAROLINE WAWZONEK:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. And, Mr. Speaker, this is an issue or topic that has come up before. Thank you, and I -- to the Members, and I am happy to say that I'd be -- that I do intend to do a review of the fiscal responsibility policy. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MS. CLEVELAND:** Mr. Speaker, I prefer a three-letter word known as "yes". But thank you, I'll take it.

Mr. Speaker, can the Minister explain the plan to increase the cushion in our finances between total borrowing and our total borrowing debt limit? Thank you.

**HON. CAROLINE WAWZONEK:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. So can I explain the plan to increase the cushion? So Mr. Speaker, let me just take a step back if I might perhaps and I am mindful of time, mindful of your admonition around the length of answers, but this is really something that's going to -- you know, the big part of what the Department of Finance does, the borrowing plan that we have, and the main estimates that are before you. So I look forward to continuing the conversation in the Committee of the Whole with Finance next week.

Mr. Speaker, right now when we have -- we do have borrowing room still for this year and next year and even going into the future. Obviously as our surpluses go down and the needs for cash increase, the room will continue to get smaller and narrower. But a lot -- there's a lot of things that are underway, particularly on the front of MTS, Health and Social Services, and those are two areas where we've identified the risk. So there's the health sustainability work that's happening to help and try alleviate those pressures which are increasing our short-term debt, and I know that there's work happening over at MTS to look at their operating model which is also an area where we see some risk which is increasing our long-term debt.

So again, Mr. Speaker, I'm being mindful of time but there's -- those are just two of the things that are happening. There are also things happening within the structure of budget to make sure that we've provided ourselves some conservative places where we have cushion so that we aren't increasing

short-term debt unnecessarily. And I think, Mr. Speaker, I might stop at that and see what else I have to answer in a few moments. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MS. CLEVELAND:** Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, in my Member's statement I alluded to the GNWT cannot be the economy of the NWT, and our infrastructure and investments really drive the NWT economy. And so can the Minister explain how the GNWT will afford its major infrastructure projects without increasing our debt limit? Thank you.

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

**HON. CAROLINE WAWZONEK:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. This is another fun one, Mr. Speaker, that I'd like to spend a lot more time on but let me just be very brief about it for now.

Mr. Speaker, the three -- there's sort of three major projects that of course were all agreed to as being priorities for this Assembly. There's certainly a lot of other capital projects, and we've had two very large capital budgets in the last couple of cycles. So what I would suggest, Mr. Speaker, is at this point in time we do have sufficient financial capacity, planned capacity in our budgets to achieve the mandate priority of advancing those projects.

In terms of where they're going to go into the future, a lot there depends on who our partners are, the financial structure of those projects, and the timing of each. So that is exactly the work we're doing right now, Mr. Speaker, is to determine who the partners might be, who equity partners might be, what the state of the federal government's involvement might be, the Canada Infrastructure Investment Bank. There's a number of ways in which we can structure these projects and structure the investments in them that would not necessarily require 100 percent dollars from the GNWT, indeed almost certainly would not, and would not necessarily need to draw from the budget, from the borrowing limit, or have a negative impact on it. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**MS. CLEVELAND:** Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. And I appreciate the Minister answering these questions. And I know that they're not all easy questions to answer in a very narrow window of time. And this next one is not going to be any easier, but I think they're important conversations to have.

Mr. Speaker, can the Minister explain how the operating surplus is projected to change over the next five years here in the NWT? Thank you.

**HON. CAROLINE WAWZONEK:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I promise not to speak for four minutes and 47 seconds.

The changes in operating surpluses, so, Mr. Speaker, the current projections, and of course projections are just that, even over the course of one year, and as we've seen in the last two years, projections can be impacted quite significantly.

But for this coming year, our operating surplus is projected to be at around \$113 million. Next year, it goes up 166, and then down again to 132, and over time it is expected that those surpluses will get smaller and smaller. But, Mr. Speaker, that also, as I've said, does depend on what's happening with our expenses and what might happen with revenues. So those things can change quite a bit. That said, it's obviously a number that we monitor fairly closely and that we do provide updates through the year and at various sittings of this House so that we can continue to update what our forecasts might be.

Operating surplus, of course is important because that helps determine the amount that we have available under the fiscal responsibility policy to meet that policy to invest in our capital projects and anything that we have extra on top of the 50 percent we actually then are investing in the infrastructure so that we aren't adding to our debt load. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

#### QUESTION 990-19(2): STUDENT FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE

**MS. SEMMLER:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, yesterday when we were in Committee of the Whole, my colleague from Frame Lake was questioning the Minister of Education in regards to SFA. So I just want to add on to some of those questions that I have for the Minister.

You know, with the pandemic we made exceptions for students and their SFA. I know I haven't been in school for a long, long, long time and required SFA. But one of the things that I do wish that the Minister will go back and reconsider is during the COVID pandemic, whether or not there has been mental health or medical issues or whatever issues that caused the student to lose their semester or drop out for whatever reason, that they do not lose their years that they would normally get. I know, like, for SFA, you know, for basic rent, supplementary grant, you get so much funded for school so you could at least complete a diploma -- a degree. And I just want to make sure that the students that have been affected by this last two years with college and, you know, university, that they do not lose those years so they

continue to can get that, whether or not -- and I'll ask in the next question about the money. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Member for Inuvik Twin Lakes. Minister responsible for Education, Culture and Employment.

**HON. R.J. SIMPSON:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. So yesterday I believe we were asked to look into how many requests that we received to address issues like the Member is talking about. So we're working on that and in terms of ensuring that people have their full number of semesters and they're not negatively affected by anything that happened during COVID.

I can say that I want -- it didn't -- I didn't finish school in the number of SFA-funded semesters. So I know that there are many factors that can cause someone to go beyond those funded semesters, and I think there are ways that we can adjust our program so that we can account for that. So we are making some changes during this term, and I think that students who perhaps were affected by COVID might benefit from those changes in the years to come and they might be able to reclaim those semesters. Thank you.

**MS. SEMMLER:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I don't know if that was a yes, maybe, or we'll see. But I'm just hoping that -- because a number of our basic rent supplementary, you know, I commend the Minister that, you know, the years of -- the years of time in school, I'm not a lawyer and I know it'll probably take a lot long if I was to go back to school and be a lawyer, so I'm sure it goes beyond. But, you know, a lot of our students -- a lot of the Aurora College students, a lot of our students are just, you know -- especially with getting the basic and supplementary grants and the years that they can qualify for those are Indigenous, and we really want to pursue making sure that our Indigenous are not having any barriers. So if we run out of SFA, that might be a barrier that they don't finish school and then they don't get into the workforce. So, Mr. Speaker, I'm really hoping that he'll look at if not the whole, at least some of our Indigenous applicants that they don't lose any funding due to the last two years. Thank you.

**HON. R.J. SIMPSON:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. So I can't say any more than I said in my last answer so I will leave it at that. Thank you.

**MS. SEMMLER:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. And I look forward to whatever changes are coming and I hope that our students will be happy with those changes.

I also -- you know, I know that a couple of students in the past year have told me that they've gotten letters from credit that they owed money because they didn't pay back SFA when they -- so I'm just

wondering if that's something that the Minister can look into, that our students that are struggling to find jobs, that have dropped out, now owe back SFA for not completing, if they could make sure that they give them some leniency or to reach out to these students to make sure that they're not sent -- let's not get them bad credit before they even get into the workforce. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**HON. R.J. SIMPSON:** Thank you. So I answered this one yesterday as well, and this is beyond the scope of my department. So I can talk to the Minister of Finance and we could have a discussion about this one. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Minister. Final supplementary, Member -- colleagues, our time for oral questions has expired. Written questions. Returns to written questions. Replies to the Commissioner's address. Petitions. Reports of committees on the review of bills. Reports of standing and special committees. Tabling of documents. Minister responsible for Workers' Safety and Compensation Commission.

### Tabling of Documents

TABLED DOCUMENT 585-19(2):  
WORKERS' ADVISOR OFFICE NORTHWEST  
TERRITORIES AND NUNAVUT 2021 ANNUAL  
REPORT

TABLED DOCUMENT 586-19(2):  
WORKERS' SAFETY AND COMPENSATION  
COMMISSION NORTHWEST TERRITORIES AND  
NUNAVUT 2022 CORPORATE PLAN

TABLED DOCUMENT 587-19(2):  
FOLLOW-UP LETTER FOR ORAL QUESTION  
910-19(2): FORT GOOD HOPE SENIORS HOME

**HON. PAULIE CHINNA:** Mr. Speaker, I wish to table the following three documents: Workers' Advisor Office Northwest Territories and Nunavut 2021 Annual Report; Workers' Safety and Compensation Commission Northwest Territories and Nunavut 2022 Corporate Plan; and a Follow-Up Letter for Oral Question 910-19(2): Fort Good Hope Seniors Home. Mahsi, Mr. Speaker.

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

TABLED DOCUMENT 588-19(2):  
LETTER DATED JANUARY 21, 2022, FROM SALT  
RIVER FIRST NATION TO MINISTER  
RESPONSIBLE FOR HOMELESSNESS  
REGARDING MONEY FOR HOMELESSNESS  
PILOT PROJECT

**MR. O'REILLY:** Merci, Monsieur le President. I wish to table a letter dated January 21st, 2022, from Salt River First Nation to the Minister responsible for Homelessness regarding Money for Homelessness Pilot Project. Mahsi, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Member for Frame Lake. Tabling of documents. Notices of motion. Motions. Notices of motion for the first reading of bills. Minister responsible for Infrastructure.

### Notices of Motion for First Reading of Bills

BILL 46:  
AN ACT TO AMEND THE MOTOR VEHICLES  
ACT

**HON. DIANE ARCHIE:** Quyananni. I give notice that on Tuesday, March 8, 2022, I will move that Bill 46: An Act to Amend the Motor Vehicles Act be read for the first time. Quyananni.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Minister. Notices of motion for the first reading of bills. First reading of bills. Second reading of bills. Consideration of Committee of the Whole of bills and other matters: Bill 23, 29, and 38; Minister's Statement 202-19(2); Tabled Document 561, 567, 578, 579-19(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):** I now call Committee of the Whole to order. 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 Justice and Municipal and Community Affairs. Mahsi, Madam Chair.

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

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler):** Thank you, committee. We will break for a short recess.

---SHORT RECESS

**CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler):** I'll call Committee of the Whole back to order. Committee. We've agreed to consider Tabled Document 561-19(2): Main Estimates 2022-2023, and we are finishing up with the Department of Justice. Minister wish bring to witnesses in the House?

**HON. R.J. SIMPSON:** Yes, I do. I would like to bring in Charlene Doolittle, deputy minister, and the director of corporate services.

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

Welcome. Committee, we are continuing on with Justice, and so we were on the section policing services. And Member for Monfwi, before we ended yesterday, was in the middle of her question. So I'll turn it back to you, Member for Monfwi.

**MS. WEYALLON-ARMSTRONG:** Thank you. Yesterday they said that, okay, regarding my region two positions were allocated, and it just -- two positions were allocated but only one legal aid. That, I don't really -- I don't really like it. I don't think it's right what they're doing because what they're doing is that if you create -- if you put in more policing in the community, that's to make more arrests. But we don't have enough people to work with them, like legal aid. We only have one legal aid, and we have -- there's four communities in my region. But from what I heard is that the policing are short-staffed in my region. That's what I heard. And so I just want to ask the Department of Justice, what are they doing to help the community reduce the crime rate?

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

**HON. R.J. SIMPSON:** Thank you. I'd like to ask the deputy minister to answer.

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

**MS. DOOLITTLE:** Mahsi, Madam Chair. Specifically in the Tlicho region, there is a \$330,000 annual investment in community programs. This is broken down by the -- first with the community justice committees, that's \$203,000 annually. And this is renewed multiyear agreements. And then there's the Tlicho government victim services, which is \$127,004 annually.

We also have the Behchoko Friendship Centre which is funded \$245,000 annually for crime prevention. And this is broken down with the men's healing program with the friendship centre. That's \$70,000 annually.

And then the guns and gangs friendship centre is also -- the Guns and Gangs program funds the friendship centre for \$175,000 annually, and that's specific to the region.

Of course, there's broader things that the department does for the whole of the Northwest Territories for justice-led initiatives. Integrated case management was discussed. Wellness court, the community safety officer program in Fort Liard, the SMC

therapeutic community, the domestic violence treatment options court for men, and that is available for -- it's held in Behchoko as well, and people are invited to do the programming in Yellowknife from Behchoko. There's restorative justice community policing plans on reducing crime by addressing NWT systemic issues. Those are some of the things broadly done. Thank you, Madam Chair.

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

**MS. WEYALLON-ARMSTRONG:** Thank you. There's three other communities that don't have friendship centres so we have to keep that in mind. You know, like, there's Whati, Gameti, and Wekweeti that don't have friendship centres. And so, okay, thank you. Thank you for the reply.

Another one too it's -- okay, that's good that they're doing all that because I've been dealing -- there's a lot of concern because when you look at -- when you look at it, it's mostly young boys.

I just want to know if the Department of Justice are doing -- what are they doing in the correction system to help -- to help our young boys that are -- you know, that are there or -- because I'm sure -- I've been getting lots of phone calls, a lot of parents are concerns about their kids. So what they're -- they don't -- I also feel the same, and a lot of other people feel the same, they don't like how the correction system is operating because with the policing and all that, and it's just that it -- they're complaining saying that our future generations, all the correction system or the policing is doing is that locking up our young boys, our future generations, and lot -- I do agree with them. And so what is the Department of Justice or the correction system doing to help these young boys, especially it's mostly young boys. We know that. So what is -- what are they doing to help -- to help at the correctional system when these young -- young people enter the system? Thank you.

**CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler):** Thank you. Member for Monfwi, we discussed the correction service in the last section -- or the section before. This is policing services but maybe I'll just turn it over to the Minister to see within that division -- this department if there's anything to answer. Thank you.

**HON. R.J. SIMPSON:** I guess the RCMP don't have much of a role in the correctional service so, yeah, there's not much I can add in terms of the policing aspect. Thank you.

**CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler):** Thank you. Member for Monfwi, did you have --

**MS. WEYALLON-ARMSTRONG:** Thank you. Okay, there's another one too is that I've been getting lots of phone calls and, you know, especially from parents, and most of the crime that's committed are,

you know, when there's drugs and alcohol involved. So a lot of parents are complaining and especially they have -- they're -- they are frustrated with the drug dealers, and my colleague here mentioned about the drug dealers that we need to do more for the drug dealers as well too, that, you know, we need to have a program for them. So I do agree with that too as well. But a lot of time parents are frustrated or other people are frustrated because on income support day and child tax day, there's lot of -- there's more drugs in the community than alcohol issues. So that's another one too that lot of community members are very concerned about, especially the choice of drug in the community is crack because they are -- you know, they're inexpensive to buy and the high is short-lived, and then -- you know, and it has other effects on the body as well. So I just wanted to know if the Department of Justice are doing more in that area about the working with or -- or working with the school and working with the other community organizations to -- about drug program? Like, at one time there was a DARE, that DARE program, and we haven't seen anything like that for quite a while in any of the regions. Thank you.

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

**HON. R.J. SIMPSON:** Thank you. Perhaps I can just get the deputy minister to answer. Thanks.

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

**MS. DOOLITTLE:** Mahsi, Madam Chair. So there is -- the GNWT does have a problematic substance use committee. It's led by the chief public health officer but the Department of Justice co-chairs this group, and they meet bimonthly. So they -- you know, they focus on drugs but alcohol as well, which is largely problematic in the Northwest Territories. We do have crime reduction strategies, mentioned early Guns and Gangs, the community safety officer pilot in Fort Liard and the men's healing program. We also are aware and the -- I can say that the RCMP is aware that -- they're familiar with the increase in calls in the community of Behchoko, and they are meeting with the leadership to address this, not only short-term goals but long term as well. And I would say that half of these calls or their calls are social disorder calls. So it'll require a broader approach than just the Department of Justice and the RCMP and all of our departments and partners and stakeholders. So that's something we can certainly continue looking into. Mahsi, Madam Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler):** Thank you. Are there any further questions from Members under the policing services? Oh, Member for Frame Lake.

**MR. O'REILLY:** Thanks, Madam Chair. I know that there were a number of housing units that GNWT

was -- the Housing Corporation was building for the RCMP. How does that factor in to any of the budget items here, if at all? Thanks, Madam Chair.

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

**HON. R.J. SIMPSON:** Thank you. I believe there's a -- it's about an \$800,000 increase, and that is reflective of the increased costs of housing. Yeah, \$809,000. Thank you.

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

**MR. O'REILLY:** Thanks. So that money is paid then by the Department of Justice to the Housing Corporation; is that how it works? Thanks, Madam Chair.

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

**HON. R.J. SIMPSON:** Thank you. So that is the -- the Department of Justice's 70 percent contribution to the housing budget and technically I'm not sure if it goes to Housing or if it goes to the RCMP then to housing. But I can ask Mr. Bancroft for some explanation. Thank you.

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

**MR. BANCROFT:** Thank you, Madam Chair. The \$809,000 was representative of the 70 percent under the TPSA agreement of the Department of Justice's share of that cost. It is paid through the TPSA to the RCMP through Public Safety Canada. And then the revenues would be recognized by the Housing Corporation's side. Thank you, Madam Chair.

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

**MR. O'REILLY:** Okay, thanks, Madam Chair. Well, that's a creative way to transfer money from Justice to Housing. I appreciate that. Yeah, I think that's all I've got. Thanks, Madam Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler):** Thank you, Member. All right. Are there any further questions to policing services from Members?

Seeing no further questions, please turn to page 296. Justice, policing service, operations expenditure summary, 2022-2023 Main Estimates, \$50,012,000. Does committee agree?

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler):** Thank you. We will now turn to page 298, services to government, with information items on page 299 and 300. Any

questions on services to government? Member for Yellowknife North.

**MR. JOHNSON:** Thank you, Madam Chair. This is where the Access to Information and Protection Privacy Act applies and the access and privacy office. My understanding was that the plan was to centralize all of our ATIPP officers in this unit. But I just don't see a corresponding budget increase or staff increase. Can I just clarify whether that -- this is where that would be and whether that is occurring? Thank you.

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

**HON. R.J. SIMPSON:** Thank you. So the centralized ATIPP office consists of five full-time employees. The GNWT access and privacy officer, that's a manager level position. There are two senior information and privacy specialists and two information and privacy specialists, and they're a coordinating role and the departments themselves also still have a role in ATIPP as well. It's not all done by this unit. Thank you.

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

**MR. JOHNSON:** Okay, thank you, Madam Chair. I guess I was under the understanding that the people who are doing the roles in the departments were going to move to the Department of Justice and essentially be all done in one place but I -- perhaps I was mistaken in that.

One of the areas I would like the department to look into is I know there is some work being done on the chief information officers about our transparency initiatives and about proactive disclosure. And I've heard, you know, a number of journalists and ATIPP officers say that if you looked at all the data and you tracked it that there's some clear areas that get ATIPPed over and over again, and we can probably reduce the workload by identifying trends of what gets repeatedly ATIPPed and just simply proactively disclosing it. And that may require some, you know, prior redaction in cases, but some of it I think is just information we could probably find a way to publish and cease getting those ATIPPs altogether thus freeing up resources for everyone involved in the multistep process. Is that work being done by that office, or is that something the Minister could work with the chief information officer on reviewing? Thank you.

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

**HON. R.J. SIMPSON:** Thank you. That work is being done, and it's being done across government. There are working groups that are tackling this. There are employees in the departments who are working on

figuring out how to make information more transparent, so not just open information but open data so there's more raw data available that can be manipulated, and I believe the Member's familiar with how the Government of Canada displays that data. And for myself, I find that very useful. So that type of work is happening. Perhaps the deputy minister can add some more specifics. Thank you.

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

**MS. DOOLITTLE:** Mahsi, Madam Chair. And this work falls under the open government policy, and there's a senior level working group on that group. The Department of Justice, our director of policy, where our ATIPP shop sits, is on that committee. So -- and there -- they do focus -- they have subworking groups, and one of them is a working group that addresses the information the Member spoke about, the open data, and they're currently looking at that and working on that, so. Mahsi, Madam Chair.

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

**MR. JOHNSON:** Yeah, thank you, Madam Chair. I'm very glad to hear that. I -- you know, there's been a clear kind of upward trend in ATIPPs and complaints to the information and privacy commissioner and we in the Legislative Assembly have been adding resources, but I think there's a way to kind of curb that trend and save us all some time and money.

With the ATIPP Act eventually coming into force with bringing municipalities under it, can the Minister just speak to any training initiatives or work being done to make sure that the municipalities are ready for the burden that comes with ATIPP? Thank you.

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

**HON. R.J. SIMPSON:** Thank you. And that is a big hill to climb, and so there's no rush on my part to get municipalities under ATIPP because while it is important I believe that, you know, the public access information, and I've looked at ATIPP reports from other jurisdictions where the municipalities are subject to ATIPP and they have, you know, a community of a few hundred people, might have one full-time person doing ATIPP work. So it's important that they have the proper recordkeeping systems and that they have the proper training. But for some specifics on how things are rolling out, I can ask the deputy minister. Thank you.

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

**MS. DOOLITTLE:** Mahsi, Madam Chair. So in order to bring municipalities under the act, the department

has worked with MACA to draft a terms of reference to establish a working group. This includes representatives from the NWT Association of Communities and local government administrators of the NWT. That terms of reference was presented in April 2020, and the working group last met November 15th, 2021, and is reviewing the terms of reference.

They will be tasked with the development of a realistic and measured implementation plan that will address timelines, training needs, resource requirements of community governments to operationalize their ATIPP responsibilities. So they're involved, and I think everyone is trying to have a very realistic approach to this. Mahsi, Madam Chair.

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

**MR. JOHNSON:** Thank you, Madam Chair. I'm glad to hear that. Yeah, I recognize it is a big hill to climb, as the Minister said.

When we spoke with the information and privacy commissioner, they expressed some concerns that, you know, some people -- the people in the departments are not getting the training they need for this job. And some people have, you know, another role and then they're often, you know, told do ATIPPs as well and some went years without getting any sort of formal training on how to do ATIPPs.

Does this unit train people in other departments, and can we -- does this unit kind of track who is doing ATIPPs in all the other departments and making sure that, you know, they're properly resourced? Some departments are much better than others and some really do not seem to think that this is a priority. So I'm just -- can the Minister speak to any training that this unit does? Thank you.

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

**HON. R.J. SIMPSON:** Thank you. And this office does provide advice. It provides support. And it is designing a new suite of access and privacy training modules. So that work is happening. For some detail, perhaps I could pass it over to the deputy minister. Thank you.

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

**MS. DOOLITTLE:** Thank you, Madam Chair. The access and privacy office is designing a new suite of access and privacy training, including updating the general privacy awareness training that is accessible to all GNWT employees as well as how to address privacy breaches, privacy impact assessments, and

we do have a request for proposals to design. We have the substantive material but we have to put it in a format to be delivered and reach people so that we have a request for proposals out for that, and we're hoping to be ready for the summer/fall of 2022.

The access and privacy office currently offers one-on-one training for new ATIPP coordinators in all departments. So they are aware of who the ATIPP coordinators are and will meet one-on-one to train them. Mahsi, Madam Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler):** Thank you. Are there any other questions from Members for services to government? Member for Deh Cho.

**MR. BONNETROUGE:** Mahsi, Madam Chair. I'm looking at page 302, the rental office, can you explain that? Because I recall we used to have a residential rental office or a rental officer. I'm not sure if that's the same or what it is. Mahsi.

**CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler):** Thank you, Member. We're on services to government. That's services to the public. So that's the next section. I'll put you on the list for first one. No, that's the next section. We'll call this one and then I'll put you on the list. Okay.

So services to government, operation -- Justice, services to government, operations expenditure summary, 2022-2023 Main Estimates, \$13,188,000. Does committee agree?

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler):** Thank you. I will now call the Justice service to the public, on page 302, with information items on 303. And Member for Deh Cho.

**MR. BONNETROUGE:** You have to remind me what I was saying there. Yeah, maybe the Minister heard my question before but can you just tell us about what that entails, the rental office, because all these they don't have, like, longwinded titles that we used to see before. These are all the shortened versions, so. Mahsi.

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

**HON. R.J. SIMPSON:** Thank you. The office of the rental officer administers the public -- or the Residential Tenancies Act or I guess a -- resolve disputes under the Residential Tenancies Act. So if a tenant has an issue with their landlord or a landlord has an issue with their tenant, they can take it to their Residential Tenancies Act. It is -- the GNWT pays for it but it is not a GNWT entity per se because it does regulate disputes between the Housing Corporation and residents -- tenants of the Housing Corporation. Thank you.

**CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler):** Member for Deh Cho.

**MR. BONNETROUGE:** Mahsi. So does your department, Justice, regulate that or that office to hear complaints or lodge complaints? Mahsi.

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

**HON. R.J. SIMPSON:** Thank you. The rules surroundings complaints and the process for resolving those is laid out in the Residential Tenancies Act, and that office administers the act and deals with complaints according to that legislation. And we support that office by -- you know, with financial means as well as amendments to the act on occasion to help, you know, streamline its services, make its services more accessible. So, thank you.

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

**MR. BONNETROUGE:** Mahsi. I'm wondering if the Minister could provide information, or if he knows, the amount of complaints that have gone to the office? Mahsi.

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

**HON. R.J. SIMPSON:** Thank you. Every year, the rental officer produces a report and there are statistics in that report. I don't have those numbers on hand. I don't think we have those numbers on hand right now but there is a report that I've tabled in this Assembly with that information. Thank you.

**CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler):** Thank you. Member for Deh Cho.

**MR. BONNETROUGE:** Mahsi. I was hoping someone here would have had that information because it would have led to my next question, and I don't know if you'll be able to answer that also, is I was hoping to have it broken out by communities about the complaints or, yeah, the lodging of all the complaints. Mahsi.

**CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler):** Thank you. Do you have any -- you have no further questions?

**MR. BONNETROUGE:** Pardon?

**CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler):** Do you have any further questions?

**MR. BONNETROUGE:** Yes, I was wondering if you could provide information if they break it out by communities.

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

**HON. R.J. SIMPSON:** Thank you. So I'm flipping through the Residential Tenancies Act right now. I just -- or the report of the rental officer. I just Googled it. So it doesn't appear that they have it broken down by community. But let me just continue to flip through.

So in 2021 -- so 2020-2021, there were 297 applications filed but I do not have the numbers by community. So perhaps we can ask the office if they can provide that information. Thank you.

**CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler):** Thank you. Member for Deh Cho.

**MR. BONNETROUGE:** Yes, mahsi for that. Yes, that would be great stats to have because as MLAs, I think we're hearing a lot of these complaints and we're addressing it and we have an office there, then we need tenants to be aware of those services that's being offered. But no further questions. Mahsi.

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

**MS. WEYALLON-ARMSTRONG:** I think I just wanted to ask here, the active positions, services to government. We did talk about decentralizations and headquarters. Here it says headquarters only. So headquarters have -- okay, they went from 61 to 63. Why, like there is increase, like, in this -- I know there was, like -- I can understand about the pandemic. That's what's always being used as an excuse, but --

**CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler):** Member, we're just -- we are on services to the public now. So we passed services to government.

**MS. WEYALLON-ARMSTRONG:** Sorry about that. [Inaudible]

**CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler):** Okay. Member for Monfwi.

**MS. WEYALLON-ARMSTRONG:** Okay, thank you. Sorry about that. Well, still the same, though. I mean, like, 61 in Yellowknife -- or it went up to 63, and office of the public's trustee is an important -- you know, it's an important -- it's important for a lot of small communities, this department, because a lot of times our people, they always contact public trustee. What I would like to see is that if we can have the public trustee office transfer to the regions or to the small communities because -- so, yeah, they're -- they are greatly needed. I think even the Members -- the Ministers file they also said the same thing too before. So what I would like to see is I would like to see more of this positions going out to the regions. Is there any plan that they're going to transfer some positions to the regions? Thank you.

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

**HON. R.J. SIMPSON:** Thank you. Not in this budget, but it is a constant conversation I'm having with the department and, in some cases, investments in technology are going to make that possible, but not currently. Thank you.

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

**MS. WEYALLON-ARMSTRONG:** At least it's in there -- they're thinking about it so which is good, you know. And, yeah, that's about it. But there was another one. It's just a comment, okay.

I know that when I said that we need more healing programs in the regions than incarcerations of our young people especially -- when you look at the -- when you look at it, it's mostly young boys. So we need more programs and services for them in the regions. I think that will really help a lot of -- it's not just our region that's going through this. It's also the other regions. It's going to help small communities. So that's all I wanted to say. Thank you.

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

**HON. R.J. SIMPSON:** Thank you. And my colleague, the Minister of Health and Social Services, is well aware and I will reiterate the comments to her on that. Thank you.

**CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler):** Thank you. Any further questions to public -- sorry, service to the public. Member for Yellowknife North.

**MR. JOHNSON:** Thank you, Madam Chair. In the rental officer's annual report -- well, all their annual reports going back quite a while, there's been recommendations for amendments to the act. There's a number I would agree with. I think there's been some -- well, there was a court case about when it applies to transitional housing and shelters and there's -- I think we are long overdue for some changes to beef up our tenancy law. As well as I know the rental officer has made comments before that she can only -- or they can only adjudicate individual complaints. So if a corporate landlord is found to have violate one tenant relationship, there's no remedy that she can order it to remedy it for the, you know, thousands of other people. They would each have to bring an individual complaint, unless she wants to take that landlord to court.

So really my question coming out of this is given the kind of reports and a few issues, is there any plans to bring forward changes to the Residential Tenancies Act? Thank you.

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

**HON. R.J. SIMPSON:** Thank you. And I think, you know, there's always change needed to that act. It needs to adapt to new situations. I think it needs to be easier for landlords to -- small landlords who evict tenants sometimes. You know, I know a number of elders who have properties, one property, two properties, and they use it for their retirement income and, you know, they get taken advantage of and they spend six months paying for fuel and power, and people aren't paying their rent. And so I've seen a number of situations like that. And there have been measures taken to address things like that outside of the act. But I take the Member's point that, you know -- we could all raise issues, I think, that could be addressed. But in terms of any immediate plans, I'd like to pass it to my deputy minister. Thank you.

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

**MS. DOOLITTLE:** Mahsi, Madam Chair. As the Member mentioned, there is the annual report and recommendations made through that, and that's the primary vehicle for amendments and changes. It's a discussion with the chief rental officer and the department, and they review those and see whether -- and assess whether those changes should be brought forward. So that happens every year and if significant, would not just have to be required to be raised in the annual report, so. Mahsi, Madam Chair.

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

**MR. JOHNSON:** Yeah, thank you, Madam Chair. I guess I -- you know, I know we have a large legislative backlog and a lot of work to kind of cram in these last 18 months. The Minister, as the Government House Leader, knows that well. But Justice is the best department to get legislation done so maybe they could tack on one more. I think there's some changes needed there.

I had one more question which is that I know there's an annual report from the coroner and the department, you know, receives those recommendations but I think there's kind of a step missing here, is that following an inquiry, numerous recommendations are made and they then get kind of given to departments and no formal response is given. There kind of seems to be a, you know, not a formal follow-up mechanism. I think that probably could be a legislative fix, you know, requiring when a department is -- has recommendations following an inquiry that they at least provide a formal response. You know, that would be well beyond just Justice but perhaps, you know, absent legislative fix, can the Minister speak to any work being done to make sure that the great work that comes out of inquiries gets responded to at the very least. Thank you, Madam Chair.

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

**HON. R.J. SIMPSON:** Thank you. And those recommendations are -- things that appear in those reports are not always for the Department of Justice. They might not even be for government. I don't know if the deputy minister would like to speak to this, or. Thank you.

**CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler):** Okay, thank you. Deputy minister Doolittle.

**MS. DOOLITTLE:** Mahsi, Madam Chair. And the Minister is correct. This would be difficult to police because they involve departments within the GNWT, which we can track and monitor, the recommendations, but it's difficult to track whether, you know, independent agencies have followed the recommendations or not. It would be difficult to police that. So it's not something that we do do. But we do hear the Member's comment. Mahsi, Madam Chair.

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

**MR. JOHNSON:** Yeah, thank you, Madam Chair. Yeah, I guess I'm not asking the Department of Justice to be the enforcer of those recommendations or even tell a department that they have to follow them. I know the Minister is well aware of how some of the statutory officers go where there's a required timeline to respond, and I think that's something that the act could require, is that, you know, if a department receives one they at least say accept, reject, or deny. That's how we -- we have a similar relationship with our auditor general and, well, a number of kind of arm's lengths. So I guess I'll just ask if that's something the Minister could, you know, possibly look into? Thank you.

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

**HON. R.J. SIMPSON:** Thank you. I mean, it's a little beyond the scope of what we're discussing here today, with the budget of services to public, but I'm happy to have conversations with the Member. And as he stated as well, we have a large legislative agenda and we don't have that much time left in this government. So we're pretty tight for -- tight for staff. We have a number of lawyers who've decided to run for office and now they're sitting in this room here instead of drafting for us. So that's part of the issue. Thank you.

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

**MS. CLEVELAND:** Thank you very much, Madam Chair. Madam Chair, in regards to the public trustee line, I notice that there's a little bit of an increase. I'm

wondering if this is due to a greater number of estates that the public trustee is managing and if that number is expected to continue to increase therefore as our population ages? Thank you.

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

**HON. R.J. SIMPSON:** Thank you. Oh, so this is an increase due to amortization and increases in the collective bargaining agreement. Thank you.

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

**MS. CLEVELAND:** Thank you very much, Madam Chair. Madam Chair, and I need to do better to slow down so my apologies again to the interpreters.

My next question is in regards to the coroner service. The coroner service also saw an increase, and I'm wondering if the Minister can speak to what that increase was for? Thank you.

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

**HON. R.J. SIMPSON:** Thank you. There was an increase to collective -- or the salaries because of the collective agreement, as well there is a position that is now on the books, an administrative coordinator. It was funded internally before I believe. Thank you.

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

**MS. CLEVELAND:** Thank you very much, Madam Chair. Madam Chair, the coroner puts out an annual report every year and within those annual reports, a lot of times we do end up seeing recommendations to different government departments. I'm wondering what support the Department of Justice provides to the coroner's office to either solicit responses from different departments for those recommendations or to provide some teeth to those recommendations. Thank you.

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

**HON. R.J. SIMPSON:** Thank you. I think I've talked myself -- I have nothing left to say about the coroner's reports so perhaps -- and their recommendations. Perhaps the Minister -- or the deputy minister has some more comments. Thank you.

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

**MS. DOOLITTLE:** Mahsi, Madam Chair. So the coroner is independent of the department, of government so those -- and they are

recommendations so we don't put teeth to them. They are recommendations. But we certainly communicate with them and work with them and do our best to support them, recognizing that they are independent. Mahsi, Madam Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler):** Thank you. Are there any further questions from Members for service to the public?

Seeing none, Justice, service to the public, operations expenditure summary, 2022-2023 Main Estimates, \$4,769,000. Does committee agree?

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler):** Thank you. Committee, there are additional information items from pages 304 to 306. Does any Members have any questions with regards to those information items?

Okay, seeing no further questions we will now return to the departmental summary found on page 275. Okay, so Justice, operations expenditure, total department, 2022-2023 Main Estimates, \$137,054,000. Mr. O'Reilly.

COMMITTEE MOTION 195-19(2):  
TABLED DOCUMENT 561-19(2): MAIN  
ESTIMATES 2022-2023 JUSTICE – DEFERRAL  
OF DEPARTMENT,  
CARRIED

**MR. O'REILLY:** Merci, Madam la Presidente. I move that this committee defer further consideration of the estimates for the Department of Justice at this time. Mahsi, Madam Chair.

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

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Question.

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

---Carried

Consideration of Department of Justice, 2022-2023 Main Estimates, operating expenditures, total department, is deferred.

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

What is the wish of committee?

**MR. O'REILLY:** Thanks, Madam Chair. Committee wishes to continue with the Department of Municipal and Community Affairs.

**CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler):** Okay, thank you. We will take a short recess and then resume with MACA.

---SHORT RECESS

**CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler):** I now call Committee of the Whole back to order. Committee, we have agreed to consider Tabled Document 561-19(2): Main Estimates 2022-2023. Does the Minister of Municipal and Community Affairs have any opening remarks?

**HON. SHANE THOMPSON:** Yes, I do. Thank you, Madam Chair.

I am pleased to present the 2022-2023 Main Estimates for the Department of Municipal and Community Affairs. Overall, the department's estimates propose an increase of \$1.972 million or 1.6 percent over the 2021-2022 Main Estimates. These estimates support the mandate objectives for the department while continuing to meet the GNWT's fiscal objectives to prioritize reasonable and strategic spending.

Highlights of these proposed estimates include:

- Initiative funding increases of \$922,000 for community governments and \$507,000 for ten relief workers and associated salary and benefits for NWT 9-1-1 service;
- A forced growth increase of \$331,000 in the proposed budget is to provide for grants in lieu of property tax for tax-based communities; and,
- Finally, there is a total increase of \$212,000 in other adjustments, which is the net impact of an increase of \$123,000 to provide for MACA's administration of federal investment in Canada Infrastructure Plan; an increase of \$445,000 for the collective agreement increases with the Union of Northern Workers; and a decrease of \$356,000 in travel budgets.

These estimates continue to support the priorities of the 19th Legislative Assembly and support the vision of the Budget 2022 by supporting the GNWT's mandate objective to reduce the municipal funding gap by \$5 million. If approved, this mandate objective will be 83 percent fulfilled for a total investment to date of \$4.167 million.

Of the total proposed estimates for MACA in 2022-2023, 82.8 percent, or \$101.9 million, is intended to support community governments.

That concludes my opening remarks. Thank you, Madam Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler):** Thank you. Does the Minister wish to bring witnesses into the Chamber?

**HON. SHANE THOMPSON:** Yes, I do.

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

Thank you. Minister, would you please introduce your witness.

**HON. SHANE THOMPSON:** With me today is deputy minister Laura Gareau. Thank you, Madam Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler):** Thank you. Welcome, deputy minister Gareau. Committee has agreed to forego general comments. Does the committee agree to proceed to the detail contained in the tabled document?

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler):** Thank you. Committee, we will defer the departmental summary and review the estimates by activity summary beginning with community governance, starting on page 334 with information items on page 337. Questions? Member for Yellowknife North.

**MR. JOHNSON:** Thank you, Madam Chair. I see there's an increase for assessment services and my understanding is that that's partly because we pay people to do some of the assessment work. And I've asked many questions before and, forgive me, I just fully do not understand the role of MACA verse Lands verse Finance in assessing how much people pay in property tax especially, you know, in not tax-based communities. So I'm going to try and ask a few more questions to help myself understand what's going on here.

And specifically I guess I want to ask, in the Ingraham Trail does it actually matter how much your property is worth for how much you're going to pay in the various taxes and lease fees, or are all of those properties essentially just not meeting the minimum threshold so they pay the same amount? Thank you.

**CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler):** Thank you. Minister of Municipal and Community Affairs.

**HON. SHANE THOMPSON:** Thank you. For that detail, I'll turn to the deputy minister. Thank you.

**CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler):** Thank you. Deputy minister Gareau.

**MS. GAREAU:** Thank you, Madam Chair. If I understand the MLA's question, it's about the distinction between the taxation role of MACA in doing assessment. So we do do assessment in all

communities in the NWT with the exception of the city of Yellowknife. However, we do provide the city with contribution to support their assessment services.

MACA staff do the assessment in the six municipal -- or sorry, in the 21 general taxation communities as well as the hinterland, and the Ingraham Trail is considered part of the general taxation area where MACA does assessment. Thank you. I hope that answered the question.

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

**MR. JOHNSON:** Yeah, thank you, Madam Chair. And then I guess my question is really who do I ask the question to? I know Lands has -- a big part of its lease fee is based on the value of the property, which I assume they get that information from MACA, but the vast majority of properties just pay a standardized lease rate because they don't actually get high enough threshold. Like, you know, they're not a mine as an example. And then, I believe, I just want to clarify, is it Finance who ultimately has the policy for how much tax is being paid in the hinterland and they get that information from MACA here? Thank you.

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

**HON. SHANE THOMPSON:** Thank you. So my understanding is that we do the assessment. We then give it to Finance, and then Finance comes up with the calculation of what the taxes are. And there's a formula there and for the life of me, I would ask you to ask the finance minister to explain that because I'm still trying to learn it and I've been working with the department for 23 years and I've been an MLA for six. And it's a very interesting -- and I say interesting, it's a well thought out formula. And so -- but I'm not an accountant so I don't totally understand. Thank you, Madam Chair.

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

**MR. JOHNSON:** Yeah, thank you, Madam Chair. You know, yeah, I know many of my constituents have been receiving bills for years and they're still trying to figure it out because they're dealing with at least three departments, and it's also based on what type of lease you got at what time. I'm just wondering if perhaps -- and I know that you guys just do the assessments but I think far too much assessment is being done of what are essentially cabins that could probably just pay one fee to one department. We could probably even raise the fee and make some money and at least there would be one bill.

Is there some work being done between the various departments that deal with the kind of hinterland

about whether there's just too much counting going on to collect what are pretty small tax bills? Thank you, Madam Chair.

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

**HON. SHANE THOMPSON:** Thank you. First, to his comment that, you know, let's just raise the rates there, I hate to say it, I've been dealing with this for a while in the Lands, and for four years before was when I was the MLA and the lands issue and the fees are something very, very difficult, and people get very excited about it. So you may get some emails from people saying that's not a good idea.

But in regards to how we work together, yes, we work with the Department of Lands; we work with Finance, to try to address it, try to come up with a formula that works for everybody. But as you've heard me talk about as Minister of Lands, we're in the process of looking at a number of regulations in that. So again, we have to work together and we can't go ahead of somebody else until the other one is there. Thank you.

**CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler):** Thank you. Are there any other questions from Members under community governance?

Seeing none, Municipal and Community Affairs, community governance, operations expenditure summary, 2022-2023 Main Estimates, \$2,146,000. Does committee agree?

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler):** Thank you. We will now turn to community operations on 339 with information items on 340 and 41. Questions?

Seeing -- oh, Member for Great Slave.

**MS. NOKLEBY:** Thank you, Madam Chair. I'm just looking -- or have some questions around the asset management.

Now, maybe first I'll just start with is this reflective of the department's assets in communities or is this to help communities with maintaining and dealing with their own assets? Thank you.

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

**HON. SHANE THOMPSON:** For that detail, I'll turn to the deputy minister. Thank you.

**CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler):** Thank you. Deputy minister Gareau.

**MS. GAREAU:** Thank you. The asset management strategy is work that we're doing in partnership with the local Government Administrators Association as

well as the NWT Association of Communities. And it is about community government assets and to plan for their eventual replacement, to make sure they have a full inventory, help them with their capital plan, all those aspects. Thank you.

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

**MS. NOKLEBY:** Thank you, Madam Chair. I think that's great. This is definitely an area where when, you know, you don't pay attention to it it gets out of control and then when you have to go ahead and buy \$400,000 loaders, people are like why are we spending that money. So I think that's great.

Is there a way or is part of this work to train people in those communities in order to be more of, say, warehousemen, inventory asset managers, the trades around those types of work? Thank you, Madam Chair.

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

**HON. SHANE THOMPSON:** So my understanding through it is we have a program that we work on. We try to train the community on it. We've had some -- it was -- it used to be hands on but with the COVID situation, we've had some problems. But we are now ramping it up again to work with the communities. Thank you.

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

**MS. NOKLEBY:** Thank you, Madam Chair. And I appreciate that, yeah, it was probably kind of difficult to do that. And I know that -- and when I speak to this, it's sort of the same as with the community financial services contributions, which I think is probably similar to just help them take care of their accounting according to the detail.

I guess where I'm going with this, and the Minister probably knows, is that I would like to see this becoming more a transition into the communities where they are more independent and it not being us coming in and doing that for them. So if there is a component -- a specific training component that's being rolled out or maybe perhaps plans for one rather than just sort of we're working -- and I guess I'm asking, is there formalized training around that? Thank you.

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

**HON. SHANE THOMPSON:** So -- and I'll turn it to the deputy minister but my understanding is yes, there is formal training. It is about training the community to be -- for about the program, how to utilize the program, how the program helps them

move forward on it. So it's very not much about us doing it; it's us working with the community to give them the skills to do it. But for further detail, with your permission, Madam Chair, I would turn to the deputy minister for her to clarify anything that I may have said wrong or clarify if there's other stuff out there. Thank you, Madam Chair.

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

**MS. GAREAU:** Thank you. Yes, just to add to what Minister Thompson said, there is a training component with this as well. We also have -- so we have staff working on the strategy at headquarters but we also have our regional capital planning staff involved because the asset management strategy is so closely linked to the infrastructure piece. And so, you know, provided that hand-on training around ways to improve the asset management planning, you know, how to do that longer-term infrastructure planning and how the age and condition of your assets feeds into that whole planning cycle so that the training and work with communities is being done by folks in headquarters but mainly by our regional capital planning staff. Thank you.

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

**MS. NOKLEBY:** Thank you for that. I appreciate that. And I'm sorry if it took me a bit to understand as it is a Friday and I don't feel like I can speak well today. But I think -- I guess my next question would be, then, we talked a lot about the silos and obviously there's a lot of asset management expertise within the Department of Infrastructure. So I'm curious to know a little bit more about would there be -- would this work and the assessment management strategy be being done in conjunction with the Department of Infrastructure, or at least with their expertise feeding into it, or even a review at the end? Thank you very much.

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

**HON. SHANE THOMPSON:** Thank you. We don't have a formal approach to it. In the past when we started doing asset management, we actually took it from NWT Housing Corporation. So they have an asset management program. And then as we developed, we looked at the asset management programs available across the country and how we could best utilize what's available. So we do that there. We do have some informal conversations that I know have happened in the past but nothing really formalized right now. So it's -- we've taken the tool, used it, and again I guess our -- it comes down to our client, which is our community government, and they're the ones that are able to tell us if we need to expand it, if we need more information, and if we

need to, then we do have access to infrastructure available. So right now, no, but we do have it there available. Long answer, sorry.

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

**MS. NOKLEBY:** Thank you. So that gives me a bit of concern too, because it's my understanding that there wasn't, in the past, great collaboration between the Housing Corporation and Infrastructure and I may have some insider information on how that has played out, even in this Assembly. So, you know, it -- to me, it seems like quite a waste and a shame that we wouldn't be utilizing -- or at least having them reviewing these things. And I get that it's very much the communities driving it, that's all great, but, you know, to just flip that over at the end of if all and say hey, does this make sense? You have asset management people in Infrastructure that are then, you know, dealing with things in communities like -- you know, I know I'm aware that the hospital in Inuvik's pellet boiler had they been more smart about it wouldn't have made it so that it can only be loaded by super-Bs that can't then back into that space so there's an extra step now of offloading from super-B pellets to smaller vehicles to then fill up the hopper. So there's things like that where I just feel like that extra set of eyes. And I know I'm just reiterating what I just said, and I hear the Minister's commitment to doing that collaboration, but I think it really -- I just can't stress how key I think that is. And if we talk about breaking down silos, why -- why would we go elsewhere before we look internally to see if we have help? Thank you.

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

**HON. SHANE THOMPSON:** I'll start, and then I'll turn to the deputy minister.

So first and foremost, when we -- this is -- and again, this is dating me. So I've been around for a while. With the asset management program, it was a Housing program that they had and we worked with Housing to -- and then we worked with the community to adapt it. We've now gone from there to another program better suited for the communities. But as in the relationship with Infrastructure and that there, I'll turn to the deputy minister. Thank you, Madam Chair, with your permission.

**CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler):** Thank you. Deputy minister Ms. Gareau.

**MS. GAREAU:** Thank you, Madam Chair. Yes, our capital planning staff have, you know, a lot of them are engineers or, you know, they're in -- they have that background. And while we don't have a formal working relationship with Infrastructure, there is a lot of ongoing collaboration. You know, especially in our

smaller communities or regional centres where, you know, the GNWT staff who do, like, work often collaborate and work on the projects together. They're both supporting the community governments.

Part of the challenge is that the -- the infrastructure we're talking about is owned by the community versus GNWT infrastructure which is owned by the GNWT. So, you know, the responsibility for the asset and then the decisions around that asset, including its eventual replacement, those are all -- it's different people making those decisions. But there is a lot of ongoing collaboration and we frequently ask Infrastructure for advice or assistance when required. Thank you.

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

**MS. NOKLEBY:** Thank you for that. Yeah, and I appreciate the Minister clarifying that it's not still the same Housing Corporation program that it was to begin with, that there has been significant changes there.

I appreciate also what the deputy minister is saying and yes, it comes down to, yeah, if it is -- you know, I'm not thinking about the fact that it is their property versus us coming in and doing so and, of course, there would be more collaboration just in a small community because everybody -- everybody does know each other.

And I think -- I'd just add that I -- I think that MACA is a department that I know really nothing about in my prior life to coming into this House and so, like, I wouldn't know who the engineers are from MACA which, you know, I know all the engineers in Infrastructure and other departments. So I mean, I guess for me, I would ask that maybe at some point I can just come meet some of your engineers and maybe get a better feel for what's going on there. Thank you.

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

**MR. O'REILLY:** Thanks, Madam Chair. On page 339, in the program detail, program management, it's going up \$130,000, and I would like to know why. Thanks, Madam Chair.

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

**HON. SHANE THOMPSON:** Thank you. Sorry, which line?

**CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler):** It's on our -- on page 339, the program management.

**HON. SHANE THOMPSON:** I'd turn to the deputy minister. Thank you.

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

**MS. GAREAU:** Thank you. The increase is mainly due to an increase of \$123,000, and that is for our program administration and audit of the investing in Canada Infrastructure Plan. I believe that \$123,000 is classified as an other adjustment in MACA. The remainder is due to collective -- the net impact of a travel reduction as well as that collective agreement increase. Thank you.

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

**MR. O'REILLY:** Okay, thanks, Madam Chair. So the cost of this audit, does that come out of the money that the federal government gives us, or are we paying for the audit ourselves? Thanks, Madam Chair.

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

**HON. SHANE THOMPSON:** Thank you. From the federal government. Thank you.

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

**MR. O'REILLY:** Okay, thanks for that. On page 340 is contributions, and I see that we have something called community financial services contributions, and can I just get some more information about how communities actually access that? And obviously it was fully used last year so maybe some understanding of who -- who can access it and what it's used for. Thanks, Madam Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler):** Thank you. Member -- or Minister of MACA.

**HON. SHANE THOMPSON:** Thank you. For that detail, I'll turn to the deputy minister. Thank you.

**CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler):** Deputy minister.

**MS. GAREAU:** Thank you. This funding is to provide short-term assistance to community governments who may be experiencing operational difficulties. So what happens is we would provide them with funding to hire a short-term contracted financial services to come and help them with their financial practices or to strengthen their financial management.

The financial position of a community government can deteriorate rather quickly if some of those key administrative positions are vacant. So this helps them hire some short-term technical assistance while their longer term staffing is playing out.

And examples of -- so in terms of how they access the funding is they would contact our regional office and make the request, and we would work with them to better understand their request and help them with their staffing and any other short-term needs they may have. Types of work that communities do with this funding is to hire bookkeeping and accounting services if they need their audited financial statements restated, like at yearend where it's urgent that they meet the deadline and it can't wait for the position to be staffed. They can also access this funding for financial training and cleanup of accounting records. A lot of it is for reporting and accounting purposes, where it's critical or there's a timeline for them to get the information done. Thank you.

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

**MR. O'REILLY:** Yeah, no, thanks. No, that sounds like a -- good to have that kind of contingency there and available to communities. We want to avoid communities going into administration under MACA. So no, it sounds good.

Madam Chair, I don't have any further questions on this section. Thank you.

**CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler):** Are there any further questions under this section?

Seeing none, Municipal and Community Affairs, community operations, operations expenditure summary, 2022-2023 Main Estimates, \$2,383,000. Does committee agree?

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

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

---SHORT RECESS

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Bonnetrouge):** Directorate, beginning on page 342 with information item on page 345. Open up for questions. Ms. Cleveland.

**MS. CLEVELAND:** Thank you very much, Mr. Chair. Mr. Chair, my questions are in regards to the policy and planning division. I note that in 2021-2022, the actuals were at \$866,000. I'm wondering why for this year's mains, they've come down to 606. Thank you.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Bonnetrouge):** Mahsi. Minister.

**HON. SHANE THOMPSON:** For that detail, I'll go to the deputy minister. Thank you.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Bonnetrouge):** Deputy minister.

**MS. GAREAU:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. The main reason is for it's the travel reduction that was applied across the department. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Bonnetrouge):** Mahsi, Ms. Cleveland.

**MS. CLEVELAND:** Thank you very much, Mr. Chair. Mr. Chair, my concern with this is that I see even from the year before there that the number was still much lower and that we're not seeing an increase either to staff cohort; there is no increase to staff in directorate. And one of the things that this Assembly continues to talk about, and especially Regular Members on this side, is concerns over the backlog, the legislative backlog rather, with the Department of MACA. And so I'm wondering how they intend to accomplish their legislative commitments without increasing their staff cohort? Thank you.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Bonnetrouge):** Mahsi, Ms. Cleveland. Minister.

**HON. SHANE THOMPSON:** Thank you. I'll start, and then I'll turn to the deputy minister. But we are looking at trying to address this with -- I think it's interns and staff, the alignment or whatever -- however you want to call it, to address this. I think we've got a new director in -- a director in place, and this individual has developed a really good plan that we feel that will help us achieve what we need to do during this Assembly and moving forward. But for further detail, I'll turn to the deputy minister with your permission, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Bonnetrouge):** Mahsi, Minister. Deputy minister.

**MS. GAREAU:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. In terms of our legislative agenda, we do have two large pieces of legislation where the review is currently underway, the Fire Protection Act as well as the Property Assessment and Taxation Act. So we are taking on some larger legislative projects during the life of this Assembly.

We're also actively working to bring community governments under the ATIPP legislation which is a piece of Justice legislation. So, you know, I would say that our legislation is -- our legislative agenda is fairly ambitious.

In terms of how we're getting that done, we are looking at getting some short-term assistance through hiring additional positions, casuals, interns, summer students, and we will also use contract work if required. But the intent very much is to get our legislative agenda done this legislative session. Thank you.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Bonnetrouge):** Mahsi, deputy minister. Ms. Cleveland.

**MS. CLEVELAND:** Yeah, thank you very much, Mr. Chair. Mr. Chair, I guess I just -- I don't understand how this happens where, you know, hiring interns is absolutely excellent; it still costs money. Finance doesn't pay for the entire bill and so there still needs to be a budget allocated to that. And if -- you know, if they're bringing in short-term employees, then those positions still need funding, and that's not reflected here.

In addition to that, if the plan is to use some contract services to get this work done, which I'm fully in support of, the 2021-2022 Main Estimates is the same as the 2022-2023 Main Estimates under contract services. And so this is one of those situations where I guess I'm just not seeing how MACA is setting themselves up to bring in the staff needs in order to do this work that has been committed to. And I know that this work, too, has kind of been passed from multiple different deputy ministers. And so I acknowledge that this deputy minister is receiving this -- this backlog but it still is a commitment of what the Assembly would like to see done.

In addition to that, there's been a lot of talk about the municipal funding formula and reviewing that with NWTAC and so is that work also expected to come out of this division as well? Thank you.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Bonnetrouge):** Mahsi, Ms. Cleveland. Minister.

**HON. SHANE THOMPSON:** Thank you. I hear the Member's concerns, and I have to say with the new deputy minister and new director, we've come up with a very good plan and I think we're going to be able to achieve this.

We also, should people be aware, is that we are looking at the funding, the three different funding programs, and we were looking at to complete this in 2023-2024. We've made a commitment now that it will be done in 2022-2023. So it will be done the upcoming fiscal year. So we have a very good plan. It's very -- I think it's very solid. But for further detail, I'll ask the deputy minister to provide some clarity on if I missed anything or anything we need to add. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Bonnetrouge):** Mahsi, Minister. Deputy minister.

**MS. GAREAU:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. Part of this is a timing issue. The -- you know, our current plan to get our legislation done and to accelerate some policy work was developed after the main estimates were developed. However, you know, we're almost into a new fiscal year and I am aware of where there's vacancies in other areas of the department or where there's projects that can be delayed. And you know, so as a deputy, I do have the ability to make

those kind of decisions around the allocation of some of the resources within the department.

There's also many different ways to undertake the legislation and policy work. And while the -- the staff in corporate affairs are an essential part of that, there's also staff -- you know, technical expertise within our divisions and regions that also assist. So it's not -- you know, the entire burden is not just on the folks in this division. There's also, you know, one or two people in some of our key divisions that are also assisting.

The work we're doing too involves other departments. So we do have working groups in place with reps from other departments who are also bringing their policy experience and their perspectives into the work. So it is -- you know, there is a lot of active work underway right now on the policy legislation work, and it's not just the folks in this division doing it. So, you know, that's part of our plan, to use the resources that are available to get our work done. Thank you.

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

**MS. CLEVELAND:** Thanks, Madam Chair. So Madam Chair, it -- I guess my biggest concern is getting to kind of the 11th hour of this Assembly and then realizing that we needed to give MACA more resources to get this substantial legislative work done.

And so does the Minister of MACA intend to report to this House on the status of these legislative agenda items and will MACA bring forward a SUP to the House if they need additional resources to get this work done in this Assembly? Thank you.

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

**HON. SHANE THOMPSON:** Yeah, we will report to committee. We'll give updates. It will probably be not quarterly but probably biannually we'll give you updates on that, because I want to get the department to focus on the work that we need to get done. We will provide that information to committee. I think that's just smart business and help committee understand where we're going.

In regards to this -- asking for a SUP, right now we feel that the money we have in place and the ability for the deputy minister to be creative within the department, we're able to achieve what we need to do. There's other demands within this government that we need to look at, and so you'll hear later on -- I think you heard when we did our presentation with the COVID Secretariat and how we were doing it, while we realign five positions within the department. So we are looking at creative ways of being able to be successful to meet what we're needing, and

we've already told you guys that there was one piece of legislation that we weren't able to get done. But we are working on it. So I just want to make sure people are aware it's not -- we're not stopping. It's just that we have other priorities that we need do. Thank you, Madam Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler):** Thank you. Are there any other Members who wish to speak to the directorate? Member for Great Slave.

**MS. NOKLEBY:** Thank you, Madam Chair. And I think I'll take a little bit of a cause for some of my other colleagues that maybe don't have an opportunity today to speak.

I'm just looking at the directorate and the fact that all of the positions are headquartered -- are listed -- sorry, located in headquarters in Yellowknife with the no increase that my colleague spoke to. While I understand why a directorate would need to be in one location, we have talked many times about the move to virtual work. And I guess one conversation we have a lot on this side of the House is the small-communities-versus-Yellowknife-versus-regional-centres conversation, which we even had this morning, so I would -- I guess I'm curious to know within this directorate, like, how does that break out? Do we have staff where they are solely focused on a small community, or is the directorate more structured in a manner where they're all sort of doing work that's for the entire area?

And I guess where I'm going with this and why I'm asking is that it seems to me this might be a place where we could sort of really start to tackle that divide between the three -- like, I'm often struck that we're talking to Yellowknife at the same time that we're talking to Aklavik. And when I used to go sit, even as an engineer on national groups, I would sit and laugh to myself as Ontario and Quebec talks about their problems and I'm sitting here with, you know, ten member firms instead of, like, 40,000, right. So it's quite -- and I'm sure all the Cabinet understands this from their FBT tables, right. So I'm wondering if there's some way within this directorate that we could start to address that issue considering that MACA is the community department. Thank you.

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

**HON. SHANE THOMPSON:** Thank you. I'll start, and then I'll turn -- with your permission, turn to the deputy minister.

This is something that we've talked at the Cabinet table about. We've talked about it at the DM and the senior management committee at our table there. We've had these conversations. But for the detail of where I think the Member's looking for, I'll turn to the

deputy minister for further information. Thank you, Madam Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler):** Thank you. Deputy minister Gareau.

**MS. GAREAU:** Thank you. The positions in the directorate are -- they do support the entire department, similar to directorates in other departments. You know, this is our finance-policy-sort-of-back-room operations staff. And many of these staff do not -- they're not like our -- they're unusual in MACA in that they are probably the only staff in the department that do not have ongoing regular contact with community governments. You know, it's -- so what these folks do is they support our regional superintendents and our directors too, in their work with community governments, so. And also like other directorates, provide support to myself and the Minister and Cabinet at FMB through the Minister. So that's primarily the work that these staff do. Thank you.

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

**MS. NOKLEBY:** Yeah, and I guess what I'm hearing then, and not to minimize the work, so they're kind of the operations, like you said the accountants, that kind of thing. So I guess then, I understand why they wouldn't be involved with the communities directly. However, then what is sort of the effort made to ensure then those roles are actually being held maybe by community members or former community members? And the reason I say that is that in every aspect of our work, that lived experience, that, you know, any time anybody making decisions for the North has had more experience in a small community, they're going to make a better decision for the North. So I guess my question is what kind of recruitment or strategy is there to ensure that, you know, those types of positions are filled by community members even if they're not in communities? Thank you.

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

**HON. SHANE THOMPSON:** Thank you. So I can tell you that, you know, what we encourage is community-regional experience. It really helps at headquarters. You know, unfortunately sometimes the positions that we have within this, the organization, when people apply they do not have that community or regional experience. So our priority has always been to try to get community and regional people into headquarters where possible, especially -- because I -- I agree with the Member, what better way to be able to do things and understand things if you understand it from the community-regional aspect of things. I know -- and I can just use my experience from the sport rec side,

that's how it used to be all the time. You had to have community experience before you moved into regional or headquarters. So we've been able to do that. Some of the superintendents that have moved on to headquarters have had that community regional experience, and it does build to the capacity. So, yeah, very much so, we look at that. But we want to get the best person for the job and sometimes the best person for the job may or may not have that community-regional experience. But we've been very fortunate, I would say. Everybody that I've seen, the new hires recently, has been community or NGOs or regional experience moving forward. So hopefully that answers the question the Member's looking for. Thank you, Madam Chair.

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

**MS. NOKLEBY:** Thank you, Madam Chair. And I know that the Minister's constituents will remind him if he's not, you know, promoting and championing community people getting into these positions.

I guess that leads me to ask, then, about the department's involvement with the Indigenous Gateway Program and how much does the department really utilize that? Because I do see MACA as being a department that very much is one where the work could be trained, not so much -- like ENR, and your other hat, has some very specific, you know, scientific years of study type roles but MACA, you know, there are a lot that we could be training. And I'm worried, like we've said many times, that we're keeping good people just because they don't have that capacity or that training or that experience, that paper, right. And I know my colleague that's sitting in the chair right now has commented already this session that we need to be looking at the pool of candidates available and then, you know, working backwards from that to get them into these positions versus oh sorry, you don't meet our very specific criteria, so. And I do note that the department has one of the higher targets for Indigenous hiring of all of the -- it's ambitious. So maybe the Minister or the department can speak a little bit to are they one of the bigger departments using the Indigenous Gateway Program; is there a way that that could be more fostered, any comments around that? Thank you, Madam Chair.

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

**HON. SHANE THOMPSON:** For that clarity, I'll turn to the deputy minister. Thank you.

**CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler):** Thank you. Deputy minister Gareau.

**MS. GAREAU:** Thank you. Unfortunately, I don't have my numbers with me. But yes, we do frequently

make use of that program and as well as the other Indigenous recruitment and retention programs offered by human resources.

I can tell you that the last I would say probably, you know, five or six regional competitions that I've seen have been local hires, you know, from the region or from the community. It's something that we do take very seriously, and we do -- you know, our perspective is we want to hire staff with regional experience, whether that's with an NGO or an Indigenous government or a community government or federal government who have had that experience and understand the realities faced by community governments. So it is really something that the regional superintendents and folks in headquarters look actively at. Thank you.

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

**MS. NOKLEBY:** Thank you, Madam Chair. And I appreciate both the Minister and the deputy minister's responses on the last couple of questions here. You know, and I do have faith that this is a department that is looking to do things right.

I'm just looking at the contribution funding -- going blind here. It is pretty stagnant for the partners. You know, and there's good work there - the Association of Communities; the LGANT, which has been mentioned before; and the Arctic Energy Alliance. You know, again, I see this as a great way to sort of stimulate economies as well in communities because I'm assuming if LGANT is being provided money, then they're turning around and offering programs or training or something for a community.

So can the Minister speak to whether this is fully subscribed? Is it one that's always, you know, they get it, it's set, or is it sort of -- I'm assuming they don't have to do a proposal every year for the work -- or for the money. And do we want -- do we see a need to add more money here or come back for more later? Thank you.

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

**HON. SHANE THOMPSON:** Thank you. So my understanding is it's fully subscribed. We utilize it there. We utilize biggest bang for our dollar I guess you would say. Like anything else, any government, any department, yeah, more money would be great but we have to compete with other priorities within this government, whether it's mental health, addictions, infrastructure, education. You know, and so again, it's about trying to put our priorities within the government to do it. So it's not that we don't -- we have those conversations but then again we have to weigh our concerns with other priorities within this

government and within the department. Thank you, Madam Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler):** Thank you. Are there any further questions under the MACA directorate? Member for Frame Lake.

**MR. O'REILLY:** Madam Chair, on page 343 program detail, regional management, I see that there was quite a bump up in 2021-2022, \$924,000. That was the revised estimates on \$240,000, which was in the main. So can I get an explanation as to what that increased funding there was? I think it's probably related to COVID but I'd like to get that information from the Minister, please. Thank you.

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

**HON. SHANE THOMPSON:** I believe it's not COVID; it's floods. The flood, what we were dealing with the flood. Thank you, Madam Chair.

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

**MR. O'REILLY:** Okay, no, thanks very much. I appreciate that.

And then on the same page, and this is probably the same thing again, but purchased services, the revised estimates were \$100,000 greater than the main estimates. So can I get an explanation there, please.

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

**HON. SHANE THOMPSON:** The Member is correct, it's regarding the floods. Thank you.

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

**MR. O'REILLY:** Thanks, Madam Chair. And then same page, compensation and benefits, there's a \$600,000 increase in the revised estimates over what was in the mains. And I presume it's probably again flood related but maybe the Minister could provide some details as well about what sort of staffing increase happened during the flooding last spring. Thanks, Madam Chair.

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

**HON. SHANE THOMPSON:** Yeah, so the Member is correct. It's flood related. For the detail of what we did and how we were able to address it, I will turn to the deputy minister, with your permission. Thank you.

**CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler):** Thank you. Deputy minister Gareau.

**MS. GAREAU:** Thank you, Madam Chair. Yes, to add to what Minister Thompson said, we received 2021-2022's supplementary funding and special warrant funding for the flood. So you'll see it appear in our revised -- in our 2021-2022 revised estimates both in the directorate and in the public safety division when we get there. And we did hire temporary staff to help with the flood response. The funding runs out in a couple weeks, at the end of March. And all of the costs will be recoverable from the Government of Canada. So once we're done with our flood response, we will be submitting a claim and we will be eventually reimbursed for this funding. Thank you.

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

**MR. O'REILLY:** Thanks, Madam Chair. Yeah, I want to thank the Minister and the deputy minister for that. So I guess I, too, will be very optimistic that we're going to recover this money from the federal government, but I think the last time GNWT went to get emergency response funding covered was the great fire season of 2014. And as I recall, it took five years to get that money out of the feds. So what sort of timeframe are we looking at this time around? Thanks, Madam Chair.

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

**HON. SHANE THOMPSON:** I'll start, and with your permission turn to the deputy minister. I must -- that was one of our concerns when we were talking about it.

What department and staff have been doing is every time we've seen anomalies or some challenges, we've reached out to the federal government. So we said this is A, does that fit into it, does it? So we are well aware of why we're doing it. We are working on filling out the, you know, the claims and what we're able to do. But for the detail of the process that works with the federal government, I'll turn to the deputy minister. Thank you.

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

**MS. GAREAU:** Thank you. Yes, we've been working all along with the representatives from Public Safety Canada just to make sure that we understand their program parameters and how our -- what we've been spending fit into that. So that has definitely been helping to smooth the process. The federal staff fully understand what kind of claim we will be submitting and what types of expenditures we will be submitting for.

The other difference, too, is in the past we haven't always had dedicated staff full time to work on the flood claim and this time around, we will have a

dedicated staff probably for a six or an eight-month term or casual, financial staff who that's all they will be doing is completing the claim. And the sooner we can get the claim in and start working with Canada on it, the better chance that we will have a speedy turnaround from Canada. Thank you.

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

**MR. O'REILLY:** Thanks, Madam Chair, and I realize we may be slipping over into some of the stuff in the next section. But the directorate's responsible for managing, I think, a lot of this flood relief and emergency response stuff, so. What are we doing in anticipation of another potential flood in this upcoming year? Yeah, let's start with that. Thanks, Madam Chair.

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

**HON. SHANE THOMPSON:** I only got three minutes and 42 seconds. Well, I'll try not to use all your time, for the Member. So we have developed a planning process. We started this in June, thanks to Minister Chinna and her conversations with the department. As we were going through the flood recovery, we are doing the planning to meet the needs now. We've already started doing a number of things with the policy, the DAP policy, communications with the communities that are -- will be impacted by potential floods. Superintendents have been reaching out to the communities working on their -- checking their plans. And this is something that people should be aware of, is that we have weekly conversations about the flood recovery and the planning of how we are moving forward. So to not waste any more time, we do have a plan in place. We are enhancing it. We are making sure -- and there's some things that we will be bringing to committee showing the work that we did to it. So we've already started it. I know we are only in March but the floods, we've been working on it since June and the community -- or the department, regional and corporate have been -- or directorate have been doing things since January. Plus, we've had press releases or things out there, the public as well, getting people prepared. Thank you, Madam Chair.

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

**MR. O'REILLY:** Thanks, Madam Chair. So just thinking ahead a bit here, I'd rather avoid the department having been -- or go for a special warrant or a supplementary appropriation. Do we -- have we thought about how -- you know, with the climate emergency on us, we're likely to get more flooding, we're likely to get more fires? How are we, you know, starting to better plan for these things? Maybe even to start to set aside some money, whether it's a

contingency fund or an emergency response fund, climate adaptation fund, to better deal with these sorts of things rather than go for special warrants and supplementary appropriation so that we actually start to set aside the money as we're going along? Thanks, Madam Chair.

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

**HON. SHANE THOMPSON:** For that detail, I'll turn to the deputy minister. Thank you, Madam Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler):** Thank you. Deputy minister Gareau.

**MS. GAREAU:** Thank you. There is a lot of work going on at the federal level in looking at disaster adaptation and mitigation. Minister Thompson sits on the minister's table; I sit on the deputy minister's table. We are waiting to hear more from Canada on what types of funding may be available to assist in being proactive about some of the risks that we know we face as a territory. Unfortunately, I don't have much more of an update than that. But MACA does have staff throughout the department actively working with communities on this. You know, we look at emergency hazard and risk identification. We look at the infrastructure and do risk assessments and, you know, does infrastructure need to be moved or how does it need to be improved to help disaster proof it.

We are looking at -- we do hazard mapping through our regional offices and our school of community government delivers climate change focused training as well as the active work our regional offices are doing with communities to help them look at mitigation options to lessen the damage of a flood or a disaster when it does hit. Thank you.

**CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler):** Thank you, deputy minister. Are there any further questions under this section? Go ahead.

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

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

---Carried

I will now rise and report progress.

---SHORT RECESS

## Report of Committee of the Whole

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

**MS. SEMMLER:** Mr. Speaker, your committee has been considering Bill 23, 29, and 38; Minister's Statement 202-19(2); Tabled Documents 561, 567, 578, and 579-19(2), and would like to report progress, I think we had one motion, and, Mr. Speaker, I move that Report of Committee of the Whole be concurred with. Thank you.

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

---Carried

Third reading of bills. Order. Order.

Madam Clerk, orders of the day.

## Orders of the Day

**COMMITTEE CLERK OF THE HOUSE (Ms. Jennifer Franki-Smith):** [Translation Unavailable]

Orders of the day for Monday, March 7th, 2022, 1:30 p.m.

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

## 17. Notices of Motions for First Reading of Bills

## 18. First Reading of Bills

## 19. Second Reading of Bills

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

- Bill 23 - An Act to Amend the Public Utilities Act
- Bill 29 - Resource Royalty Information Disclosure Statute Amendment Act
- Bill 38 – Miscellaneous Statute Law Amendment Act, 2021
- Minister's Statement 202-19(2): Annual Status Report on the Mandate of the Government of the Northwest Territories, 2019-2023
- 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 of the Government of the Northwest Territories, 2019-2023
- Tabled Document 578-19(2): Supplementary Estimates (Infrastructure Expenditures), No. 3, 2021-2022
- Tabled Document 579-19(2): Supplementary Estimates (Operations Expenditures), No. 3, 2021-2022

## 21. Report of Committee of the Whole

## 22. Third Reading of Bills

## 23. Orders of the Day

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Madam Clerk.

Colleagues, before we leave today I just want to send our thoughts and prayers out to the community of Fort Smith at this time.

This House stands adjourned until Monday, March 7th, 2022, at 1:30 p.m.

---ADJOURNMENT

The House adjourned at 2:03 p.m.