



NORTHWEST TERRITORIES
**LEGISLATIVE
ASSEMBLY**

2nd Session

Day 133

19th Assembly

HANSARD

Tuesday, February 7, 2023

Pages 5087 - 5122

The Honourable Frederick Blake Jr, Speaker

Legislative Assembly of the Northwest Territories

Members of the Legislative Assembly

Speaker

Hon. Frederick Blake Jr.
(Mackenzie Delta)

Hon. Diane Archie

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

Mr. Ronald Bonnetrouge

(Deh Cho)

Ms. Caitlin Cleveland

(Kam Lake)

Hon. Paulie Chinna

(Sahtu)
Minister responsible for Housing Northwest Territories
Minister responsible for Homelessness
Minister responsible for the Public Utilities Board
Minister responsible for the Workers' Safety and Compensation Commission

Hon. Caroline Cochrane

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

Mr. Richard Edjericon

(Tu Nedhe-Willideh)

Hon. Julie Green

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

Mr. Jackie Jacobson

(Nunakput)

Mr. Rylund Johnson

(Yellowknife North)

Ms. Frieda Martselos

(Thebacha)

Ms. Katrina Nokleby

(Great Slave)

Mr. Kevin O'Reilly

(Frame Lake)

Ms. Lesa Semmler

(Inuvik Twin Lakes)

Mr. Rocky Simpson

(Hay River South)

Hon. R.J. Simpson

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

Hon. Shane Thompson

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

Hon. Caroline Wawzonek

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

Ms. Jane Weyallon Armstrong

(Monfwi)

Officers

Clerk of the Legislative Assembly

Mr. Tim Mercer

Deputy Clerks

Mr. Glen Rutland
Ms. Kim Wickens

Committee Clerks

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

Law Clerks

Ms. Sheila MacPherson
Mr. Toby Kruger

Box 1320

Yellowknife, Northwest Territories

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

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

TABLE OF CONTENTS

PRAYER	5087
MINISTERS' STATEMENTS	5088
Housing NWT Renewal Successes (Chinna).....	5088
Drug Poisoning Deaths in Hay River (Rocky Simpson)	5089
Notice of Budget Address (Wawzonek).....	5089
Premier Absent from the House (Archie)	5090
MEMBERS' STATEMENTS	5090
Ernie Daniels Appointment to Bank of Canada Board of Directors (Martselos).....	5090
Detoxification Facilities (Rocky Simpson).....	5090
Lanky Court Housing Conditions (O'Reilly)	5091
Deh Cho Arctic Winter Games Participants (Bonnetrouge)	5091
Increasing Cost of Living in the Northwest Territories (Nokleby)	5092
Determents of Rent and Rental Arrears (Weyallon Armstrong)	5092
Condolences on Passing of Nunakput Residents (Edjericon).....	5093
Government of the Northwest Territories Mandate and Needs of Tu Nedhe-Wiilideh Residents (Edjericon)	5094
Speech Language Pathology Services (Cleveland).....	5094
Expanding NWT Pharmacists' Scope of Practice (Johnson)	5095
RECOGNITION OF VISITORS IN THE GALLERY	5096
REPORTS OF COMMITTEES ON THE REVIEW OF BILLS	5096
RETURNS TO ORAL QUESTIONS	5100
ORAL QUESTIONS	5101
WRITTEN QUESTIONS	5112
RETURNS TO WRITTEN QUESTIONS	5112
TABLING OF DOCUMENTS	5120
CONSIDERATION IN COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE OF BILLS AND OTHER MATTERS	5121
REPORT OF COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE	5121
ORDERS OF THE DAY	5121

YELLOWKNIFE, NORTHWEST TERRITORIES

Tuesday, February 7, 2023

Members Present

Hon. Diane Archie, Mr. Bonnetrouge, Hon. Paulie Chinna, Ms. Cleveland, Mr. Edjericon Hon. Julie Green, Mr. Jacobson, Mr. Johnson, Ms. Martselos, Ms. Nokleby, Mr. O'Reilly, Hon. R.J. Simpson, Mr. Rocky Simpson, Hon. Shane Thompson, Hon. Caroline Wawzonek, Ms. Weyallon Armstrong.

The House met at 1:31 p.m.

Prayer

---Prayer

SPEAKER (Hon. Frederick Blake Jr.): Good afternoon colleagues. Wasn't that a great way to start our sitting? Please join me in thanking the Kole Crook Fiddlers for starting things off here today and, especially their great leader, Linda Duford.

---Applause

I also want to thank Sarah Cleary for our opening prayer today. Thank you.

---Applause

Colleagues, we last convened in this Chamber on November 3, 2022, and it is great to be back. I know you have been busy with your duties as members, Ministers, and with committees, but I hope that everyone had a wonderful holiday season and are feeling refreshed and prepared for this sitting. I know that I am looking forward to it.

Before we begin, I want to take a moment to congratulate our Team NWT athletes who competed in the 2023 Arctic Winter Games in Alberta. Team NWT put on a great performance and brought home many ulus to prove it.

I also want to congratulate and say a special thank you to the Fort McPherson Tetlit Gwich'in Dancers, who won the hearts of many with their wonderful performances. Congratulations to all of our athletes and performers.

Colleagues, I want to thank the pages that will be with us during this sitting. We are fortunate to be welcoming pages from Wrigley, Inuvik, Hay River, Ulukhaktok, Whati, Tulita, Fort Smith, and Yellowknife. I have said many times that the youth are our future. I am proud of our page program, which allows us to bring in youth from across our territory. I am honoured and inspired to have our future leaders with us in this chamber.

I would also to thank our interpreters for the incredible work they do for us each and every day. During this sitting we will have interpretation into Dëne Suliné Yatié, Dene Zhatié, Inuvialuktun, Sahtúot'ine Yati, Tlicho, and French. It is because of their hard work and dedication that we are able to honour our official languages.

Finally, I would like to take a moment to remind each of you, as Members of this Legislative Assembly, to conduct yourselves in keeping with our rules and traditions. When we show respect for each other, for this institution and for our rules, we show respect for those who have elected us to represent them here in this chamber. That doesn't mean we will always agree. We won't. Disagreement, even passionate disagreement, is a part of our job. However, when we disagree, we must do so with the dignity and respect that our people expect from us.

Now, colleagues, it is my duty to advise the House that I have received the following message from the Commissioner of the Northwest Territories. It reads: Dear Mr. Speaker, I wish to advise that I recommend to the Legislative Assembly of the Northwest Territories, the passage of:

- Appropriation Act (Operations Expenditures), 2023-2024;
- Supplementary Appropriation Act (Infrastructure Expenditures), No. 3, 2022-2023;
- Supplementary Appropriation Act (Operations Expenditures), No. 3, 2022-2023; and
- Supplementary Appropriation Act (Infrastructure Expenditures), No. 1, 2023-2024 during the second session of the 19th Legislative Assembly.

Yours truly, Margaret M. Thom, Commissioner.

Thank you, colleagues.

Ministers' statements. Minister responsible for Housing NWT.

Ministers' Statements

MINISTER'S STATEMENT 294-19(2): HOUSING NORTHWEST TERRITORIES RENEWAL SUCCESSES

HON. PAULIE CHINNA: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I would like to provide an update on Housing Northwest Territories' Renewal, including some long-awaited changes we have made to programs and policies that are already improving housing supports for those most in need.

In June 2021, at the first meeting of the NWT Council of Leaders, I stood with my colleague, the Honourable Premier Cochrane, and committed to conducting a review of the former NWT Housing Corporation's policies and programs with a working group identified by the council.

In the short time since that commitment, I was mandated and I am pleased to report on some of the results of the important work, which has been guided by Housing NWT's renewal strategy.

First, we made fundamental changes to our mandate. These changes include:

- A commitment to deliver client-focused services and assist those most in need;
- The recognition that housing plays an important role in the well-being of individuals and communities, and
- Recognizing that strong partnerships are key to improving housing outcomes.

With a new mandate in place, Housing NWT has its marching orders to work with the Council of Leaders Housing Working Group and to look at policy and programming changes through the lens of the new mandate.

Some of the resulting changes include:

- Eliminating the need for a co-pay for emergency repairs to ensure that emergencies are addressed in a timely manner;
- Working collaboratively with stakeholders and Indigenous governments on the design and location of these units we build;
- Addressing the higher costs of home repair by increasing the maximum funding amounts for projects funded under these

three programs: The Emergency Repair Program, Fuel Tank Replacement Program, and the Seniors Aging in Place Program.

- Changing our approach to Community Housing Plannings to recognize the key leadership role NWT Indigenous governments are playing in providing housing supports to their members;
- Enhancing our support to local housing organizations associations is our primary partner in the delivery of public housing in communities, with better training and communication;
- Improving tools for tenant education and communications regarding their tenancy agreements; and,
- Lastly, working to plan, build and manage our assets in an energy efficient manner with the Energy Management Strategy and Blueprint, the details of which will be announced soon.

Housing NWT will also be moving forward with a new pilot program that is expected to offset some of the costs of shipping materials to remote communities and this is another program that will improve the availability of minor home repair materials where they are difficult to access.

Mr. Speaker, the changes guided by Housing NWT's renewal are not limited to programs and policy. They touch on all areas of Housing NWT's work. We have charted a new path for collaborative work with Indigenous governments, including agreements with the Tlicho government, Sahtu Secretariat, and with others to follow.

We are improving our communication with stakeholders and the public. We are seeking partnership with non-governmental organizations and others like never before. We have seen successes in our engagement with the federal government addressing housing priorities.

I would like to thank the Council of Leaders, and their participants on the housing working group, for helping us improve and modernizing Housing NWT's mandate, programs and policies.

Your contributions have led to positive changes that are already helping us better serve our residents. Our renewal has marked a turning point for the GNWT in how we address the territorial housing crisis.

Mr. Speaker, by providing fair access to quality housing supports for people most in need, I am

confident that we will increase the well-being of individuals and communities across the Northwest Territories as stated in our mandate. I am proud of the work we have done thus far, and I look forward to the work ahead.

I would also like to thank the staff of Housing NWT for working strategically with our communities as well and also with the feedback that we've received. They've really made a lot of changes within this government. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Minister. Colleagues, before we continue, I'd just like to welcome our former Member and Minister, Mr. Lou Sebert. Mr. Sebert was a Minister and a Member in the 18th Legislative Assembly. I'd also like to welcome Mr. David Jones, our Integrity Commissioner. Welcome.

Ministers' statements. Minister responsible for Health and Social Services.

MINISTER'S STATEMENT 295-19(2):
DRUG POISONING DEATHS IN HAY RIVER

HON. JULIE GREEN: Mr. Speaker, I rise today to speak about the devastating impact that the drug poisoning crisis has had on the community of Hay River. The coroner has confirmed that there were six deaths related to drug poisoning in 2022. Many families are struggling to understand and cope with the emotional toll of these deaths.

Public health officials have noted that these deaths are drug poisonings rather than overdoses. The difference is that with a drug overdose, someone takes too much of something they know they are taking. But with a drug poisoning, the drug user is not aware their supply is contaminated with opioids. Because of this, we are now calling deaths shown to be related to fentanyl and carfentanyl "drug poisoning" to emphasize the added danger to all people who use illicit drugs. We need to help people understand that if they are taking drugs they must take precautions.

In Hay River all individuals who died from drug poisoning were alone. None of them had naloxone, a nasal spray which reverses the effects of opioids, and none of them were aware their drug supply was contaminated with fentanyl or carfentanyl. Anyone can be at risk of drug poisoning, including people who are using illicit drugs for the first time, people who use drugs recreationally, and people who are frequent or daily users.

Mr. Speaker, the Hay River Health and Social Services Authority has been collaborating with community partners on initiatives to prevent

poisonings, to help drug users recover and their loved ones to cope with the stress of having a family member who is addicted.

To date, the authority has distributed educational posters about naloxone around the community. They have been offering the Matrix program to help people recover from addictions, and the Hope for Families workshops. They have created a team comprised of a clinician and a mental health professional to provide outreach services over the next three months, and they are ready to support the town's new social issues committee and the elders group.

In December 2022, a group of healthcare professionals assembled to help respond to this situation. Last month, the Hay River Health and Social Services Authority, along with the chief public health officer, and the NWT chief coroner, held a news conference in Hay River to raise awareness about the drug poisoning deaths and the presence of fentanyl and carfentanyl in the community. The chief public health officer and her staff also met with community members and service providers to hear their concerns about resource gaps and to identify supports to address the concerns arising from drug use.

Mr. Speaker, the health and social services system wants to collaborate with the community to enhance supports and prevent further harms related to drug use. While this situation has reached a crisis point in Hay River, we understand there are many residents who are concerned with a rise in the use of illicit drugs in their communities. We intend to apply the lessons learned in Hay River to address these concerns with them.

Mr. Speaker, deaths due to drug poisoning are entirely preventable. My thoughts are with everyone who has lost someone close to them due to the contamination in the illicit drug supply in Hay River.

All residents can support a safer community by learning to recognize the signs of drug poisoning, carrying and knowing how to use naloxone, not mixing drugs, and if using, to start "low and slow," and not to use alone. It is important to know that you are protected from drug possession charges under the Good Samaritan Drug Overdose Act if you call 9-1-1 for help, and please do call. You may save a life. I ask everyone in the Northwest Territories to help prevent further drug poisoning deaths by treating one another with compassion and understanding as we address this complex issue together. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

MINISTER'S STATEMENT 296-19(2):
NOTICE OF BUDGET ADDRESS

HON. CAROLINE WAWZONEK: Mr. Speaker, I give notice that I will deliver the budget address on Wednesday, February 8th, 2023. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Minister. Ministers' statements. Deputy Premier.

MINISTER'S STATEMENT 297-19(2):
PREMIER ABSENT FROM THE HOUSE

HON. DIANE ARCHIE: Mr. Speaker, I wish to advise the House that the Honourable Caroline Cochrane will be absent from the House for today and tomorrow to attend the first ministers meeting in Ottawa, Ontario. Quyananni, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Deputy Premier. Members' statements. Member for Thebacha.

MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

MEMBER'S STATEMENT 1293-19(2):
ERNIE DANIELS APPOINTMENT TO BANK
OF CANADA BOARD OF DIRECTORS

MS. MARTSELOS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, as we begin the final calendar year of our term, I'd like to start this session by first welcoming back all my colleagues into this chamber. It's good to be back after a winter break and holiday season. I hope all Members and staff of the Assembly had a good and restful holiday with their loved ones.

Mr. Speaker, for my first statement, I want to share a positive story about a Thebacha constituent who was recently appointed into a very prestigious new career opportunity. On January 12th, 2023, the federal government appointed Mr. Ernie Daniels to the board of the Bank of Canada.

Ernie is a member of the Salt River First Nation and will serve a three-year term on the 12-member board of directors. Ernie has over 35 years of senior financial management experience, including serving as president and CEO of the First Nations Finance Authority for ten years, which is a First Nations-governed nonprofit financial institution. In addition, Mr. Speaker, according to a spokesperson from the Bank of Canada, Ernie, to the best of my knowledge, is the very first ever First Nations person to join the bank's board. And as someone who has known Ernie all his life and

have worked with him many times over the years, I can attest that he is a very driven, bright, and dedicated individual. I know he will excel as a director with the Bank of Canada.

Mr. Speaker, this appointment is not only a milestone for Indigenous people, but it respects the significant occasion for all of Canada. On behalf of the constituents of Thebacha and the people of the NWT, I want to congratulate Mr. Ernie Daniels on his achievement of being appointed to the board of directors on the Bank of Canada. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

MEMBER'S STATEMENT 1294-19(2):
DETOXIFICATION FACILITIES

MR. ROCKY SIMPSON: Mr. Speaker, Hay River has, and continues to have, its fair share of substance abuse issues which has been driven home by the number of drug-related deaths in the last year.

Mr. Speaker, for those who are no longer with us, we grieve; for those who find themselves fighting a losing battle, we hear their cry for help. But are we as government listening? That cry is becoming louder, and it is not more studies they are asking for, it is not more reports they are asking for, and it is not more discussions they are asking for. What is being asked for is a safe place to detox with proper assessment and support.

Mr. Speaker, I am certain that we all know someone who is struggling with substance abuse, whether it be a family member, a friend, or that random person we pass on the street. Substance abuse has no qualms about who it engages and who it hurts. I hear more people in the community talking about never feeling so unsafe. I hear of children who are scared to go to the school bus stop because of the ongoing traffic to known drug houses. I hear of elders being coerced out money by family members who are looking to buy drugs. I hear of persons lives being threatened because of drug debts. This is the reality we are living in within our communities.

Mr. Speaker, the issue and impact of substance abuse in our communities, whether it be illicit drugs or alcohol, will not go away but that does not mean we give up and do nothing. I have constituents come into my office who are addicted to drugs and/or alcohol. I had known drug dealers attend my office who are addicts themselves and scared for their lives. All are looking for a way out but find that the resources

needed are not there, not complete, and not immediate.

Mr. Speaker, we have no infrastructure or workable mechanisms in place to help those that are seeking detox support. They are told they need to be clean for 24 hours. They are told there are no available beds when they go to the hospital. They are told there are no trained addiction staff workers on the floor. They are told access to treatment facilities is weeks, and most likely months, away.

Mr. Speaker, it is time for the Minister of Health to make detox beds and qualified detox staff a priority, as I would rather visit my friends, relatives, and constituents at a detox or treatment centre than attend their funeral. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

MEMBER'S STATEMENT 1295-19(2):
LANKY COURT HOUSING CONDITIONS

MR. O'REILLY: Merci, Monsieur le President. Over recent months, my office has done a lot of work on behalf of tenants in public housing units in the Lanky Court apartment complex in my riding. It's been a long and very difficult process to get responses from the housing minister on behalf of the Yellowknife Housing Authority working with Northview Apartment Real Estate Investment Trust. More importantly, actual improvements to housing conditions do not seem to have materialized.

There have been cockroach and bed bug infestations and housing conditions no one should have to endure. Young children being repeatedly attacked by bed bugs, mold so bad that it's causing breathing problems for tenants, public housing tenants forced to pay moving costs and service connection charges when they are moved within the complex, and more. At least one constituent finally moved out as there were no solutions being offered.

One constituent first came to my office about a bed bug infestation and inaction from the landlord on dealing with the pests. To combat the pests, this tenant had to treat or throw out all furnishings, clean the apartment thoroughly, and pack up household effects while the chemical treatment was actually underway. For a low income person, action packers, cleaning products, and new furniture are unaffordable and were not provided.

Compounding the pest problem was mold rot in the bath and kitchen area requiring extensive repairs. Through long and persistent lobbying, I

got the constituent moved into another apartment while repairs took place on their unit. That seemed like a good solution, Mr. Speaker, until I learned recently that the new apartment was already infested with cockroaches.

I've also been informed that the tenant would not be moving back to the renovated and pest-controlled unit. The constituent was also charged \$400 for moving furnishings and personal effects and would be charged the fee for transferring their electrical account.

It's hard to believe, Mr. Speaker, that we treat people in this manner. Looking at the core housing need and other data from the bureau of statistics, we see that these horrible conditions are commonplace across the Northwest Territories. Ten percent of all houses are considered inadequate, which in some smaller communities goes as high as 50 percent. Pests, mold rot, and bad indoor air are so commonplace that the bureau of statistics actually compiles separate data tables on these problems by community.

The root of the problem is this government's inability or unwillingness to provide adequate housing for all our residents. Housing is not a priority with this government when we continue to spend more on roads than on housing, and travel to Ottawa for mega projects, over housing. I'll have questions for the housing Minister later today. Mahsi, Mr. Speaker.

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

MEMBER'S STATEMENT 1296-19(2):
DEH CHO ARCTIC WINTER GAMES
PARTICIPANTS

MR. BONNETROUGE: Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I would like to recognize a few participants from my constituency who were chosen for the 2023 Arctic Winter Games. The games were recently held in Fort McMurray, Alberta, January 29th through February 4th.

It's not often that we see any participants at the Arctic Winter Games from the smaller centres. We should join in cheers when they do happen. Although we did not get any participants from K'atl'odeeche First Nations, Kakisa, nor Enterprise, we did have four participants from Fort Providence.

Kristina Bonnetrouge participated as one of the badminton coaches for Team Northwest Territories. She will also attend the Canada Games in the next few weeks. Kristina, who plays badminton, attended Arctic Winter Games in 2014 and 2016, North American

Indigenous Games 2014, Western Summer Games 2015, and the Canada Winter Games in 2015. Kristina has won the Aboriginal Sport Circle Award in 2014 and the Scott McAdam Youth Leadership Award in 2018. She is very keen to continue coaching, and we wish nothing but success for our own Kristina.

Thorston Gold, who was stationed and lives in Fort Providence, is the table tennis coach for Team Northwest Territories. Thorston is also the sport's chair for the table tennis event for the Arctic Winter Games held in Fort McMurray. In this position, Thorston assisted with the purchase of equipment and training officials to run the event. Thorston was also able to run the media and communication outlets for Hockey NWT and Table Tennis North. This allowed for the promotion of athletes sharing stories and ensuring the amazing experiences of our athletes were shared. We thank Thorston for his contributions to readying the athletes for participation at the Arctic Winter Games.

Two of our younger table tennis athletes were a brother and sister team made up of Karissa and Carter Sadowich. Karissa, 9 years old, and Carter, 11 years old, are part of the group of the younger athletes at these games. Their parents, grandparents, and our community are so proud they made Team Northwest Territories. I am certain this will not be the last games for Karissa and Carter. Mahsi, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Member for Deh Cho. Members' statements. Member for Great Slave.

MEMBER'S STATEMENT 1297-19(2):
INCREASING COST OF LIVING IN THE
NORTHWEST TERRITORIES

MS. NOKLEBY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Happy New Year, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to welcome yourself, my colleagues, the interpreters, and all of our staff back for a constructive and productive winter Session, and for the last year of our Assembly.

Mr. Speaker, I hope you had a wonderful break, full of rest, relaxation, and time spent with family. I wish this was the case for all the residents of the territory, however, for many of my constituents and others, there was no break from the daily struggle of surviving. With soaring fuel and electricity rates, escalating rent and grocery prices, most residents are living pay cheque to pay cheque, and many are having to make the hard decision between paying a bill, or their rent, and having food on the table.

Further compounding their woes is the quality of housing that is available in our territory. When you spend excessive amounts of money on your rent and all you receive in return is a moldy, pest-infested apartment, with sketchy heating and people smoking crack in the hallways, it's extremely demoralizing. Mr. Speaker, several of these apartments are in my riding and several more exist throughout the city. Windows are broken and boarded up, fire extinguishers are set off on a regular basis; mold is present, and raw sewage is leaking, and many are often without heat.

Mr. Speaker, it often takes months for any response to my questions. And when I do get one, they are often vague and lacking details.

I asked for the plan to move residents into Nordic Arms, purchased by the department a year ago this month, and was told "sometime after the renovations are complete" which appears to be slated for April 2023. However, when I requested the sequencing plan to accommodate the renos and move in the residents, it's appears to me there isn't one.

Mr. Speaker, when is this Minister going to do anything for my constituents and others in the territory? Where are all these units she has continuously promised? Where are the contracts with NGOs to run the shelters in Yellowknife and Inuvik? Imagine my surprise, Mr. Speaker, to recently learn that the highly anticipated homelessness strategy, a priority to all 19 of us and promised for April 2023 last session, isn't even being led by the housing Minister anymore. Rather, this critical and desperately needed strategy, and subsequent action, is now being led by the Premier and EIA. What does this say about the state of the strategy, that in the 11th hour, the GNWT feels it's better for a whole new Minister and staff to execute it rather than the department where the expertise supposedly lies. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

MEMBER'S STATEMENT 1298-19(2):
DETERMENTS OF RENT AND RENTAL
ARREARS

MS. WEYALLON ARMSTRONG: Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. [Translation] Mr. Speaker, what I am going to talk about is regarding housing in the Ticho region, Behchoko, Whati, Gameti, and Wekweeti. And I'm going to talk about the rental prices. There's a lot of people that has debts with their rentals. And the whole process of rating their monthly rent. And sometimes some

of these people are evicted from their units. I will be talking about that today. But today I want to talk about people's arrear and what happens to them in the future if they were to ask for a new rental again. So these are some of the questions I will be bringing forward.

I have so many concerns from my constituents regarding this. And also it is also is rated with your last year's taxes, the amount of money that they make the previous year, it's based on what they pay this year. Sometimes this year the person is not working, and some of them are saying that they're paying over a thousand dollars a month with no income. So I will talk about that and ask questions [Translation Ends].

Priorities as the Member for Tlicho region is to ensure that each resident in Behchoko, Gameti, Wekweeti, and Whati has access to affordable housing. Mr. Speaker, one of the barriers to accessing affordable housing is arrears. Residents have experienced evictions from public housing units due to arrears and are ineligible to reapply for public housing until those arrears are paid off. Mr. Speaker, far too often, the conversations is focused on what arrears are owed and not why arrears have accumulated. Mr. Speaker, my constituents have shared with me many reasons they have accumulated arrears that reflect the economic realities of the Northwest Territories, not the desire for someone to pay their rent on time. Mr. Speaker, can I have unanimous consent to conclude my statement. Thank you.

---Unanimous consent granted

Mr. Speaker, my constituents have shared with me many reasons they have accumulated arrears that reflect the economic realities of the Northwest Territories, not the desire for someone to pay their rent on time. Mr. Speaker, I assure you that residents want to be able to pay their rent. Mr. Speaker, many of my constituents rely on seasonal employment and therefore lack consistent or stable income. Currently the practice of the local housing authority is to use the Government of Canada notice of assessment to verify income and determine a tenant's rent. Tenants are not given options for income verifications that reflect the economic realities of the North and reliance on seasonal employment.

Mr. Speaker, many elders have expressed they have not had respectful or meaningful communication to verify their income, which results in arrears. Additional accommodation need to be made for elders. Housing staff at the LHO level need additional training in culturally respectful communication and encouragement to meet elders in their homes or places they are

comfortable, not insist elders go to NWT or to LHO offices. Mr. Speaker, Housing NWT verification of income policy states, quote, "annual or periodic verification is required. Housing NWT need to develop an option for tenants to use verification of income methods given the high number of people who are seasonally employed, a verification of income would respond to employment and income status at a given time. With more accurate income verification, arrears could be reduced in the long-term because people would be able to pay their rent. According to the latest housing annual report, Housing NWT has accumulated millions of dollars over the years in arrears. This is a serious accumulation of arrears that indicates poor Housing NWT management and not the decision of individual rent. I will have questions for the Minister of housing. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Colleagues, before we continue, I'd just like to remind Members when you seek unanimous consent, usually it's to finish your statement. But because it's the first day, I'll let this slide. But when we continue, once you seek unanimous consent usually you have 30 seconds to -- actually, I'll just explain.

When you're starting in your official language and you switch to English, you actually get 30 more seconds. And then if you seek unanimous consent, that's another 30 but that's to finish your statement, not the whole two and a half minutes. But like I said, today's the first day. Going on, we'll just be mindful of others. Thanks.

Okay, Members' statements. Member for Nunakput.

MEMBER'S STATEMENT 1299-19(2):
CONDOLENCES ON PASSING OF
NUNAKPUT RESIDENTS

MR. JACOBSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Today I rise in the House to pay my respects to the communities in my riding who lost loved ones since November 2022. My home community of Tuktoyaktuk, Mr. Speaker, we lost one of our respected elders, retired long-time employee in the hamlet of Tuktoyaktuk, mechanic, Mr. Churchill Woelki Senior. His wife Dorothy Woelki, sons Churchill, Charlton, Brent, and daughters Emma and Shelly, and many grandchildren and great grandchildren, and beloved brothers and sisters. Our thought and prayers are with you.

Mr. Speaker, Ulukhaktok, Angus Elias, young man, husband of Gail, he's grandson of Albert and Shirley Elias. Our thoughts and prayers are with you.

George Alinguk, beloved elder, retired, long-time employee of the hamlet of Ulukhaktok, wife Connie Alinguk, and many grandchildren, great grandchildren, and other family members. Our thoughts and prayers.

Community of Paulatuk. Mr. David Rueben, beloved elder, respected by many in Nunakput. One of the last to use dog teams as a livelihood and as a young man, Mr. Speaker.

Also, my nephew. Travis Coyne. Thoughts and prayers go to MaryAnne and Josh in Whitehorse, Yukon, and my sister who is there right now with them, thinking of them, and our thoughts and prayers are with them all, Mr. Speaker, and all who lost loved ones across our territory and across the North. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Member for Nunakput. Our thoughts and prayers are with your community and the whole region. I know we suffered a lot of losses throughout the holidays, and our thoughts and prayers are with the families and throughout the territory as well. Members' statements. Member for Tu Nedhe-Wiilideh.

MEMBER'S STATEMENT 1300-19(2):
GOVERNMENT OF THE NORTHWEST
TERRITORIES MANDATE AND NEEDS OF
TU NEDHE-WIILIDEH RESIDENTS

MR. EDJERICON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I was elected on February 10th, 2022, on by-election for the Tu Nedhe-Wiilideh riding. In October 2019, the newly elected MLA Members went to a retreat to bring forward all their goals and mandates for the respected communities from this retreat. The GNWT tabled their four-year mandate plan, and it has been one year, on February 10th, 2022, I was elected as MLA for Tu Nedhe-Wiilideh riding. Not one Minister, not one deputy minister, or the Premier approached me on the needs and wants for my riding. Despite I made every effort to work in Cabinet to be heard, but no meeting took place to my requested date.

As the MLA for my riding, I'm sitting on committees on various overall government operations and from what I can see, this government is status quo, and the departments are moving forward with their four-year mandate with no consultation or accommodation with my riding on the community's needs or infrastructure projects. Again, this government knows best on what is needed in all communities in the NWT, including my riding.

I raised my constituent issues with the Premier, Cabinet, and Minister in the fall session where

I said the train left the station and there was no way to throw on constituent issues and baggage on to the moving train with the door closed. So it doesn't matter what I say or do, this government wants me to support the 2023-2024 budget with no consultation or accommodation for the communities in any riding is deeply concerning. In the 2022-2023 budget, the GNWT allocated \$3.4 million for public housing repairs. On April 14th, 2022, Northern Affairs Canada announced a \$60 million federal housing dollars to address the urgent housing crisis in the NWT and allocation to be determined.

The housing crisis allocation was determined and decided by the NWT Housing Corporation at the time to use the \$30 million that is Indigenous money to fix up public housing units and assets. They did not address the real housing crisis promised in their public announcement for all 33 communities in the Northwest Territories. In the 2023-2024 fiscal year budget, the GNWT will be spending another \$30 million, CIRNAC dollars, again to fix up public housing units.

I'll be asking the Premier and Minister to work with Indigenous governments to allocate the \$30 million through the contribution agreement so Indigenous governments can address their own housing crisis. Mr. Speaker, I will have questions for the Minister at the appropriate time. Mahsi.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Member for Tu Nedhe-Wiilideh. Members' statements. Member for Kam Lake.

MEMBER'S STATEMENT 1301-19(2):
SPEECH LANGUAGE PATHOLOGY
SERVICES

MS. CLEVELAND: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, for over a decade Canadians have acknowledged the growing shortage of speech-language pathologists, especially in school settings. These services are critical for all children to access education equitably. The deficit is due, in part, to the limited number of openings in graduate programs and the increased need for speech-language pathologists as their scope of practice widens, rates of neuro-divergent children grows, and classrooms play catchup in a post-pandemic world. Also, we have an aging population.

This national shortage impacts education outcomes in the NWT and was recognized as an NWT-specific concern by the 2020 Office of the Auditor General's report on education.

The audit concluded that in the decade since its previous education audit that Education,

Culture and Employment had "improved its support for delivering inclusive schooling but more work was required" and that the department did not provide "adequate guidance and training for support assistants", and adding, "the needs of all students were not being met."

Mr. Speaker, low staffing levels have continued to force Health and Social Services to reorganize its service delivery of speech-language services. But we aren't the only jurisdiction experiencing high demand and low staffing for speech-language services. Our sister territory Nunavut experienced the same and has creatively addressed this through a partnership with Ongomiizwin Health Services through the University of Manitoba. Through this partnership, they provide occupational therapy, speech-language pathology, and physiotherapy to all students in Nunavut. Referrals are sent directly from the schools to the Department of education, which then works with the Ongomiizwin coordinator. Schools receive one to two in-person therapist visits throughout the school year. And between visits, therapists provide virtual support via video conferencing with the students or ongoing support through constant email contact between teachers and therapists.

In the NWT, last year's wait times to access speech services ranged from two months in Fort Smith to half a year or more in Yellowknife. Six months is more than half of a school year. This is far too long for students to wait for services critical to equitable access to education.

Our children cannot wait for a decade-long shortage to right itself. This government needs to look at creative solutions like community-based paraprofessionals, funded teletherapies, and partnerships that work for teachers in the child's best interests. Without these innovative solutions, the needs of NWT students will continue to go unmet. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

MEMBER'S STATEMENT 1302-19(2):
EXPANDING NORTHWEST TERRITORIES
PHARMACISTS' SCOPE OF PRACTICE

MR. JOHNSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We all know we're in a health crisis and getting to see a doctor is harder and harder. And there are many steps we can take but one I would like to speak about today is giving our pharmacists, who go to school for many years and quite frankly often know the drugs they are

prescribing better than the doctors themselves, the ability to prescribe basic medications. This is a recommended practice by Health Canada. All ten provinces will be able to provide this service in 2023, including the Yukon. But here in the Northwest Territories, we are falling far behind in what our pharmacists are capable of doing. There is a recommended list of minor ailments that Health Canada recommends pharmacists can prescribe as well as the limited ability to renew certain prescriptions. They estimate that this reduces emergency room visits by 35 percent, Mr. Speaker. Emergency room visits are vastly more expensive than a visit to the pharmacist.

At this point, Mr. Speaker, almost every other jurisdiction in Canada has done this. I will have questions for the Minister of health of when we can introduce changes to our Pharmacy Act and give a long-needed power to our pharmacists to help their clients. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

HON. SHANE THOMPSON: Mahsi cho, Mr. Speaker. This past weekend, I had the pleasure of attending and refereeing the Paul Stipdonk Memorial Soccer Tournament. It was the first time since the pandemic cancelling the last couple of years. As I stated previously in this House, this tournament is a bit unique in that we don't keep score, teams are mixed up, and we do not have a winner or loser. The focus is on the youth having fun and playing the sport; something the namesake was all about. Besides playing the sport, the youth are given the opportunity to attend a skills competition event on Saturday.

This year we had athletes from Samba K'e and Fort Simpson. They were great sportsmen and ambassadors of their respective communities. It was amazing to see all their smiling faces and the fun they had over the weekend.

I am proud to say that Fort Simpson youth were great hosts and really enjoyed the games as they made new friends from the region. I was proud to say that parents and family of the athletes, whether they were from the community or from out of town, did an amazing job cheering and encouraging the youth. It was awesome to see the stands and the hall full of supporters.

Mr. Speaker, a special shout-out goes to the Mackenzie Recreation Association, Municipal and Community Affairs, the Village of Fort Simpson recreation staff, who kept the facility

nice and clean, and most importantly Roslyn Firth and Jacqueline Whelly who dedicated many hours of organizing and making sure the event ran smoothly. To the speed skaters' mom, thank you for catering the whole weekend.

I would like to thank the Fort Simpson high performance athletes for being the coaches of the teams, helpers, and being great role models to the youth. It was great to see this capacity being built. I take great pride when I see young athletes paying back to the sport. In closing I would like to use the words provided by one of the organizers: "A big special thank you to the Stipdonk family for letting us to honour their husband, dad, grandfather, and friend in a way that brings so many smiles to the youth."

Mr. Speaker, I would like to encourage my colleagues to give them a big round of applause. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Member for Nahendeh. Members' statements. Recognition of visitors in the gallery. Member for Great Slave.

Recognition of Visitors in the Gallery

MS. NOKLEBY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I'd like to welcome my new constituency assistant Maggie Mercredi to the Chamber. Maggie is a long-time constituent of Great Slave, both as a youngster and currently, and I'm very excited to have her working with me. Thank you very much.

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

MS. MARTSELOS: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to recognize a constituent of mine, Louis Sebert. He's also a friend of mine, even though he ran against me in the last election.

I also want to recognize the Kole Crook Fiddlers and thank them for being here today, and especially Noah Coup who is one of my constituent's son. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Member for Thebacha. Recognition of visitors in the gallery. Member for Hay River South.

MR. ROCKY SIMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd also like to recognize the Kole Crook Fiddlers. And I'd like to recognize, even though they're not here, they were here, Sumara Wilson, Jackson Fuller, Blair Engdon, Linda Duford, Darcy Deloriae, Navia Beck.

I'd also like to recognize Mr. Lou Sebert, a previous MLA, and a fellow lawyer as well. And he could just as well be sitting here next to me, and I wouldn't mind it. Thank you.

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

MS. CLEVELAND: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, Kam Lake is very proud to have a few pages joining us this week. We have Kristine White, Rider Jensen, and Sarah Mercer that are representing Kam Lake as pages in the House. So thank you very much.

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

HON. PAULIE CHINNA: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to recognize the fiddlers today as well too. I'd like to recognize Lucas Tutcho of Deline and Emerson Stewart of Tulita.

I'd also like to welcome Mr. Louis Sebert as well. I did have the opportunity of meeting him when I did work for Department of Lands. He did visit the Sahtu as Minister responsible for Department of Lands. Mahsi. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Member for Sahtu. Recognition of visitors in the gallery. Reports of committees on the review of bills. Member for Yellowknife North.

Reports of Committees on the Review of Bills

COMMITTEE REPORT 38-19(2):
REPORT ON BILL 62: AN ACT TO AMEND
THE INCOME TAX ACT,
CARRIED

MR. JOHNSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Your committee would like to report on its consideration of Bill 62, An Act to Amend the Income Tax Act.

Bill 62 received second reading in the Legislative Assembly on November 2, 2022 and was referred to the Standing Committee on Government Operations for review. The standing committee held a public hearing and clause-by-clause review on January 18, 2023.

Mr. Speaker, the committee reports that Bill 62, An Act to Amend the Income Tax Act, is ready for consideration in Committee of the Whole. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Member for Yellowknife North. Reports of committees on the review of bills. Reports of standing and

special committees. Member for Yellowknife North.

MR. JOHNSON: Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the honourable Member for Thebacha, that Committee Report 38-19(2), the Standing Committee on Government Operations report on the review of Bill 62, An Act to Amend the Income Tax Act, be received and adopted by the Assembly. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

MR. JOHNSON: Well, after I read this report I hope you'll accept it.

---Laughter

Standing Committee on Government Operations report on Bill 62, An Act to Amend the Income Tax Act, No. 2.

Bill 62, An Act to Amend the Income Tax Act, No. 2, received second reading on November 2nd, 2022, and was referred to the Standing Committee on Government Operations for review. Bill 62 would amend the Income Tax Act to harmonize this legislation with the federal government as required under the Canada-Northwest Territories Tax Collection Agreement. Specifically, Bill 62:

- Allows the Canada Revenue Agency to share NWT-specific taxpayer data with Finance Canada to support better tax policy design and analysis;
- Removes federally repealed provisions used to address various COVID-19 relief measures; and.
- Ensures the Income Tax Act is consistent with federal provisions and complies with the Canada-Northwest Territories Tax Collection Agreement.

Committee Accepts GNWT Request to Amend

On January 16, 2023, the Government of the Northwest Territories informed committee that it was seeking additional changes to Bill 62. After the government introduced Bill 62, the Department of Finance discovered the effective dates contained in the bill did not agree with the corresponding measures in the federal tax legislation that had different retroactive effective dates. Without the proper effective dates, the Canada Revenue Agency would be non-compliant with the Income Tax Act when administering the territorial income tax regime. Originally, clause 13 of Bill 62 proposed:

13.1 Subject to subsections (2) to (5), this Act comes into force on assent.

13.2 Subsection 5(1) is deemed to have come into force January 1, 2018.

13.3 Subsection 5(2) is deemed to have come into force November 30, 2020.

13.4 Section 7 is deemed to have come into force March 25, 2020.

13.5 Section 12 is deemed to have come into force March 25, 2020.

To correct the coming into force dates, the department drafted a proposed motion that read: that Bill 62 be amended by deleting clause 13 and substituting the following:

13.1 Subject to subsections (2) to (6), this Act is deemed to have come into force January 1, 2022.

13.2 Section 4 is deemed to have come into force January 1, 2023.

13.3 Subsection 5(1) is deemed to have come into force January 1, 2018.

13.4 Subsection 5(2) is deemed to have come into force July 1, 2021.

13.5 Section 7 is deemed to have come into force March 25, 2020.

13.6 Section 8 is deemed to have come into force March 25, 2020.

In response to questions, the Minister of Finance said there would be no delays in bringing forward these proposed amendments. She further explained that the need for retroactive dates were a result of delays in federal changes, the details of which she would try to find and provide separately to committee. The Minister also said that there were no lost revenues to the GNWT because of these changes.

Committee was satisfied with the rationale for the changes and the wording of the motion. Therefore, committee agreed to and passed the motion, with the concurrence of the Minister of Finance, during its public hearing and clause-by-clause review on January 18, 2022.

BILL 62 TO ALLOW DISCLOSURE ON COST OF NWT TAX CREDITS

During the public hearing, the Minister of Finance expressed her understanding that Bill 62 would allow the federal government to disclose the fiscal cost of the territory's tax credits. At present, neither the main estimates nor the public accounts report on the revenue

lost from most territorial tax credits. Only a few tax credits – the carbon tax offset, the cost of living offset, and the NWT child benefit – are reported. More than a dozen others, such as the NWT political contribution tax credit, the disability amount, and the dividend tax credit, appear to be unreported.

At committee's review of the 2020- 2021 Public Accounts, the Comptroller General suggested that the federal government does not provide the Department of Finance with disaggregated data on tax credits. She reported that the federal government collects territorial income taxes, distributes territorial tax credits, and returns the net tax revenues to the Government of the Northwest Territories. This situation may imply that the Department of Finance cannot access information to assess the effectiveness and efficiency of territorial tax credits.

Committee wants to see more public disclosure on the cost of each territorial tax credit. Enhanced disclosure could inform better tax and fiscal policymaking. It would also correct a significant fiscal reporting gap to improve transparency and accountability to taxpayers. Committee welcomes the ways Bill 62 will allow the federal government and the Department of Finance to disclose more information on territorial tax credits.

Conclusion

The committee reports Bill 62, as amended, to the Legislative Assembly as ready for consideration in Committee of the Whole. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

MOTION TO RECEIVE COMMITTEE REPORT 38-19(2) INTO THE HOUSE, CARRIED

MR. JOHNSON: Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the honourable Member for Thebacha, that the Committee Report 38-19(2), the Standing Committee on Government Operations report on the review of Bill 62, An Act to Amend the Income Tax Act, be received and adopted by the Assembly. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Question.

MR. SPEAKER: Question has been called. All those in favour? All those opposed? Any

abstentions. The motion is carried. The committee report has been received and adopted by the Assembly.

---Carried

Reports of standing and special committees. Member for Nunakput.

COMMITTEE REPORT 39-19(2): REPORT ON CONTAMINATED SITES

MR. JACOBSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Your committee on economic development and environment is pleased to provide the report of prevention and management contaminated sites and commends it into the House.

The Standing Committee on Economic Development and Environment identified contaminated sites as a priority of the committee to focus through the life of the 19th Assembly. The Committee focuses to ensure the Northwest Territories is well positioned to prevent environmental liabilities and effectively manage contaminated work sites. To guide committee in the review of contaminated sites, several stakeholders included several briefings from the Government of the Northwest Territories. As a result the review, committee has provided several recommendations to the Government of the Northwest Territories and the intent and purpose was improve, prevention, management of contaminated sites in the Northwest Territories. Mr. Speaker,

Recommendation 1

The Standing Committee on Economic Development and Environment recommends that the Government of the Northwest Territories create a mandatory legislative requirement for companies to operate with approved closure and reclamation plans on regularly reviewed and updated with appropriate adjustments through financial security.

Recommendation 2

The Standing Committee on Economic Development and Environment recommends the GNWT keep closure and reclamation tools up to date and publicly available to ensure the GNWT is collecting enough security to reflect true costs of a closure and reclamation.

Recommendation 3

The Standing Committee on Economic Development and Environment recommends that the GNWT work inter-departmentally with communities and their existing community-based monitoring programs to align monitoring efforts with the surveillance

programs required under regulatory permits and licences.

Recommendation 4

The Standing Committee on Economic Development and Environment recommends the GNWT ensure it has the internal expertise to inform regulatory decision-making and inspection capacity to prevent further public liabilities.

Recommendation 5

The Standing Committee on Economic Development and Environment recommends the GNWT expand the Approach to Contaminated Sites guidance document to ensure policies and processes are in place to prevent future public environmental liabilities, most significantly projects that result in perpetual care situations. Further policy and guidance with respect to public disclosure are also required.

Recommendation 6

The Standing Committee on Economic Development and Environment recommends the GNWT establish the internal capacity for an effective early warning system to prevent further public liabilities. This approach will also require clear measures to prevent perpetual care situations, including mandatory financial security that is regularly reviewed and adjusted.

Recommendation 7

The Standing Committee on Economic Development and Environment recommends the GNWT ensure legislation has clear and appropriate timelines for remediation and reclamation of inactive or suspended well sites.

Recommendation 8

The Standing Committee on Economic Development and Environment recommends the GNWT study the Government of Saskatchewan Institutional Control Program and develop an NWT model that better implements the polluter-pays principle for the long-term and unforeseen remediation of mining sites while providing regulatory certainty with respect to industry relinquishment. An NWT model should be developed by the end of the 19th Assembly.

Recommendation 9

The committee recommends the GNWT implement transparent and clear processes to ensure that securities are established, reviewed and coordinated among various departments.

Recommendation 10

The Standing Committee on Economic Development and Environment recommends the GNWT review and amend all legislative requirements regarding the form of financial security for environmental compliance and remediation to ensure financial security must be irrevocable, absolute and unconditional.

Recommendation 11

The Standing Committee on Economic Development and Environment recommends that the GNWT undertake an immediate review of the Oil and Gas Spills and Debris Liability Regulations to ensure that the absolute liability caps are increased to fully implement the polluter-pays principle, reflect best practices and protect the public from liabilities. This review and increases to the caps should be implemented before the end of the 19th Assembly.

Recommendation 12

The Standing Committee on Economic Development and Environment recommends the GNWT make financial security information (including operator, land and water related securities, amounts, location of project, form of security, expiry dates) public through a website to help build public confidence in resource management.

Recommendation 13

The Standing Committee on Economic Development and Environment recommends the Department of Finance provide a plan with timelines to enhance reporting on the GNWT Environmental Liabilities Dashboard by matching reporting practices in the Treasury Board of Canada Secretariat's Federal Contaminated Sites Inventory.

Recommendation 14: The Standing Committee on Economic Development and Environment recommends the GNWT develop a plan with a budget and schedule to better support communities in the management of landfills, that includes training, capacity building, best practices in waste management, diversion, backhaul and related matters. This plan should be developed by the end of the 19th Assembly.

Recommendation 15: The Standing Committee on Economic Development and Environment recommends the GNWT explore partnerships with industry and industry associations to provide hands-on practical training for landfill managers across the territory.

Recommendation 16: The Standing Committee on Economic Development and Environment recommends the GNWT provide a response to these recommendations within 120 days. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Member for Nunakput. Reports of standing and special committees. Member for Nunakput.

MR. JACOBSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I, move, seconded by the honourable Member from the Deh Cho, that the Committee Report 39-19(2), deemed read, and printed in Hansard in its entirety. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Question.

MR. SPEAKER: Question has been called. All those in favour? All those opposed? Any abstentions. The motion is carried. Committee Report 13-19(2) is deemed read and will be printed in Hansard.

---Carried

COMMITTEE REPORT 39-19(2): STANDING
COMMITTEE ON ECONOMIC
DEVELOPMENT AND ENVIRONMENT
REPORT ON CONTAMINATED SITES

https://www.ntassembly.ca/sites/assembly/files/2023-02-07_-_scede_cr_39-192_contaminated_sites.pdf

Member for Nunakput.

MR. JACOBSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I move, second by the honourable Member from the Deh Cho, that Committee Report 39-19(2), Standing Committee on Economic Development and Environment report: The Prevention and Management of Contaminated Sites be received and moved into the Committee of the Whole for further consideration. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Question.

MR. SPEAKER: Question has been called. All those in favour? All those opposed? Any abstentions. The motion is carried. The committee report has been received and will be moved into Committee of the Whole for further consideration.

---Carried

Reports of standing and special committees. Returns to oral questions. Minister responsible for Housing NWT.

Returns to Oral Questions

RETURN TO ORAL QUESTION 1163-19(2): HOMELESSNESS

HON. PAULIE CHINNA: Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I have a Return to Oral Questions asked by the Member for Great Slave on October 13, 2022, regarding Homelessness.

The current data count for homelessness in the territory are from 2019 and show that a total of 1,585 Northwest Territories residents have experienced homelessness at some time in their life. In April 2021, the Homelessness Hub Yellowknife conducted a point in time count and found 312 individuals experiencing homelessness in Yellowknife.

The NWT has only done counts as part of specific projects, and we do not currently have a systematic collection of data on this population to allow us to track the population over time. Not only does this make it difficult for me to tell you how many NWT residents are impacted at this point, but it also means that I do not have the data on how long individuals remain homeless and what kinds of housing solutions they move into. As social departments have worked together, they have noted the need for better data collection to support the work of these clients.

It was recently reaffirmed by meetings with my colleagues from provinces/territories at the recent Ministers of Housing meeting, that the issues we are facing in the NWT are being faced in all jurisdictions of Canada. We have learned that there are a variety of approaches being taken in other jurisdictions, ranging from taking innovative approaches to collaborative program and services delivered for vulnerable populations to changing the architecture of government departments. All efforts recognize that improving access to programs and services is required to meaningfully address homelessness.

Similar to other jurisdictions, the Government of the Northwest Territories' response to homelessness has been challenged by unclear lines of accountability, a patchwork funding sources, an ad hoc policy approach, and a lack of dedicated human resources. Homelessness is a multi-faceted challenge that requires a whole-of-government approach.

Announcements from the federal government on the Reaching Home Strategy have identified

a territorial funding stream of \$43 million to address the causes of, and solutions to, homelessness in the Northwest Territories.

The Reaching Home Strategy was designed to support the goals of the National Housing Strategy and to reduce the chronic homelessness, nationally, by 50 percent. The City of Yellowknife is receiving a total of \$6 million over five years for homelessness programming. Reaching Home also currently provides funding to the Inuvialuit Regional Corporation, Deline Got'ine Government, and the Tlicho Government.

In addition to the Reaching Home funds, I am pleased to be able to say that some of the projects funded under the National Co-Investment Fund from Canada are also targeted to supporting vulnerable populations. Examples of this are included in Yellowknife, an additional 21 units under construction at Lynn's Place and the renovation of 41 units at Spruce Bough, and the creation of 14 units at the Family Support Centre in Hay River. These projects are just the beginning of some of the investment that will benefit the vulnerable persons across the Northwest Territories.

Homelessness is a very complex issue and truly to make change we do need to work closely with other social envelope departments to generate solutions and develop client-centered and focused approaches. That necessary collaborative work is now underway. We believe taking a bit more time will provide us with the opportunity to develop a more cohesive whole-of-government approach.

As noted in a response to a question earlier, this sitting in the House I have committed to providing a strategy regarding homelessness on or before April 1, 2023. This will allow the strategy to represent the intergovernmental nature of responding to homelessness instead of focus just on the Housing NWT's response.

We also recognize that engagement with our partners, including non-governmental organizations, Indigenous governments, and community governments, will be necessary to further advance work on this issue. I expect that this engagement will continue and further inform work during early this summer. As you have heard myself and my colleague speak in this House, we recognize that addressing homelessness is more than just Housing NWT or Health and Social Services responsibility and therefore our strategy must focus on a multi-faceted response. Mahsi, Mr. Speaker

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Minister. Returns to oral questions. Minister responsible for Health and Social Services.

RETURN TO ORAL QUESTION 1246-19(2): INFERTILITY TREATMENT

HON. JULIE GREEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I have a Return to Oral Question asked by the Member for Kam Lake on October 27, 2022, regarding Infertility Treatment.

To answer the Member's question as to who decides what conditions are covered as a medically necessary insured health service, it is not unfortunately a simple answer.

There are multiple factors that come together to determine what is deemed a medically necessary insured service. While the Canada Health Act sets out the principles of its Medicare system, specifically the principles of universality, portability and accessibility, it is the provincial and territorial healthcare insurance plan administrators who work with their respective physician groups, and across jurisdictions, to identify a set of services that each jurisdiction accepts as medically necessary insured service provided by physicians and in hospitals. This common set of services allows Canadians to have access to the same suite of services no matter where they live in the country.

Of course, each province and territory can cover additional services that are not universally insured across Canada. These services are only available as an insured service to the residents of that jurisdiction. In the NWT, we cover additional services such as eye examinations and rehab services, which are not services covered in other jurisdictions.

In cases of infertility, when an underlying medical condition is identified as the probable cause of the infertility, treatment of that underlying condition is covered under the NWT Healthcare Plan as an insured health service.

Where the cause of infertility is not readily known, these cases may be submitted to the Medical Advisor for review of the specifics of the case and decision. This process, referred to as 'prior approval,' is used in situations where detection and treatment of a potential underlying condition may be outside the Health and Social Services system's usual referral pathway or in circumstances that warrant further examination. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Minister. Returns to oral questions. Acknowledgements. Oral questions. Member for Hay River South.

Oral Questions

QUESTION 1306-19(2): MEDICAL DETOXIFICATION SERVICES

MR. ROCKY SIMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I talked about detox beds and the importance of them in all communities, not only Hay River. You know, just before we came into the building here, I had a call from somebody who was, you know, asking me if I could take them to the health centre in Hay River because they wanted to detox. But whenever I -- you know, I've done it in the past, and whenever I do it, it's usually, you know, we don't have a bed, or they don't have -- they don't seem to have the qualified staff there. So we need a mechanism, I guess, whether it's through legislation or something to also be able to kind of hold a person, you know, for a number of days as we do with mental health to help them along to detox. But, Mr. Speaker, the question I have is for the Minister of health, and I'd like her to tell me how many dedicated detox beds are available in Hay River. Thank you.

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

HON. JULIE GREEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I would just like to start by saying that not everybody with addictions needs hospital-based detox. For example, somebody who has an opioid use addiction can be treated as an outpatient with an opioid antagonist therapy, which is a medication-based therapy. So there isn't a need in that case for someone to be in hospital. The really key time that people need hospital detox is in the withdrawal from alcohol which can produce life threatening symptoms. So the Hay River Health and Social Services Authority does not have dedicated detox beds, but they certainly can be made available when a health practitioner assesses the patient and decides that inpatient detox is the preferred option to take. Thank you.

MR. ROCKY SIMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. And I appreciate that answer. However, you know, when somebody comes to me, and they ask me to take them somewhere, they want -- you know, they want to detox, you know, I've got to respond, and I've got to try and help them because it could be between -- you know, a matter between life and death. So, you know, to say that, well, not all people, you know, require a bed in the hospital to detox is maybe correct, and I agree there's other forms. But I think it's important that, you know, we have those places available. And I find that in the community we need them. Mr. Speaker, can the Minister tell me the number of staff available at the Hay River health centre who are actually qualified to deal with persons seeking detox support? Thank you.

HON. JULIE GREEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I'd like to thank the MLA for the engagement he has with this issue in his community. I'm very pleased that he gets calls directly and can provide the information that he has and I'm providing. So there are -- all frontline registered nurses are qualified to administer and support medical detox under the direction of a physician, and that applies to opioids and alcohol. So the starting point is to go to the health centre and to be assessed for the substance that the person wants to detox from, and the process then rolls from there. There are always registered nurses at the health centre who can provide this assistance. Thank you.

MR. ROCKY SIMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. And, again, I appreciate that answer. You know, I understand that there are staff there. I understand they all have qualifications. But at the end of the day when somebody goes in there, they don't only need medical treatment; they also need, you know, support from counsellors as well. And because what I find is that it's difficult sometimes for a person to actually stay there. They're looking for ways to leave the facility. And I know we can't stop them, but I think if we have people there to provide that support, they may stay. So, Mr. Speaker, can the Minister tell me if the department has dedicated detox beds on its radar for Hay River, and if not, will she make a commitment to reviewing it and making it a priority. Thank you.

HON. JULIE GREEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, there is a gap in our continuum of service which relates to people who are ready for detox and facility-based treatment to have a place, a safe place to live while they retain -- regain their sobriety and move forward with counselling and the application form to get into facility-based treatment. So what I would say about this is that the hospital is one possibility, but there needs to be a community-based possibility as well where people have a safe place to stay where they can access counselling, where they can use whatever therapy has been prescribed to them. And this is something that I think maybe exists in Yellowknife but not anywhere else in the territory. So it's certainly an area that needs strengthening which we need to look at. Thank you.

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

MR. ROCKY SIMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, you know, I guess when we're talking about people who are, you know, crying out for help, we have sort of the middle

component. We have a lot of programming. You know, I don't dispute that. And, you know, and I try and encourage people to -- you know, to take some of that programming or talk to counsellors. And we also have access to treatment centres, albeit that they're put from down south; they're not here in the territories, but we do have that. What we don't have is the front end which is the detox centres -- or beds. We need something for these people. You know, they need to be somewhere where they're safe, because a lot of times we're dealing with people who might be homeless; they don't have a place to live; you know, they've got families kicking them out, whatever. So they need a safe place. And it takes this government to actually do something. It takes our financial resources. So, Mr. Speaker, after six confirmed drug-related deaths in the community of Hay River, to support residents requiring detox, we need the funding, \$240,000, actually, for two positions which would be medical social workers. Can the Minister tell me when this might happen or if it's on her radar because my assumption was that it was something that was already going to happen. Thank you.

HON. JULIE GREEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, in fact, the Hay River Health and Social Services Authority is now actively recruiting two medical social workers who will support community outreach efforts and coordinate clinical care. So I don't know where that process is at, but the money has been identified; the ad has been posted, and we -- it usually takes somewhere up to 12 weeks to fill a position. So I hope that before we leave here at the end of March, you will -- I will be able to announce to you that the medical social workers are in place. Thank you.

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

QUESTION 1307-19(2):
HOMELESSNESS PREVENTION

MS. NOKLEBY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my questions are for the Minister of housing. Earlier the Minister responded to my oral question from last session and mentioned two projects here in Yellowknife that are being -- are supposedly work of the department in order to combat homelessness. Can the Minister tell me how much money that the GNWT contributed to those two projects, Lynn's Place and Spruce Bough that were mentioned in the return to oral questions. It's my understanding that money was from the federal government, not the GNWT and the two NGOs involved. Can the Minister please speak to the GNWT's contribution. Thank you.

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

HON. PAULIE CHINNA: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. And thank you to the Member for the question as well too. I actually just had the information in front of me, but I was more calculating the units for Yellowknife. That's what I had concentrated on. We have 366 that are being delivered now by the national co-investment fund, but then we did support these applications going forward. Housing did create a position to be the outreach to talk to NGOs, to talk to Indigenous groups, to gain their interest in addressing the housing crisis throughout the Northwest Territories with us. Working in partnership is a priority of mine as well too. Right now we have 214 of the 366 co-investment fund applications that have been approved. They are now under construction. Right now you can see the expansion of Lynn's Place, Spruce Bough, Borealis Co-Op, and Avens Senior Society also with a number of renovated units that are happening throughout the city. We also work with the City of Yellowknife as well too to address homelessness as well. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MS. NOKLEBY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I don't think I asked about the number of units. I asked the Minister how much money, besides the one position that hasn't done anything, did the GNWT spend on Lynn's Place and Spruce Bough. Thank you.

HON. PAULIE CHINNA: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I addressed the answer to the question. I said I did not have those numbers, that I was more concentrating on the number of units that were being delivered. I did have that in front of me just recently. I will follow up with the Member as well. But like I had said, I wanted to describe our support for the co-investment applications going forward for the Northwest Territories. We did create support and a position within Housing NWT to be the outreach to work closely with CMHC in addressing those housing needs and to support those applications going forward. We did get funding from this government to be addressing the national co-investment fund applications as well too. Sometimes the proponent comes forward as well, and they're not looking for financial support; they're looking for support through the application as well too. Some of them actually do have the means to bring their applications forward. But I will follow up with the Member as well to justify the numbers and what we financially contributed to these 214 units being constructed now here in Yellowknife. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MS. NOKLEBY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I'm happy to have given the Minister an opportunity for a Minister's statement there when she still did not answer my question or say that at the beginning of the first response. If she couldn't answer that, can she tell me how does she make decisions regarding the homelessness strategy and areas for funding, etcetera, when she doesn't collect any data about the people that are homeless or struggling in the Northwest Territories. Can the Minister tell me how she plans to address the fact that she has no data on who is homeless in the territory when she presents her homelessness strategy? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Member. I believe that's a different line of questions than what you started with. The next time we'll be a little more strict on that. Minister for Housing NWT.

HON. PAULIE CHINNA: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thank you, Mr. Speaker, for that as well too. Right now we've recognized that the homelessness strategy is an all-of-government approach. We are looking at the needs that are specifically identified as well too, addressing the poverty reduction, the food security, mental health, and addictions, and also looking at the affordable housing, and working more closely with our nonprofit organizations as well. This has been identified as a whole-of-government. And we're looking at this strategy hopefully being provided to Members by February 28th. And we did have the date that was identified as of April 1st, but I do understand the complexity of this strategy as well and the identified needs. For the data collection, this is something the government has not put together. We don't have those numbers. What I can do is work on the wait list that we do have throughout the Northwest Territories and the significant need for housing across the North. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

MS. NOKLEBY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. And I thank you for indulging my question. So as I sit and listen to the fact that we have not collected this data and hear the Minister explain that the housing wait list is what she's going off of, I think we're conflating two different issues here. Homelessness does not equate to the number of people that are on the housing wait list, especially whether you have NGOs like the YWCA taking and housing people in lieu of the government doing it themselves. Given that there is no data being collected and I've yet to see the Minister come to my riding or any in Yellowknife that I'm aware of, could the Minister please commit to doing a tour of Yellowknife

apartment buildings in my riding and including Lanky Court. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

HON. PAULIE CHINNA: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I just wanted to look at our -- looking at our wait list, that is a contribution to the housing strategy. I said this is a all-of-government approach. We will have to -- we are working with Health and Justice as well too. And I'm looking forward to the completion of the strategy as well. And also for the Member to invite me to her riding and looking at Lanky Court, I'd also like to extend that to the MLA O'Reilly riding as well too because Lanky Court is in his riding. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Minister. Colleagues, before we continue, we've got to tighten up the questions and answers. We did two, and it's been 15 minutes here, so we need to shorten it up here. Thank you. Oral questions. Member for Deh Cho.

QUESTION 1308-19(2):
SMALL COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION IN
ARCTIC WINTER GAMES

MR. BONNETROUGE: Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my questions are related to my Member's statement, the Arctic Winter Games and how the department can increase participation with small community athletes in traditional sports and all the other sports there. Can the MACA Minister advise as to what steps were taken to increase participation of small communities in preparation for the Arctic Winter Games? Mahsi.

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

HON. SHANE THOMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, it was very exciting to be at the Arctic Winter Games this year. It was the first time in five years that we've had it because of COVID and the situations like that. So the department of Municipal and Community Affairs works with Sport North, the Aboriginal Sport Circle, Mackenzie Recreation Association, Beaufort Delta Recreation Association, and the Territorial Sports Organizations to develop and foster coaches and athletes in the communities. The department also supports Sport North by having the MACA regional recreation coordinators work with the communities in identifying that there. As well we get that information out to the schools. So we're able to do those things collaboratively with education and our partners. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. BONNETROUGE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I note that the Minister had gone down on public dime, and he didn't invite the most

important person, me. But, Mr. Speaker, I noted in my Member's statement there were no participants from Kakisa, Enterprise, nor Katl'odeeche, which is the Hay River Reserve. I note that there are regional recreation staff throughout the NWT. Can the Minister advise if the regional recreation staff advise and assist the small communities, particularly the communities I mentioned, in preparation for the Arctic Winter Games? Mahsi.

HON. SHANE THOMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I think MLA Semmler would probably say she was the most important person, and she was there, and she did a great job representing the Northwest Territories there. Municipal and Community Affairs regional recreation coordinators are actively involved in sharing information to all the communities. That's with the rec leaders; that's what the SAOs or the band managers. So we get that information out there. I can also confirm information on the selection process and deadlines were shared numerous times. As well we work with the schools to get that information out to the people there. Again, we place high -- how you say -- most important -- getting the information out there, it's very important for us to stress the information and getting it out there. And we work with the regional associations as well to get that information to all communities in the Northwest Territories, just not the ones in the Mackenzie region, but we also get it to the Beaufort Delta Recreation Association. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. BONNETROUGE: Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. I thank the Minister for that answer. What I hear there is that they share -- the regional recreation staff only shares information. I think in my previous statements regarding sports activities for all the communities and since the lagging time due to COVID and new recreation staff was pertinent and very important that that staff -- those staff go out into the communities, and it hasn't happened. We got a lot of staff involved in recreation who are not going into the communities to offer assistance within the communities. You're only sharing info. But that's just not going to work. Mr. Speaker, I understand there is controversy in this May junior regionals held in Yellowknife in the past and the lack of proper facilities for attending athletes and their chaperones. This was all during the trials and preparations. Can the Minister advise as to why other communities outside of Yellowknife were not considered to host regionals or trials? Mahsi.

HON. SHANE THOMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I'm going to have to clarify something here. Our regional recreation

coordinators do go away to the communities. They do work with the schools. They do work with the recreational staff. They come in when they're invited, when they're new so they get into that there. In regards to hosting territorial events, yes, there was some confusion out there. But, again, it got fixed. Territorial organizations work with the communities to see if they want to host it, if they're able to do it, if they've got the venues, they got the places, accommodations for the food. It's been the practice to host where communities want to host it and where they can be hosting it. In Fort Simpson, in my 30 years in that community, we've hosted territorial and regional trials. Fort Providence has hosted regional trials as well. So we do give that option to -- opportunity to various communities, and we will continue to do that. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

MR. BONNETROUGE: Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. I wish we could see a record of their staff going into the communities. I'm not aware of anything there. Anyways, I understand the Canada Winter Games are upcoming. I don't know the dates or a venue or which place it's being held. Can the Minister advise if, because it's a short period of time, if the same athletes that attended the Arctic Winter Games will be the same athletes going to the Canada Winter Games? Mahsi.

HON. SHANE THOMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the 2023 Canada Winter Games are going to be held in Charlottetown, PEI, on March -- February 18th to March 5th. So we do have a team coming from the Northwest Territories. Some of the athletes that did attend the Arctic Winter Games are part of the Canada Games team. There is a selection process, but there is a number of new athletes as well that are able to participate at that level. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

QUESTION 1309-19(2):
PUBLIC HOUSING TENANT ISSUES

MR. O'REILLY: Merci, Monsieur le President. My questions are for the Minister for Housing NWT. I outlined a myriad of problems brought to my office by constituents in public housing at Lanky Court. Can the Minister tell us why individuals being moved out of their public housing units to repair them are being charged moving expenses and utility account service charges, and will the Minister commit to

reimbursing such unfair charges? Mahsi, Mr. Speaker.

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

HON. PAULIE CHINNA: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. And thank you to the Member for asking the question as well. The information that I did receive is that the Yellowknife Housing Authority did pay for the moving expenses, and it didn't appear that there was any issues with the assessment of the additional deposits on their utility accounts, but if there is something -- if there is receipts, if there's something that I could look at that I could further look into this file as well too. I would not want to see the clients endure these additional expenses when moving from unit to unit as well. And right now that -- looking at anything that we need to do to improve our client service with housing, I appreciate the comments coming forward as well. And it's the time for us to start recognizing how we could improve services. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. O'REILLY: Merci, Monsieur le Président. I want to thank the Minister for that. And I'll work with my constituent to get the receipts over to the Minister's office pronto. But just trying to get a response in a reasonable time frame from the Minister on my constituent's concerns about public housing in Lanky Court has been a real challenge. I suggested several times that public housing tenants are being told to move or store belongings for insect control that cleaning products and storage containers should be provided. Can the Minister tell us why cleaning products or services and storage containers are not provided to public housing tenants to facilitate improvements in their housing conditions? Mahsi, Mr. Speaker.

HON. PAULIE CHINNA: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. And thank you to the Member for the question as well too. And I just wanted to apologize also for the delay in the responses. I did have a new team established within the last year. So we are getting more coordinated, and hopefully we're able to respond a lot more quicker. We are also -- I don't want to take up too much time, but we are also working more closely with the local housing authority and improving our communication and our relationship with them as well. Right now we do have some storage facilities that are provided to some clients, but it's looked at as a case-by-case basis. Just for an example that one of the storage facilities were provided to a client that was in a Fort Gary apartment complex, and it was a cold storage facility that was provided to deal with the movement and also to house the tenant's belongings while the

house was being treated for a bug infestation. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. O'REILLY: Merci, Monsieur le Président. I want to thank the Minister for that. And I'll advise my constituents that if they have problems with storage containers and so on, they should contact the Minister's office. As bad as conditions are in Lanky Court, the statistics bureau figures on specific housing problems reveal that about 10 percent of NWT houses have mold and/or insect pest problems. This strikes me as a pandemic, Mr. Speaker. What public education and awareness measures does Housing NWT or community housing organizations take to raise awareness of these problems and give advice on actions tenants can take? Mahsi, Mr. Speaker.

HON. PAULIE CHINNA: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. And thank you to the Member because I'm starting to recognize that this is quite a huge issue here in Yellowknife with the Lanky Court. We do have the pest control companies that do provide information as they are providing the assistance and the work in these units as well. Right now one of the things that housing is developing is improvement with our clients as well too. So we're looking at educational materials for the tenants as well when we're looking at what needs to be maintained, what needs to be recognized, and when to call our local housing authorities right away to deal with these issues. Another thing that I just wanted to mention is that within our conversations with the federal government, we were successful in receiving \$60 million over two years. We will be committing \$30 million of that funding to public housing renovation. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

MR. O'REILLY: Merci, Monsieur le Président. Again, on mold, pests, and bad indoor quality -- indoor air quality and other housing stats, the numbers show that housing core needs have steadily gotten worse from 2009 to 2019. Today it stands at about 24 percent. A quarter of our houses are not good. This government continues to spend far more on roads than housing. Can the Minister tell us when this government will spend at least as much on housing as it does on roads? Mahsi, Mr. Speaker.

HON. PAULIE CHINNA: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. And thank you to the Member for his questions as well too. And I do understand where he's coming from when we're talking about funding and trying to address the housing needs throughout the Northwest Territories. And we continue to work together as a

government in trying to address these needs. But what we've done successfully is we've worked with the federal government as well too and really tried to enhance those federal applications going forward. And I've recognized that it's not all of a one-government approach, and it's not only the GNWT to address this crisis. The other thing that I wanted to mention is that we were very successful with the Indigenous governments and partnering up with them for them to receive housing money as well too. We also do support them with the community housing plans to identify the housing needs in each of the communities as well. There's a lot of funding that is out there, and housing tries its best to making sure that we do receive a bit of that federal funding coming to the north. I know I'm taking a little bit of time. The other thing that I'm just still wanting to mention is that we did put forward another co-investment application as well to address the seniors housing needs in the Northwest Territories, and we were successful with that application. So we'll see 12 new housing units for seniors that will be built for seniors and their mobilization as well too recognizing their limited mobility. Those would be constructed in 2023-2024. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Minister. Oral questions. Member for Tu Nedhe-Wiilideh.

QUESTION 1310-19(2):
REQUEST FOR CABINET TO VISIT TU
NEDHE-WIILIDEH COMMUNITIES

MR. EDJERICON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In the last year, I feel the Premier and Cabinet are not working together with the ordinary MLAs in the spirit and intent to resolve their respective community issues. In this consensus style government, this should be a top priority to work together with all Members so all communities have a voice to be heard in this government, and that needs to be respected. From what I could see, this is not happening with this government. There is no consultation or accommodation with MLAs in small communities, especially for my riding, their wants and needs for the respective communities. This is not reflected in their four-year plan. Again, the NWT Cabinet knows best for my riding. Mr. Speaker, my small communities do matter, and their voices need to be heard and respected. My question, Mr. Speaker, is to the GNWT Cabinet. I know the Premier's not here today, Mr. Speaker. The thing is that I'd like to get a commitment from Cabinet - the Premier, Minister Caroline Wawzonek, Minister Shane Thompson, Minister Paulie Chinna, and Minister Diane Archie, and Minister Julie Green, and Minister R.J. Simpson - to see if they could come to my

riding in the first week of break the House so that they are able to listen to the people in my riding to their issues and concerns. And I just want to see if I can get a commitment here today. I'm inviting you, and maybe the Cabinet could work together to either charter into the community, or we could figure this thing out. But I think it's important that we do that. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Member for Tu Nedhe-Wiilideh. The question needs to be directed to one person so I'm guessing that'll be Deputy Premier. Deputy Premier.

HON. DIANE ARCHIE: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, we as a Cabinet have standing committee meetings on all of our different discussions, whether it be our bills, legislation. We sit in front of committee, and we go through all the -- all of our work in detail, and we get feedback. And it's -- you know, it's a whole-of-government approach with Regular Members and committee. In terms of looking to commit right now, for me just sitting here asking to go into the community directly, we'd have to individually look at our schedules. Right after we're done session, some of us have FPTs; we have community tours; we have bilateral agreements. I'm not saying no, but I think that we as a government could perhaps look at each of our individual schedules and respond back to the Member. Thank you.

MR. EDJERICON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. And thank you for your response. Again, Mr. Speaker, you know, I've been here a year, and there's no Minister -- no Cabinet Minister has approached me to say, what is it your needs are for your community in your riding. In 2019, all MLAs got together, and they are able to put everything on the table in what they want to see for their riding, and they came up with a mandate for this government. Again, you know, I was never given an opportunity to have a say what should be on that mandate as well. So, you know, we've been advocating for winter roads, dust control, additions, schools in Dettah, and so on. But the thing is I know Cabinet is busy, and I'm just saying that if there's a way that we could have the Cabinet come to our community. Dettah and N'dilo is just down the road. We'd be there in 20 minutes. We could fly to Lutselk'e. You know, we could be there -- if we go there by charter, in and out, we could do Fort Resolution and so on. So, anyways, I'd just like to see if there's a way we could work together to accommodate that. This is a request on behalf of the community. Thank you.

HON. DIANE ARCHIE: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, you know,

absolutely we have requests often from Regular Members to go as Ministers. Perhaps we've been to your community several times as a result of your request to us. We've gone to some of the other ridings as a request of the Members. I encourage the Member to reach out to our ministerial offices, find a schedule that works for all of us, or perhaps even a couple of us. I mean, you know, we all can't sometimes make it all together, but we will give it some effort to be able to get to some of the communities when and where we can. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Deputy Premier. For the record, we haven't seen you since last year. No, I'm just kidding. Oral questions. Member for Tu Nedhe-Wiilideh.

MR. EDJERICON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Yes, and I'll reach out to the Cabinet by email and see if we could try to work together to come up with a day to go into those communities because I think it's very important that we do that. Mr. Speaker, earlier I had mentioned that, you know, there's -- and I heard the Minister of housing talk about the \$30 million that they're looking at putting back into housing. But that \$30 million over two years is -- it's coming from CIRNAC to deal with housing crisis. And in my riding, we have a housing crisis already, and we have housing issues. So I want to know if we are able to work with the government to look at how we could use that money to go back into the communities here in the Northwest Territories. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Member for Tu Nedhe-Wiilideh. But your line of questions needs to be to your invitation for Cabinet. We can't go to another line of questioning for a different Minister. Member for Tu Nedhe-Wiilideh.

MR. EDJERICON: Okay. Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Well, I'll have to ask these questions tomorrow then because they are important. The monies that we're talking about from CIRNAC are \$30 million over two years, but that money was spent to fixing the public housing. We still have housing crisis in Northwest Territories. And the money that's been used to address these issues were never addressed. So what I'm saying, Mr. Speaker, is that tomorrow I'll bring this up and say, hey, look, we got to work with Indigenous government to talk about how we're going to -- we should actually do a contribution agreement with Indigenous government to spend that \$30 million. So I'll talk about that tomorrow. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you. We may have a chance later today, but I doubt it, but just a thought. Oral questions. Member for Kam Lake.

QUESTION 1311-19(2):
SPEECH LANGUAGE PATHOLOGY
SERVICES

MS. CLEVELAND: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my questions are for the Minister of Health and Social Services. Mr. Speaker, this time last year when I spoke to the Minister about rehabilitation services, including speech language pathology, the Minister advised that health recently organized the delivery of speech services to focus on children from birth to five years of age. How has this change impacted service delivery in the last year, and how has it changed wait times for speech language pathology. Thank you.

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

HON. JULIE GREEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. And thank you to the Member for that question. So last year we did reorganize services on the basis that the service provided within the schools is advisory and not therapy. The service provided within the clinics is therapy. And we prioritize the youngest children for that therapy so that they have the best success when they do begin school. Having said that, we have had and continue to have significant staff vacancies in both the in-school and the occupational therapy services. And so as a result, they were reduced for this school year. In school, consultative services will be maintained for students with priority needs, and those are primarily students under five years of age and students with complex needs. So we've added a number of new positions in the Delta and at Stanton with the hope of -- not only the hope but the intention of reducing the average wait time of -- what we're going for is reduction of an average wait to less than two months. Thank you.

MS. CLEVELAND: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the Minister mentioned that the current service model focuses on -- primarily on children that are birth to five years of age. And we know that typically at about age six children age out of the system, and the model that -- sorry. They switch to a consultation model at age six. So given the impacts of COVID-19, is Health and Social Services looking to increase or remove this age-out limit to increase access to services in our community schools and that includes in Yellowknife here. Thank you.

HON. JULIE GREEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, we're not looking at making that change.

MS. CLEVELAND: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, given that there is a national shortage of speech language pathologists, is health working with ECE to create a hybrid model of partnerships, resident speech language pathologists, and community-based paraprofessionals to provide the much needed on-the-ground support in our community schools. Thank you.

HON. JULIE GREEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, as the Member knows, NTHSSA and the department do work collaboratively with ECE in this area. And in the next fiscal year, the department is preparing for a review specifically of the speech language pathology services to understand the current service gaps and identify opportunities to improve services. And that work will include NTHSSA, Hay River Health and Social Services Authority, the Tlicho Community Services Agency, and ECE. Thank you.

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

MS. CLEVELAND: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, last year I asked that the wait times for rehabilitative services like OT, PT, and speech be publicly reported. The Minister shared an interest in advocating for greater transparency of wait times. So can the Minister share any updates on if and when this type of reporting will be available in real time like an online dashboard. Thank you.

HON. JULIE GREEN: Yes, thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, we do have a high-level service dashboard that is available online, but it doesn't drill into the level that the Member is asking for. And so I will follow up with her to give her specific times for Inuvik, Stanton, and Fort Smith. Thank you.

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

QUESTION 1312-19(2):
EXPANDING THE SCOPE OF PRACTICE
FOR PHARMACISTS TO PRESCRIBE
CERTAIN MEDICATIONS

MR. JOHNSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's quite clear that the scope of practice of our pharmacists is falling well behind the rest of Canada. And whether that be for emergency prescriptions, prescriptions for minor ailments, adapting in managing prescriptions, ordering lab tests, there is all sorts of things that pharmacists can do in the rest of Canada that they can't do here. So my question for the Minister of health is will we expand the scope of practice for our pharmacists? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Member for Yellowknife North. Minister responsible for Health and Social Services.

HON. JULIE GREEN: Yes, thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, we are aware that the practice of pharmacy has expanded since our Pharmacy Act had a last substantial overhaul and that the pharmacists are able to deliver a greater scope of practice than they have historically and that that includes administering specific medications as well as prescribing them, which would be a huge help as things stand now. So we are planning to draft regulations to bring pharmacists into the Health and Social Services Professions Act and to do that work early in the life of the next Assembly. Thank you.

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

QUESTION 1313-19(2):
HOUSING NORTHWEST TERRITORIES
POLICIES AND EMPLOYEES

MS. WEYALLON ARMSTRONG: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, as a method to reduce arrears, can the Minister commit to establishing a periodic verification of income options for tenants. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Member for Monfwi. Minister responsible for Housing NWT.

HON. PAULIE CHINNA: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I don't -- I would like to follow up with the Member as well. Yes, I would like to follow up with the Member. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MS. WEYALLON ARMSTRONG: Thank you. What local housing organization staff training is required on culturally respectful communication and developing relationship with Indigenous people. Thank you.

HON. PAULIE CHINNA: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. And thank you to the Member for the question. And my apologies that I just requested to follow up with the Member because I didn't -- I just needed the question to be clarified. But I'll follow up with her separately. Thank you.

Right now we are going through a policy review right throughout housing. We've got 41 policy reviews that are currently happening. Cultural sensitivity is something that will be -- that will be included in the training for the local housing authorities as well. During this time that I've had the portfolio, I've also recognized language barriers were also an issue. So that will also be addressed. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MS. WEYALLON ARMSTRONG: Thank you. According to the 2021 Northwest Territories Housing Corporation Annual Report, rent arrears were forgiven in Behchoko and Whati. Why were no arrears forgiven in Wekweeti and for Gameti. Thank you.

HON. PAULIE CHINNA: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. And thank you for the Member for asking the question as well too because we do go through a lengthy process when we're looking at forgiving accounts. They usually would have to do with very extreme circumstances and situations. I can follow up with the Member as well too for just a further description on how that process works. We also have to abide by and report to the department of Finance and to this government as well too. There is a lengthy process for us to be looking at those accounts. Some of them are denied, and some of them are approved. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

MS. WEYALLON ARMSTRONG: Mr. Speaker, majority of the people -- majority of the Indigenous people are living in public units; therefore, it is important for housing employees to be Indigenous. I want to ask the Minister what are they doing to build the capacity. What is the Housing NWT doing to build their capacity? Thank you.

HON. PAULIE CHINNA: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. And also I just want to comment too that, you know, the numbers that we do have for Indigenous employees is quite high throughout housing. We do have the local housing authorities as well in the smaller communities. Majority of our budget is allocated to smaller communities. Also here in headquarters, I don't have the number with me on hand, but I can also provide that further information to the Member as well. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

QUESTION 1314-19(2):
FUNDING FOR MEDICAL SOCIAL
WORKERS IN HAY RIVER

MR. ROCKY SIMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, these questions are for the Minister of Health. I'd like to ask the Minister who funded the two medical worker positions. Was it new funding through this government, or was it re-profiled from within existing Hay River Health and Social Services budget. Thank you.

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

HON. JULIE GREEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my understanding is that the Hay River Health and Social Services Authority has been able to fund these positions with internal funds at this point but that they are looking for a longer term solution to continue funding the medical social workers. Thank you.

MR. ROCKY SIMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, yes, that's my understanding that they were re-profiled and that the positions are probably only going to be for one year maybe. And I'd like to see, I guess, multiyear funding for it. So I'm hoping that, you know, the Minister will look at that, and I'd ask her if the department is actually looking at funding for those two positions so that they are ongoing and multiyear. Thank you.

HON. JULIE GREEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I don't have information on what the department has for an ask. I haven't seen that yet. But it's very unusual for us to offer a position like that for only one year. It's also very difficult to recruit people for a job that's only for one year. So my expectation is that the department is looking at other ways to fund this on a permanent basis. Thank you.

MR. ROCKY SIMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, considering that these are medical social worker positions, will they be considered, I guess, more of an outreach service allowing for the workers to actually meet clients outside of a hospital setting. Thank you.

HON. JULIE GREEN: Yes, thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, a better description of these positions is adult social workers, adult services social workers. So my understanding is that the operational situation for the two when they are hired is to have one available at the health centre and one who is doing outreach. Thank you.

MR. ROCKY SIMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, can the Minister tell me whether these positions will be under the Hay River Health and Social Services Authority or under the NT Health and Social Services Authority? Thank you.

HON. JULIE GREEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, these are Hay River Health and Social Services Authority positions.

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

QUESTION 1315-19(2):
INTEGRATED SERVICES TERRITORIAL
SUPPORT TEAM

MS. CLEVELAND: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I almost forgot to mention happy birthday to the Minister of Housing today. My next questions are not for her. They are for the Minister of Education, Culture and Employment.

My first question, Mr. Speaker, is the GNWT's response to the OAG's education audit contained an action item of to develop greater integration of services for children and youth in the education system through expanding regional capacity. This action item is currently on hold. What concerns me is the deliverables of this action item were to explore regional approaches to expand the current capacity of territorial-based support team, identify a pilot for a demonstration site for the model to be deployed and evaluated, and collaborate with other departments to finalize a model for integrated service delivery that involves provision of services in schools. Given the importance of support services in schools, why was this action item put on hold. Thank you.

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

HON. R.J. SIMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. There was actually a pilot ready to go in the 2021-2022 school year, but like many things, COVID derailed that, and there was just -- it was not a possibility to do this work. The department's efforts were elsewhere unfortunately. Since that time, the approach to integrated services has changed across government, and so we are looking at new ways to integrate our services in that new approach. Thank you.

MS. CLEVELAND: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I find it very hard to accept that response because there are other ways of delivering these services that are creative, out of the box and that are COVID friendly. There are tons of virtual solutions that are out there that a lot of school boards actually pay for out of their own pocket over school shutdowns and during COVID so that students still had access to these very important services. But those funds came out of their own budgets. So my next question, Mr. Speaker, is during my Member's statement, I spoke about a partnership that Nunavut is using to deliver rehabilitation support services in schools both in person and virtually. So is ECE considering a similar hybrid model. Thank you.

HON. R.J. SIMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. And, you know, the Member is correct that the school boards have paid for some of those services, and that is with the funding that comes from the department of Education, Culture and Employment under the heading of inclusive schooling, and those funds are restricted for the types of things that the Member is talking about. So we are providing the funds, and we're letting the school boards determine how they use those funds.

And so there are those types of partnerships, but they're not at the territorial level. They are at the school board level. That being said, I think that in the long term, we need to evaluate how we provide services. The Education Act modernization will address a lot of that, will determine the different roles of the different entities. So that work is -- it's a work in progress, Mr. Speaker. Thank you.

MS. CLEVELAND: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. And I appreciate the Minister identifying that it is a work in progress and that ECE is still working on this. And I also appreciate the Minister of Health referencing that they are currently working on this with other departments, including the department of education. I think it's really important, and we can't still find ourselves in another decade simply looking at the fact that there's vacancies and saying, well, we just don't have enough speech language pathologist, so we just have to make do. We're going to have to look at other creative solutions like these hybrid models, like paraprofessionals in communities and so forth. And so I guess my next question: Looking at the Nunavut model, how it was facilitated through their department of education, not through their Department of Health and Social Services, where the focus is a hundred percent on in-school services, not on services -- especially where we have an aging population who also need access to speech language pathology. And so I'm wondering from the Minister of education is this a service that should be provided through Health and Social Services, or in actual fact, should speech language pathology for school-based children or school-aged children be delivered in schools from the department of education. Thank you.

HON. R.J. SIMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I don't think there's a straightforward simple answer to that. There's a number of different things you have to factor in. Probably four minutes worth of things that you need to factor in here. So you need to look at -- you need to look at the capacity within the department of Education, Culture and Employment. If we are talking about ECE managing clinical staff, you know, we don't have that capacity at this point.

The Member pointed out the fact that the department of health has a mandate to serve all residents, whereas ECE focuses on the schools. So there is an argument that perhaps we need to be having some -- we need to deliver services dedicated to students. All of that really is up for discussion right now as we redesign the government system of schools. But there are -- there's values to every approach. I think the bottom line is no matter who is running this right now, there aren't enough staff; there aren't enough speech language pathologists; there aren't enough people providing rehab services to provide the services we need regardless of who is administering the program. Thank you.

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

Written Questions

WRITTEN QUESTION 55-19(2): PUBLIC ACCESS TO FORESTRY DECISIONS AND DECISION-MAKING

MR. O'REILLY: Merci, Monsieur le President. My question is for the Minister of Environment and Natural Resources.

The Department conducted a five-week public engagement on a new Forest Act that concluded on December 28, 2022. No report on that work has been released to date. The summary of policy intentions document made no mention of a public registry or what information would be made publicly available. To better understand what information is currently public and the number of authorizations and decisions made under existing legislation, please provide the following:

1. The number of instances where decisions and authorizations have been made under the Forest Management Act for each of the last five years related to:
 - a) Section 2 appointments of a Forest Management Supervisor;
 - b) Section 4 appointments of Forest Management Officers;
 - c) Section 8 transfer of forests to Canada;
 - d) Section 9 forest management agreements;
 - e) Section 10 permits and licences;
 - f) Section 19 suspension of a permit or licence;
 - g) Section 21 written reasons for the suspension of a permit or licence;
 - h) Section 22 notices of appeal;
 - i) Section 28 ministerial decisions on appeals; and,
 - j) Section 30 enforcement orders.
2. The number of instances where decisions and authorizations have been made under the Forest Protection Act for each of the last five years related to:
 - a) Section 16 appointments of a forest supervisor;
 - b) Section 17 appointments of forest officers;
 - c) Section 19 directions, demands, and notices issued by the forest supervisor; and,
 - d) Section 21 permits issued.
 3. For each of the items listed in 1 and 2, please indicate where these documents are publicly available without resort to the Access to Information and Protection and Privacy Act and where the public can access them.
 4. An explanation of how the department intends to implement the provisions of the Open Government Policy (approved by the Executive Council January 8, 2018) as part of the new Forest Act, especially regarding open-by-design information and decision-making, increased transparency, and public participation in decision-making.

Mahsi, Mr. Speaker.

Returns to Written Questions

RETURN TO WRITTEN QUESTION 48-19(2): DELIVERING THE CHILD AND YOUTH CARE COUNSELLOR PROGRAM

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Member for Frame Lake. Written questions. Returns to written questions. Mr. Clerk.

CLERK OF THE HOUSE: (Mr. Tim Mercer): Mr. Speaker, I have a Return to Written Question 48-19(2) asked by the Member for Great Slave on October 26th to the Minister of Education, Culture and Employment regarding delivering the Child and Youth Care Counsellor Program.

This program has recently been re-branded from Child and Youth Care Counselling to Child and Youth Counselling. The purpose of this re-brand is to improve recruitment efforts and increase the number of candidates we receive for these positions. Throughout this response I will use this updated language.

1. Can the Minister explain what engagement or consultation the Department of Education, Culture and Employment conducted with counsellors already working in the school system prior to implementing the new child youth care counsellor positions?

The Department of Education, Culture and Employment, or ECE, engaged superintendents through the NWT Superintendent Association, where Superintendents bring the concerns of Education Body staff to the table and suggest ways to resolve issues moving forward. Prior to the introduction of the Child and Youth Counselling, or CYC, initiative, there were 18 counsellors employed in the school system. Affected employees were considered for the new CYC initiative positions if they could demonstrate they:

- Met the qualifications of the job description, which requires a master's degree in Child and Youth Care, Counselling, Clinical Social Work or Education with a focus on therapeutic counselling;
- Had equivalencies in terms of education and experience; or
- Had similar qualifications for a developmental transfer into the position.

Education Bodies were informed within a year of the initiative being launched. As the initiative was rolled out incrementally across regions, Education Bodies had between one and four years of notice. Existing counsellors were given the opportunity to seek additional qualifications to meet the criteria of the CYC position.

2. Can the Minister detail the qualifications typically accepted for child and youth care counsellors in place in our school system?

The current job descriptions require a master's degree in Child and Youth Care, Counselling, Clinical Social Work, or Education with a focus on therapeutic counselling. The Northwest Territories Health and Social Services Authority is currently in the process of updating the qualifications and screening criteria included in the CYC job descriptions to allow for a larger hiring pool. This may include expanding the description to allow for local counsellors who

can demonstrate equivalencies that meet the requirements of the position.

3. Do school principals get to evaluate the child and youth care counsellors?

School principals are not involved in the performance evaluation of the Child and Youth Counsellors, as they are employees of the health and social services authorities. ECE has an Education Body committee System through which Education Body input and feedback is provided; within this system, Education Bodies inform ECE of both successes and issues so that the department can collaborate with regions and with the Department of Health and Social Services to address issues and provide support. ECE recognizes there is a need for a formal and direct communication mechanism between Clinical Supervisors and school principals.

4. Is there a way for school administrators to speak formally to the effectiveness of this program operating in the schools?

As Members of the CYC Steering committee, Education Body Superintendents can raise concerns and ideas for improvement during those regular meetings, as well as through the NWT Superintendent Association and the Student Support Subcommittee meetings. There is also a monitoring and evaluation plan for the CYC initiative in place, which includes formal mechanisms for feedback. I'll speak to the monitoring and evaluation plan, and the associated formal mechanisms for feedback, in my next response.

5. What evaluative feedback mechanisms are in place to assess the effectiveness of the child and youth care counsellor's program?

When the CYC program was launched in the 2019-2020 school year, a monitoring and evaluation plan was launched along with it. Annually, ECE and the Department of Health and Social Services gather monitoring data about the CYC initiative that speaks to regional successes and challenges, in the regions where the initiative was implemented. As part of the monitoring and evaluation plan, these annual monitoring activities are then used to inform the CYC initiative evaluation, which is currently taking place. Examples of monitoring information that have been collected include: Turnover rates, number of monthly sessions by session type, average weekly hours that CYCs spend in schools, and number of individual students seen by school, by region. This data is collected and shared annually with the CYC initiative team for the purpose of ongoing program improvement. Due to its sensitive

nature, this data is not reported publicly. The monitoring information that the CYC initiative partners collect does not include annual feedback from children, youth, and families. Child, youth, and family feedback, as well as feedback from CYCs, educators, and administrators, is instead built into the evaluation stage of our monitoring and evaluation approach the CYC initiative. That evaluation phase is taking place this year. The department has begun gathering feedback from CYCs, educators, and administrators, as well as Indigenous governments and Indigenous organizations.

The department is also working with a consultant and a youth advisory committee on the child, youth and family portion of the engagement and feedback, which will take place between February and April 2023. As part of the evaluation taking place this year, in May 2022, ECE and the Department of Health and Social Services surveyed health and education stakeholders, including school administrators, on the CYC initiative. An internal "What We Heard" report was prepared and this information will also be used as part of the evaluation process and report to inform the overall program design updates.

Another mechanism for child, youth and family feedback, for those families that participate in the CYC initiative is the NWT Community Counselling Program Client Satisfaction Questionnaire. This tool is part of the Department of Health and Social Services' regular monitoring and reporting processes. Client Satisfaction is an indicator of the extent to which services and supports meet the needs of individuals and families and is considered a key dimension of service quality.

The questionnaire is administered regularly, every two to three years. The most recent survey was issued in 2021 and a targeted effort was made to include the CYC initiative. Results of the questionnaire will be used to support monitoring of the CYC initiative. Responses from children and youth, or their parents or guardians, who have experience receiving services from CYCs also help to inform levels of satisfaction with the initiative. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

RETURN TO WRITTEN QUESTION 49-19(2):
DELIVERING THE CHILD AND YOUTH
CARE COUNSELLOR PROGRAM

CLERK OF THE HOUSE: (Mr. Tim Mercer):
Mr. Speaker, I have a Return to Written Question 49-19(2) asked by the Member for Great Slave on October 26th, 2022, regarding

delivering the Child and Youth Care Counsellor Program.

A lot of work is going on behind the scenes to address the concerns we have heard from our partners regarding the Child and Youth Care Counsellor Program. One of the recent changes includes a name change from Child and Youth Care Counselling to Child and Youth Counselling, or CYC. The purpose of this re-brand is to improve recruitment efforts and increase the number of candidates we receive for these positions.

Mr. Speaker, the rationale for the development of the CYC initiative came from a series of youth engagement activities that were conducted by the department between 2016 and 2017. These activities gathered feedback from NWT youth in a variety of settings including FOXY/SMASH retreats, youth ambassador gatherings and the Back to the Trail Gathering.

In total, these activities engaged over 130 youth from across the NWT on the broad topic of their mental health. What we heard from youth was that existing approaches to counselling, particularly in schools, were not working for them and that they wanted dedicated, qualified resources that were easily accessible. In response to their feedback the departments of Education, Culture and Employment, or ECE, and Health and Social Services, or Health and Social Services, co-designed the CYC initiative.

In preparation for the implementation of the CYC initiative, Health and Social Services did not consult with existing child and youth counsellors as there were no dedicated CYCs in the schools delivering clinical counselling at the time. That said, Health and Social Services worked closely with our partners at ECE to support this integration, and ECE engaged with NWT Superintendents.

As part of this integration work, Health and Social Services and ECE worked collaboratively to develop a governance model for the initiative that included representation from both departments, health and social services authorities and superintendents. The CYC steering committee and regional subcommittees provide an opportunity for all parties to come together to share their experiences and contribute problem solving and solution generating around any issues that may have been identified. Additional work was done to develop a memorandum of understanding between ECE and Health and Social Services, as well as Child and Youth Counselling Program guidelines to support the consistent implementation and administration of the program across the territory. A Child and

Youth Counselling Handbook was also developed to provide frontline health and education staff with an overview of the program and identify roles and responsibilities.

Mr. Speaker, the COVID-19 pandemic had significant impacts on recruitment and retention efforts across the GNWT and the CYC initiative has not been immune to these challenges. The Human Resource Talent Acquisition team has been supporting regional recruitment efforts to ensure increased visibility and distribution of available and posted positions. However, in several regions the availability of suitable staff housing has significantly impacted CYC recruitment efforts.

Turnover rates vary significantly from each year as the initiative was implemented with a staggered roll out. In 2020 when the initiative was implemented in four regions, the turnover rate was 21.2 percent. In 2021, when the initiative was implemented in five regions, it was 7.9 percent. And in 2022, when the initiative had been fully implemented in all regions, the vacancy rate was 32.9 percent.

In cases where there are vacancies, health authorities have worked with education authorities to develop plans to provide coverage by using itinerant contracted services or by leveraging existing resources. Later today, at the appropriate time, I will table the breakdown of turnover rates by region from 2020-2022.

Mr. Speaker, the CYC initiative spans across two very complex systems and, as such, communication is critical. CYCs work closely with regional inclusive schooling coordinators and teachers on specific school, child/youth and/or classroom needs. CYCs and CYC clinical supervisors also have regular communication with principals for the purpose of planning and information sharing.

Within the current governance structure, superintendents have an opportunity to formally speak to their experiences with the program but also to contribute to problem solving and solution generating.

Around any issues they have identified. This is through their membership on both the regional subcommittee as well as the CYC steering committee.

We recognize that despite these mechanisms, there are still concerns with the initiative. Therefore, Health and Social Services and ECE have committed to fast tracking the CYC evaluation in the 2022-2023 school year, and to working collaboratively on redesign efforts.

Superintendents will be key stakeholders in both these pieces of work.

Mr. Speaker, the ongoing monitoring of the CYC initiative includes a number of key pieces of work. Health and Social Services and ECE have developed a joint CYC Monitoring and Evaluation Plan which outlines data collection methodology, responsibility, and frequency. As part of this, a CYC Annual Monitoring Report is developed each fiscal year to support Health and Social Services and ECE to better understand whether the initiative is being implemented as intended. This report is also shared with key stakeholders on the CYC Steering committee.

The Community Counselling Program, of which the CYC initiative is a part, issues a Community Counselling Program Client Satisfaction Survey on a bi-annual basis. This is the keyway that Health and Social Services receives feedback from the public on the effectiveness, acceptability, and accessibility of the counselling services in the NWT, and the results are publicly reported. The most recent survey was conducted in 2021 and the results can be found on our website. In response to recommendations from the Auditor General's report on addictions services, work is currently underway to combine our Addictions Recovery Experiences Survey with the Satisfaction Survey. The next iteration of the survey will be expanded also include feedback from individuals who may not have accessed services and incorporate questions about cultural safety to help our system to identify barriers.

In May 2022, Health and Social Services and ECE surveyed health and education stakeholders. The results have been compiled into a "What We Heard" report and shared with key stakeholders and will help to inform next steps.

Finally, both Health and Social Services and ECE are committed to fast tracking the program evaluation in the 2022-2023 school year. The results will be used to help inform recommendations for a new program design and will prioritize input from children and youth. Other key stakeholders will include families, health and education stakeholders and Indigenous governments.

ECE and Health and Social Services also commit to redesigning the CYC model concurrently with, and informed by, the evaluation process. A redesigned program will be implemented in 2023-2024.

Mr. Speaker, while we recognize that these changes are not immediate, it is important that

we take a thoughtful approach to ensure that any adjustments to the current CYC model are thoroughly considered. We all want the same thing: equitable, high-quality, and responsive mental health supports for children and youth.

To achieve this, we need to work together strategically at all levels to make a genuine effort to facilitate the success of this initiative, participate in the evaluation activities, and utilize the results of the evaluation to collaboratively determine next steps. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

RETURN TO WRITTEN QUESTION 50-19(2):
TREATING INFERTILITY

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

Mr. Speaker, I have a Return to Written Question 50-19(2) asked by the Member for Kam Lake to the Minister of Health and Social Services on October 31st, 2022, regarding treating infertility.

In the case of infertility, when a known underlying, medical condition is identified as the probable cause of the infertility, treatment of that underlying condition is covered under the NWT healthcare Plan as an insured health service.

Where the cause of the infertility it is not readily known, these cases may be submitted to the Medical Advisor for review of the specifics of the case and decision. This process, referred to as 'prior approval', is used in situations where the treatment may be outside the Health and Social Services system's usual referral pathway or when circumstances warrant deeper examination.

To clarify, it is important to differentiate between specialist services for treatment of an underlying condition and specialist services providing fertility treatments, such as in vitro fertilization.

Fertility treatments, are not considered medically necessary procedures in most jurisdictions, including the Northwest Territories. Public policy regarding funding of fertility treatments varies across Canada. For example, in Alberta and British Columbia, fertility treatments such as intrauterine insemination and in vitro fertilization are not funded, whereas in Quebec some fertility treatments are funded, such as one single in vitro fertilization cycle if the woman is between 18 and 40 years old.

The NWT Medical Travel program is in place to assist eligible residents to access medically necessary insured services not available in their home community. The NWT Medical

Travel program requires a medical referral from an NWT medical practitioner. This requirement is to validate that the medical travel is tied to an insured health service, the referral is to the appropriate service provider and nearest facility, and to ensure continuity of care is maintained.

The request made by the Member for direction to the Medical Travel Office to accept referrals from specialists outside of the territory does not align with the practice of ensuring NWT residents' health needs are managed and monitored through NWT primary healthcare providers as a best practice for continuity of care. There is no plan to move away from this practice.

The assertion that vasectomies and vasectomy reversals are covered, whereas fertility treatments for birth givers are not covered, is incorrect. Vasectomy procedures for men are covered in the NWT, as are the analogous tubal ligation procedure for women. Neither the reversal of a vasectomy nor the reversal of a tubal ligation are covered in the NWT.

The determination of services medically necessary and who makes that decision is not straightforward. Under the Canada Health Act, services delivered by physicians and within hospitals are generally considered insured health services. Medically necessary services are not defined in the Canada Health Act. Provincial and territorial healthcare insurance plan providers consult with their respective physician groups and across jurisdictions to identify a set of services that each jurisdiction accepts as medically necessary, insured services provided by physicians and in hospitals. This common set of services then meets the Canada Health Act's Principles of Universality, Portability and Accessibility.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

RETURN TO WRITTEN QUESTION 51-19(2):
HOUSING NORTHWEST TERRITORIES
OFF-LOADING HOUSING UNITS TO FIRST
NATIONS

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

Mr. Speaker, I have a Return to Written Question 51-19(2) asked by the Member for Deh Cho on October 31st, 2022, to the Minister of Housing Northwest Territories regarding Housing Northwest Territories off-loading housing units to First Nations.

1. Can the Minister explain the reason for off-loading public housing units onto First Nations organizations;

Mr. Speaker, the disposal of residential property is conducted in a manner that promotes fairness, equity and transparency and that makes the best possible use of public resources. This process supports and encourages the development of housing markets in all communities. Housing NWT is committed to working with any Indigenous government to address their housing aspirations, including the administration of public housing. It is important to note that through the disposal process, Housing NWT approaches Indigenous governments first, but they are not obliged to take on the units. If they are not interested, Housing NWT will put the units up for public tender, and if after going through the process no owners are secured, Housing would look at demolishing the building. This would make the land available for future development.

2. many are not high market communities, has the Minister explained the financial obligation and problems associated with being a landlord of public housing;

Mr. Speaker, Housing NWT places a high value on collaboration and would work with all relevant parties regarding best practices of public housing administration. Housing NWT has been encouraging and supporting the development of community housing plans in all communities. With the arrival of funding from Canada directly to Indigenous governments, we understand that Canada has also required a high-level plan from each Indigenous government regarding their housing aspirations. In some cases, in these discussions Indigenous governments have spoken about the desire to assume and renovate some of the older units in their communities to address some of the housing pressures in their communities. As part of the conversations, Housing does share information on the operating costs of units and we have spoken about the tools that Housing has to assist in property/tenant management, things like education tools, leases, preventative maintenance checklists and many other tools. Housing NWT is also looking at expanding training opportunities as part of the conversation that has taken place through the Strategic Renewal, and if property management training for other stakeholders is a priority Housing is willing to work with all parties to find a way to ensure that training is available.

3. Treaty 11 of 1921 was to ensure free housing for First Nations peoples and hence First Nations housing was devolved to the Northwest Territories Housing Corporation (now Housing Northwest Territories). Can

the Minister provide an update on progress on this obligation;

Mr. Speaker, Housing NWT's mandate is to provide a variety of housing supports to NWT residents who need help the most, regardless of whether or not they are Indigenous. Housing NWT recognizes and supports recent efforts by the Government of Canada to flow significant funding directly to Indigenous governments for their own housing priorities. While there is no reference to housing in the words of Treaty 11, there are negotiating processes available with the federal government to clarify the extent of any obligations under historic treaties.

4. The Federal Governments Rapid Housing Initiative states only 49 units for the Northwest Territories. As these are 100 percent dollars, why is there such low application numbers for the Northwest Territories?

Mr. Speaker, the Rapid Housing Initiative is a Government of Canada program, and they control the application process. In fact, Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation has recently opened the application process for Round 3 of this program. Housing NWT will continue to support all interested proponents from the Northwest Territories and continue to advocate to the Government of Canada that housing funding opportunities be designed in a way that works for the North. This includes wherever possible either removing the requirement for a cost-share to access federal programs, or at least reduce the cost share to at least a 75/25 with 25 percent being the NWT recipient's obligation rather than the 50 percent or higher required in southern jurisdiction. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

RETURN TO WRITTEN QUESTION 52-19(2):
SETTLEMENT MAINTAINERS TRAINING
PROGRAM

CLERK OF THE HOUSE: (Mr. Tim Mercer): Mr. Speaker, I have a Return to Written Question 52-19(2) asked by the Member for Deh Cho on November 1st, 2022 to the Minister of Infrastructure regarding the settlement maintainers training program.

Mr. Speaker, regarding the request to provide details on the number of indeterminate settlement maintainers, the number working in small communities, the number of vacancies, and a list of the current training opportunities offered to settlement maintainers during their employment, I will table a document later today at the appropriate time. There are 14 positions that provide maintainer services throughout the territory, all of which are filled. These services

are augmented by two contractors and an apprentice.

The Department of Infrastructure will continue to collaborate with external agencies and post-secondary organizations to provide a range of training opportunities that allow settlement maintainers to advance their workplace skills and competencies.

I appreciate and share the Member's continued interest in settlement maintainer training, including the questions specific to oil and heating technician training. I can again advise the Member and the Legislative Assembly of the department's commitment to providing all our trades employees with opportunities to acquire the relevant technical and workplace training, knowledge, and skills they need to be successful in their work.

Specific to oil and heating technician training, the Department of Infrastructure continues to support qualified tradespeople, including settlement maintainers wishing to enroll in Aurora College's 12-week Oil Burner Mechanic program. Prerequisite skills and experience are required to be eligible for this course. Where possible, Infrastructure will support individuals in gaining these qualifications.

Finally, the Department of Infrastructure, and indeed the Government of the Northwest Territories as a whole, are fully committed to ensuring all employees are provided ongoing training opportunities to enhance and advance their skills and competencies. We support a broad spectrum of theoretical and practical training experiences, both in-House and contracted with credentialed and reputable external agencies. Methodologies are specific to organizational and individual needs and may include on-the-job training, job shadowing, apprenticeships, and a variety of other innovative delivery formats. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

RETURN TO WRITTEN QUESTION 53-19(2):
NORTHWEST TERRITORIES POWER
CORPORATION TO FACILITATE
ALTERNATIVE ENERGY

CLERK OF THE HOUSE: (Mr. Tim Mercer): Mr. Speaker, I have a Return to Written Question 53-19(2) asked by the Member for Kam Lake on November 1st, 2022, regarding the Northwest Territories Power Corporation to facilitate alternative energy.

The Member has asked four questions on how NTPC will integrate renewable or alternative generation and one question on the governance of the Corporation.

I will answer these questions separately. In response to the Member's first question on the funding of alternative and renewable energy projects, NTPC works in cooperation with the Government of the Northwest Territories to advance and fund alternative and renewable energy projects. NTPC can continue to incorporate alternative and renewable energy projects in two ways. In situations where new green projects are fully financed through the Investing in Canada Infrastructure Program, or ICIP, Low Carbon Economy Leadership Fund and GNWT funding, NTPC can move forward with greenhouse gas reducing projects such as the proposed Fort Providence-Kakisa transmission line. Where existing NTPC infrastructure is at end of life and requires replacement, the aforementioned funding sources can greatly reduce the capital investment required by NTPC if these projects incorporate greenhouse gas reduction opportunities.

Technologies such as more efficient engines, incorporated in the Łutsel'k'e and Sachs Harbour plant replacements, or allowing existing green generation to continue to operate, such as with the Taltson and Snare hydro site refurbishments, can meet funding guidelines. The list of the alternative and renewable energy projects that NTPC and the GNWT is advancing can be found in NTPC's 2022-2023 Corporate Plan, the 2030 Energy Strategy, and annual GNWT Energy Initiatives Reports. In response to the Member's second question requesting information on NTPC's investment in alternative and renewable energy.

Last year, NTPC generated over 75% of its electricity through hydro generation and each year, NTPC invests in capital projects to ensure the continued hydro output by the Snare, Bluefish, and Taltson systems. Since 1998, NTPC has invested in clean burning natural gas and transitioned to Liquefied Natural Gas when the Ikhil field output was reduced. NTPC has incorporated solar arrays into several communities either through agreements with independent power producers or through its own investment, such as the hybrid power plant in Colville Lake. In 1996, NTPC partnered with the Gwich'in Development Corporation in the development of a residual heating system, utilizing heat from the power plant in Fort McPherson.

NTPC has a long history of investing in alternative and renewable energy. NTPC has used a wide range of contractors over this period and will continue to do so in the future to complete alternative and renewable energy projects. Northern contractors are benefited by

NTPC's Northern Preference Policy. Later today, at the appropriate time, I will table a document showing current and planned alternative and renewable energy projects by community, with associated capital investment dollars and contractor utilization. None of the projects noted within this document will be impacted by sunset of federal funding. Regarding the Member's third question on NTPC's reporting of performance metrics, the NT Hydro/NTPC Corporate Plan is tabled in the Legislature every March. This Plan provides seven metrics which compare corporate performance year over year. March 2022 metrics compared favorably over the previous year, but metrics may be influenced by both internal and external factors. Our corporate metrics are not available on a community basis.

The NTPC/NT Hydro Corporate Plan may be found within the tabled documents on the Legislative Assembly website https://www.ntassembly.ca/sites/assembly/files/td_636-192.pdf.

With respect to the Member's fourth question on NTPC's involvement in increasing alternative and renewable energy in housing, NTPC works with homeowners, Housing Northwest Territories, developers, and Indigenous business development corporations in the implementation of net metering installations on homes. Broader alternative and renewable residential energy projects are the responsibility of the Arctic Energy Alliance, or AEA, and NTPC sits on AEA's Board of Directors. The Member also enquired about the benefits of NTPC's current governance structure. In 2016, the GNWT replaced the public Board of Directors for NTPC and NT Hydro with six deputy ministers.

This was done for several reasons including:

- To provide better oversight of NTPC operations and better support to the Minister responsible for NTPC
- To improve accountability and provide more GNWT oversight including ensuring major policy or project issues received Cabinet consideration
- To ensure that NTPC decision making was done with a whole of government lens.
- To save on the significant expense related to operating a public board.

With respect to oversight, accountability, and decision making, the involvement of DMs on the NTPC Board has contributed to better alignment of NTPC and GNWT priorities. For example, there has been greater ability for

advanced planning with respect to NTPC borrowing, which has an impact on the GNWT's ability to manage its borrowing limit. In addition, NTPC has benefitted from some cost reductions in public relations, donations, professional association dues, professional development, retainers, utility advisors, consultants and contractors, and the board chair contract. In the period from 2014 – 2020, these savings ranged from approximately \$415,000 to \$500,000 each year. Early in 2019, the GNWT initiated a review of NTPC governance. While there has been some benefit from the makeup of the current NTPC Board, I look forward to the completion of the governance review and anticipate a decision early this year. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

RETURN TO WRITTEN QUESTION 54-19(2):
CARBON TAX AND THE COST OF LIVING

CLERK OF THE HOUSE: (Mr. Tim Mercer): Mr. Speaker, I have a Return to Written Question 54-19(2) asked by the Member for Nunakput on November 3rd, 2022, to the Minister of Finance regarding carbon tax on the cost of living.

I would like to advise, it is estimated that Northwest Territories households will spend, on average \$400 in direct carbon tax on heat in 2023-2024. Heating fuel needs vary widely across the territory, and the amount of carbon tax paid on heat will be significantly higher than \$400 for households in some communities and significantly lower for households in other communities. We also estimate that NWT households will see increases to other costs because of the impacts of the carbon tax on businesses and municipalities. NWT households are estimated to spend, on average, \$272 in indirect carbon tax in 2023-2024.

This is an average total cost of \$672 across the territory, with an average of \$899 for the Nunakput communities. It is difficult to project over time the exact cost per household, per community, of the carbon tax with any accuracy. This is because we do not know how households and businesses will respond to increases in the carbon tax rate. The extent to which businesses pass on the carbon tax to their customers, and the extent to which households change their spending patterns and reduce their heating fuel use (through conservation efforts, switching to alternative heating sources, or by heavily insulating their existing homes) is unknown.

It is likely, however, that the cost to households will increase largely in step with annual increases to the carbon tax rate. If we assume

that between 2023 and 2030 the patterns of household spending and fuel usage remain unchanged, and that the response of businesses and municipalities to carbon tax remains unchanged, then we estimate the following: NWT households will spend, on average, \$1,050 in direct carbon tax on heat by 2030-2031, and will spend, on average, \$711 in indirect carbon tax by 2030-2031. These costs will vary by community. Again, these estimates assume households and businesses do not significantly change their expenditure patterns.

Based on internal calculations, the impact of higher home heating costs on Northwest Territories' households will be heating bills that are, on average, \$400 higher in 2023, and \$1,050 higher in 2030 than they were in 2022. This is the direct impact of the carbon tax on heat. The impact of higher prices for goods and services resulting from businesses and municipalities passing on the carbon tax to households is estimated to be, on average, an additional \$272 in 2023, and \$711 in 2030. This is the "indirect" impact of the carbon tax. Consistent with the information provided to standing committee, a regional Cost of Living Offset, or COLO, would address the fact that heating fuel needs vary across the NWT, and would recognize and alleviate the extra financial pressure facing some Nunakput communities.

A regional COLO would separate communities into three geographic zone based on households' average annual heating fuel. Using each zone's population and household heating fuel use, the regional COLO amounts for each individual would increase with carbon tax rate increase. Later, at the appropriate time, I will table a document with supplemental table and chart information to support this response. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Clerk. Returns to written questions. Replies to the Commissioner's address. Petitions. Tabling of documents. Minister responsible for Health and Social Services.

Tabling of Documents

TABLED DOCUMENT 806-19(2):
INFORMATION FOR RETURN TO WRITTEN
QUESTION 49-19(2): THREE-YEAR
TURNOVER RATES OF CHILD AND YOUTH
COUNSELLORS BY REGION

TABLED DOCUMENT 807-19(2):
FOLLOW-UP LETTER FOR ORAL
QUESTION 1159-19(2): MENTAL HEALTH
AND SUICIDE

HON. JULIE GREEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I wish to table the following two documents: Information for Return to Written Question 49-19(2), Three Year Turnover Rates of Child and Youth Counselors by Region; and, Follow-up Letter for Oral Question 1159-19(2), Mental Health and Suicide. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

TABLED DOCUMENT 808-19(2):
ADDITIONAL INFORMATION FOR RETURN
TO WRITTEN QUESTION 54-19(2):
CARBON TAX AND THE COST OF LIVING

HON. CAROLINE WAWZONEK: Mr. Speaker, I wish to table the following document: Additional Information for the Return to Written Question 54-19(2), Carbon Tax and the Cost of Living. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

TABLED DOCUMENT 809-19(2):
INFORMATION FOR RETURN TO WRITTEN
QUESTION 52-19(2): SETTLEMENT
MAINTAINER TRAINING PROGRAM

TABLED DOCUMENT 810-19(2):
INFORMATION FOR RETURN TO WRITTEN
QUESTION 53-19(2): NORTHWEST
TERRITORIES POWER CORPORATION TO
FACILITATE ALTERNATIVE ENERGY

HON. DIANE ARCHIE: Mr. Speaker, I wish to table the following two documents: Information for Return to Written Question 52-19(2), Settlement Maintainer Training Program; and Information for Return to Written Question 53-19(2), Northwest Territories Power Corporation to Facilitate Alternative Energy. Quyananni, Mr. Speaker.

TABLED DOCUMENT 811-19(2):
2021-2022 ANNUAL REPORT OF THE
EQUAL PAY COMMISSIONER FOR THE
NORTHWEST TERRITORIES

TABLED DOCUMENT 812-19(2):
LANGUAGES COMMISSIONER OF THE
NORTHWEST TERRITORIES ANNUAL
REPORT 2021-2022

MR. SPEAKER: Colleagues, pursuant to section 40.23(1) of the Public Service Act, I wish to table the 2021-2022 Annual Report of the Equal Pay Commissioner for the Northwest Territories.

Pursuant to section 23 of the Official Languages Act, I hereby table the Languages Commissioner of the Northwest Territories Annual Report 2021-2022.

Tabling of documents. Notices of motion. Motions. Notices of motion for the first reading of bills. First reading of bills. Second reading of bills. Consideration in Committee of the Whole of bills and other matters, Bill 23, 29, Minister's Statement 264-19(2), Tabled Document 681-19(2), Tabled Document 694-19(2), with Member for Deh Cho in the chair.

Consideration in Committee of the Whole of Bills and Other Matters

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Bonnetrouge): I now call Committee of the Whole to order. What is the wish of committee? Member for Kam Lake.

MS. CLEVELAND: Thank you very much, Mr. Chair. Mr. Chair, I ask that the chair rise and report progress.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Bonnetrouge): There's a motion on the floor to report progress. The motion is in order and non-debatable. All those in favour? A resounding 'yea'. All those opposed? The motion is carried.

---Carried

I will now rise and report progress. Mahsi.

MR. SPEAKER: May I please have the report of Committee of the Whole. Member for Deh Cho.

Report of Committee of the Whole

MR. BONNETROUGE: Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. Your committee has been considering Bill 23, Bill 29, Minister's Statement 624-19(2), Tabled Document 681-19(2), and Tabled Document 694-19(2), and would like to report progress. And, Mr. Speaker, I move that the report of the Committee of the Whole be concurred with. Mahsi.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Member for Deh Cho. Do we have a seconder? Member for Nunakput. All those in favour? All those opposed? The motion is carried.

---Carried

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

Orders of the Day

CLERK OF THE HOUSE (Mr. Tim Mercer): Orders of the day for Wednesday, February 8th, 2023, 1:30 p.m.

1. Prayer
2. Budget Address
3. Ministers' Statements
4. Members' Statements
5. Returns to Oral Questions
 - Oral Question 1188-19(2), Memorandum of Understanding with the Canadian Red Cross
6. Acknowledgements
7. Oral Questions
8. Written Questions
9. Returns to Written Questions
10. Replies to Commissioner's Address
11. Petitions
12. Reports of Committees on the Review of Bills
13. Reports of Standing and Special Committees
14. Tabling of Documents
15. Notices of Motion
16. Motions
17. Notices of Motion for First Reading of Bills
18. First Reading of Bills
19. Second Reading of Bills
 - Bill 64, An Act to Amend the Legislative Assembly and Executive Council Act, No. 3
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
 - Minister's Statement 264-19(2), Response to the NWT Chief Coroner's Report on Suicide Report of Committee of the Whole

- Tabled Document 681-19(2), Government of the Northwest Territories Response to Committee Report 26-19(2): Report on the Child and Family Services Act – Lifting Children, Youth and Families: An All of Territory Approach to Keeping Families Together
- Tabled Document 694-19(2): Northwest Territories Coroner Service 2021-2022 Early Release of Data

21. Report of Committee of the Whole

22. Third Reading of Bills

23. Orders of the Day

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Clerk. This House stands adjourned until Wednesday, February 8th, 2023 at 1:30 p.m.

---ADJOURNMENT

The House adjourned at 4:21 p.m.