

**Yellowknife Women's Society Shelter Grand Opening**

Mr. Speaker, partnerships between housing stakeholders and community partners is critical in supporting the housing needs of our residents. One such partnership has been between the Northwest Territories Housing Corporation, the De Beers Group, and the Yellowknife Women's Society. Over the last year, all three partners came together to provide 16 single-room semi-independent suites for homeless women.

De Beers Group has a long history in the Northwest Territories including the development of its two mines. These investments have provided many employment opportunities for the residents of the Northwest Territories. In addition to the economic benefits, De Beers Group has indicated that they want to support lasting social improvements to communities.

The De Beers Group reached out to the Northwest Territories Housing Corporation to discuss potential legacy housing projects, consistent with the De Beers Group's commitment to supporting Northwest Territories communities involved in diamond mining. The De Beers Group was especially interested in projects that address the long-term needs of vulnerable people in their operating region.

Mr. Speaker, the De Beers Group has made a generous contribution of \$250,000 to the project along with project management expertise. The Northwest Territories Housing Corporation provided a \$750,000 contribution under the Northwest Territories Housing Corporation's Community Housing Support Initiative. The Yellowknife Women's Society will continue to administer a smaller emergency shelter section of the building, but their operations will become more housing-focused. They will continue to provide supportive services to residents in the new suites.

These new spaces will provide better privacy, safety and security for women. The shared living arrangement offers the safety of living with others, as opposed to being isolated in a

rental unit on the private market. Residents will have a safe, stable home where they can start to address some of the other challenges in their lives, without having to worry about housing.

I am also pleased to say that this project benefited the residents of the shelter beyond just meeting their housing needs. Incorporating a women-in-trades component, this project has employed women who were using the shelter. These women helped to construct the living spaces where they will be residing. Building skills and work experience is a great forward thinking approach that will benefit these women as they go forward and possibly decide that they wish to pursue a career in construction, maybe one day setting up their own businesses.

Mr. Speaker, the Northwest Territories Housing Corporation's partnership with the De Beers Group and the Yellowknife Women's Society is an excellent illustration of how all levels of our society can come together to meet the housing needs of our people.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.