

**Labour Market Programs**

Mr. Speaker, a strong labour market is critical to the Northwest Territories' economic future. We know what jobs are in demand, and we are focused on preparing residents for those opportunities.

Through our Skills 4 Success actions, we are seeing progress in developing an educated, productive and thriving labour force that will meet the needs of the territory's economy and meet our mandate commitment to improve labour market outcomes.

Mr. Speaker, a total of 25 former programs have been consolidated and streamlined into 10; program names have been simplified to be more intuitive and easily understood; and program offerings have been categorized into supports for individuals, employers, organizations and communities.

Labour market programs have been redesigned to be more client-focused and reduce duplication. Program staff have streamlined programming, updated program guidelines, and updated intake forms for easier access by individuals, employers and organizations.

These redesigned programs will help employers to find and train the workers they need, and they will assist individuals in accessing the training, skill upgrading, and supports they need to secure employment and advance in the labour market.

Mr. Speaker, communities understand their local labour market needs. They are key partners in bridging employment and training gaps for their residents. We want to work with communities and support them in finding innovative ways to enhance employment opportunities and outcomes.

For this reason, the Small Community Employment Support Program has been redesigned to provide funding through contribution agreements between the Department of Education, Culture and Employment and specific local Designated Authorities.

The Program will now provide small communities and regional centres with the flexibility to establish their own priorities and work with employers to support local employment opportunities. I will be tabling the Small Community Employment Strategy later today.

Mr. Speaker, we are working hard to develop a labour force that will meet the needs of the Territory's economy now and in the future. For some occupations, this includes attracting

qualified individuals to fill critical labour shortages. The Northwest Territories Nominee Program helps support employers to fill workforce gaps with skilled foreign nationals when there are no local or Canadian workers available.

Mr. Speaker, this suite of programs has aligned its goals under the Skills 4 Success strategy. We are focused on matching training and education with the labour market in the Northwest Territories; we are ensuring small communities have the programs and supports they require to build the programs they need; and we are attracting people with critical skills to the territory.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.