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The Honourable Tony Whitford, Speaker

Legislative Assembly of the Northwest Territories

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

PRAYER.....	833
MINISTERS' STATEMENTS	833
59-14(5): NATIONAL ABORIGINAL DAY (ANTOINE)	833
60-14(5): NEW MANDATE/SECRETARIAT FOR YOUTH MINISTER (ALLEN)	834
61-14(5): FIRE CORE TRAINING CERTIFICATION CEREMONY (STEEN).....	834
MEMBERS' STATEMENTS	835
NATIONAL ABORIGINAL DAY (NITAH).....	835
PREFERENTIAL TREATMENT FOR YELLOWKNIFE (DELOREY).....	835
INUVIK PETROLEUM SHOW 2002 (ROLAND).....	836
NATIONAL ABORIGINAL DAY (KRUTKO)	836
KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT STRATEGY RECOMMENDATIONS (DENT)	836
ACHIEVEMENT LEVELS OF HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATES (MCLEOD).....	837
PROGRAMS FOR HOUSING MAINTENANCE AND REPAIRS (LAFFERTY)	837
BUSINESS INCENTIVE POLICY LIMERICK (GROENEWEGEN).....	838
EFFECT OF CLASS SIZES ON LEARNING (LEE)	838
MINING WEEK 2002 (BRADEN)	838
YELLOWKNIFE HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATION CEREMONIES (BELL).....	839
NATIONAL ABORIGINAL DAY (STEEN).....	839
THOMAS SIMPSON HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATION CEREMONIES (ANTOINE)	839
PASSING OF NOAH SELAMIO (ALLEN)	839
NATIONAL ABORIGINAL DAY (MILTENBERGER)	840
RETURNS TO ORAL QUESTIONS	840
RECOGNITION OF VISITORS IN THE GALLERY	840
ORAL QUESTIONS.....	841
REVERT TO ORAL QUESTIONS.....	852
WRITTEN QUESTIONS	863
PETITIONS	864
REPORTS OF STANDING AND SPECIAL COMMITTEES	864
TABLING OF DOCUMENTS	870
NOTICES OF MOTION	870
MOTIONS	871
FIRST READING OF BILLS.....	871
SECOND READING OF BILLS.....	871
CONSIDERATION IN COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE OF BILLS AND OTHER MATTERS	874
REPORT OF COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE.....	909
ORDERS OF THE DAY	909

YELLOWKNIFE, NORTHWEST TERRITORIES

Tuesday, June 18, 2002

Members Present

Honourable Roger Allen, Honourable Jim Antoine, Mr. Bell, Mr. Braden, Mr. Delorey, Mr. Dent, Mrs. Groenewegen, Honourable Joe Handley, Honourable Stephen Kakfwi, Mr. Krutko, Mr. Lafferty, Ms. Lee, Mr. McLeod, Mr. Nitah, Honourable Michael Miltenberger, Mr. Roland, Honourable Vince Steen, Honourable Tony Whitford.

ITEM 1: PRAYER

-- Prayer

-- Singing of O Canada in Dogrib

-- Applause

SPEAKER (Hon. Tony Whitford): Good afternoon, colleagues. First of all, I would like to say a big thank you to the students of the Weledeh School Choir, under the direction of Celia Boyd and Brenda Mullin, for singing O Canada in Dogrib.

-- Applause

This choir will be singing our national anthem again on Friday at the Somba K'e Park to help us launch the O Canada CD. The O Canada CD is a souvenir edition of our national anthem in four of our official languages. Later in the year, a final version of the CD will be produced in all 11 of the official languages of the Northwest Territories. The CD will be distributed throughout the Northwest Territories to communities and to schools and will be available to the general public.

The O Canada CD project has been a project of this Legislative Assembly in partnership with the Ministry of Aboriginal Affairs, National Aboriginal Day, the Living History Society and the Office of the Languages Commissioner.

On Friday, June 21, the CD will be officially launched at the National Aboriginal Day festivities in the Somba K'e Park in the presence of Her Excellency, Governor General Adrienne Clarkson. If you are in Yellowknife on Friday I would like to invite you to attend this event, which starts at 1:00 p.m.

We are very proud of this initiative and, once completed, it will be the first recording of our national anthem in all of the official languages of the Northwest Territories. I would like to acknowledge all of the people who have worked so hard on this project, especially the staff in my office and the Clerk's office, and a sincere thank you to them for a job well done.

-- Applause

Once again, a great thank you to the students of the Weledeh School Choir for introducing the first version of our national anthem in Dogrib.

Item 2, Ministers' statements. The honourable Minister responsible for the Ministry of Aboriginal Affairs, Mr. Antoine.

ITEM 2: MINISTERS' STATEMENTS

Minister's Statement 59-14(5): National Aboriginal Day

HON. JIM ANTOINE: Mahsi, Mr. Speaker, and good afternoon everybody. I would also like to thank the Weledeh singers for O Canada, the first time it was ever sung in Dogrib in the Legislative Assembly.

(Translation not available)

Mr. Speaker, since we do not have an interpreter today, I just wanted to repeat and say that six years ago, the former Governor General of Canada, His Excellency, the Right Honourable Romeo Leblanc, declared June 21st as National Aboriginal Day. This day was intended as a day that Canadians could celebrate the diverse culture, heritage and history of aboriginal peoples and the many and varied contributions they have made to the development of Canada.

Last year I was very proud to have been a part of the decision made by the Members of this Legislative Assembly to pass the National Aboriginal Day Act making the Northwest Territories the first jurisdiction in Canada to recognize this day as a formal statutory holiday. By doing so we reinforce our commitment to bring people and cultures together to celebrate the many contributions of the Dene, Metis and Inuvialuit in the development of the North and our country.

Mr. Speaker, demonstrations of the pride that the residents of the Northwest Territories have in the rich and diverse culture and heritage of our aboriginal people will be on display across the Territory on June 21st. Due to the tremendous efforts of volunteers and community organizations, communities throughout the Territory are planning celebrations and events that showcase aboriginal music, dance, displays, artwork, traditional food and games.

The Government of the Northwest Territories is pleased to have provided funding to community and aboriginal organizations to assist with these celebrations. We are also providing communities with t-shirts, posters, pins and other promotional materials containing the Northwest Territories National Aboriginal Day logo. Members will recognize the logo from the flags that have been placed on their desks and the beautiful banners that are flying on either side of the Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, the Ministry of Aboriginal Affairs is also contributing to the O Canada Project being produced through good work of the Office of the Speaker of the Legislative Assembly. The O Canada Project is a CD that will contain our national anthem sung in all of the official languages of the Northwest Territories.

Mr. Speaker, June 21st, National Aboriginal Day, is a day for all people of the Northwest Territories to come together in celebration. I ask all Members to join me in encouraging the people of the Northwest Territories to get out and participate in National Aboriginal Day activities in their communities. Let us make this an historic and successful day. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

-- Applause

MR. SPEAKER: Mahsi, Mr. Antoine. Item 2, Ministers' statements. The honourable Minister responsible for Youth, Mr. Allen.

Minister's Statement 60-14(5): New Mandate/Secretariat for Youth Minister

HON. ROGER ALLEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I am sure all Members would agree that our young people are our future. As Minister responsible for Youth, I work to support all young people in the NWT. Today I would like to speak about two new initiatives that confirm the Government of the Northwest Territories' commitment to youth.

Mr. Speaker, the first initiative I would like to speak about today is the establishment of a firm mandate for the Minister of Youth. This mandate was recently approved by Cabinet and has five major focus areas:

- The development and delivery of programs specifically targeted to youth, including grants and contributions;
- The recommendation to Cabinet of strategies affecting youth, including overall government action plans for youth;
- Advice to departments and Ministers on policy objectives and programs originating in other departments and agencies that affect youth;
- Executive Council representation on youth matters raised in this House; and
- Executive Council representation on youth matters to external agencies and at federal/provincial/territorial meetings.

Mr. Speaker, as the Minister responsible for Youth I promote youth issues to youth organizations, the public and government. This new and specific mandate clarifies my responsibilities and will directly enhance my ability to represent youth in a more coordinated and effective way.

There is another initiative I want to talk about today, Mr. Speaker, and that is the establishment of a Youth Secretariat within the Department of Municipal and Community Affairs. This unit will assist in the delivery of this mandate. I look forward to working with MACA and the youth organizations on a number of projects under development at this time. These include the Youth Corps Pilot Program to be established in each region to test various program models. The results will serve as the basis for a summary report to Members on the youth corps concept and for recommendations on the future of the program. The Youth Contribution Policy has been established to provide contribution funding to various smaller youth development projects and the commitment to assist the NWT Youth Association with costs associated with its 2002 annual general meeting in Fort Simpson.

These initiatives demonstrate the Government of the Northwest Territories' commitment to helping develop strong, capable youth in the NWT.

Mr. Speaker, in closing, I would like to say that I look forward to working with our youth, MACA, the Members of this Legislative Assembly and our partner youth organizations in the coming year. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

-- Applause

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Minister. Item 2, Ministers' statements. The honourable Member for Nunakput, Mr. Steen.

Minister's Statement 61-14(5): Fire Core Training Certification Ceremony

HON. VINCE STEEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, 15 of our community fire fighters and GNWT assistant fire marshals have been training to receive professional certification as firefighters or fire fighter instructors. I am pleased to announce that they have now completed, or will shortly complete, this training and will be certified by the National Fire Protection Association. As Minister of Municipal and Community Affairs, I would like to congratulate these fire fighters on their success.

Mr. Speaker, it took these people three years of hard work and personal sacrifice to do this. Several of these people will now form a core team of fire fighter instructors who can deliver training programs to community fire departments here in the North. The rest of them will be able to take the new skills they have learned back to fire departments in their communities. This will help improve fire protection services in communities across the NWT.

Mr. Speaker, if I may take a moment, I would like to talk about how this training program was developed. The emergency services division of the Department of Municipal and Community Affairs partnered with the Alberta Fire Training School to deliver facility-centred and community-centred training that will work in the North.

Through this partnership, the department trains personnel to nationally recognized fire fighter and instructor standards. This will provide a core of professional fire fighters in community fire departments. Instructors certified through this process will be able to conduct additional training throughout the NWT. This program has been designed so it can be delivered in the most remote location.

Mr. Speaker, the GNWT is committed to protecting the safety of all NWT residents. Helping community fire departments and fire fighters receive professional training will help us reach that goal. Today at 6:00 p.m. in the Great Hall, we will have a ceremony to recognize the 15 fire fighters who have recently received training. I hope you will all join me this evening to honour these people. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

-- Applause

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Minister. Item 2, Ministers' statements. Item 3, Members' statements. The honourable Member for Tu Nedhe, Mr. Nitah.

ITEM 3: MEMBERS' STATEMENTS**Member's Statement on National Aboriginal Day**

MR. NITAH: Mahsi cho, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I am going to make my statement in Dene, Denesuline Chipewyan, which is on channel 4 for my colleagues to listen in on.

(Translation not available)

MR. SPEAKER: If I might interrupt for a minute, Mr. Nitah, to inform the Members that the interpretation is on channel 2. You can continue and we will reconvene the clock. Mr. Nitah.

MR. NITAH: Mahsi cho, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, today, on Friday we will be celebrating Aboriginal Day and we will be given a holiday. I am happy to see this one day put aside for us. We the Dene in the Northwest Territories, (Translation starts) we are celebrating our traditions from this country, and that is why we have one day given to us. The way we help people, the way we live on this earth as a people, our traditions and our cultures, it is like putting it all together.

They give us one day, our day, for aboriginal people in the Northwest Territories, for all the aboriginal people. It is counted as Aboriginal Day. The way we work with each other when we had other cultures come amongst us, we all helped each other. That is how we survived. That is how we got here.

It seems like sometimes they walk over us, but in one day, we will all get together again, aboriginal people. We have Aboriginal Day for that. I am thankful. Last year we talked about it in here, and that is how we reached a decision. For today, five of us are sitting in here and the way their language is used in this Territory, we work on it, for us to use our language to deliver service.

People have been appointed to work on this language committee and we have a report. We have given it a name, One Land - Many Voices, is what this document is called. It is a report on how far we have come in terms of language, in terms of the stories, in terms of how people use the language. It is for everyone in the Territories to look at. Five of us are on the committee and we worked on this. Everyone, all the people, white people, everyone.

This Friday, on National Aboriginal Day, everyone should celebrate positively. We should have a look at how far we went, all the accomplishments that we made and we should feel thankful on this day. As for that, I feel very thankful. I hope everyone has a great day and enjoys the day. Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. (Translation ends)

-- Applause

MR. SPEAKER: Mahsi, Mr. Nitah. Item 3, Members' statements. The honourable Member for Hay River North, Mr. Delorey.

Member's Statement on Preferential Treatment for Yellowknife

MR. DELOREY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, on a number of occasions, I have made statements in this House about the city of Yellowknife, and described it as being something that is probably not found on a map of the Northwest Territories. These statements were not made, Mr.

Speaker, to discredit any of my colleagues representing this wonderful city, or the city itself. As a matter of fact, Mr. Speaker, as a Member from outside of Yellowknife looking in, I might even say that I envy my colleagues. Not because they live in Yellowknife, Mr. Speaker, but for the job that they have and the issues they have to address.

It is very seldom that we hear these Members stand up and practically beg this government for funds to provide minor or even major projects that keep this city growing. On the other hand, Members from outside Yellowknife are constantly requesting more funds. My underlying message or concerns, Mr. Speaker, stem from this government and the federal government's apparent willingness to support projects and/or initiatives for Yellowknife over other communities in the North.

Very often I hear or read about grants received by Yellowknife organizations under the banner of being an NWT organization. It is great that organizations such as these receive grants. However, Mr. Speaker, my concern is that few of these grant funds ever leave the city of Yellowknife. In some cases, they are used to hold meetings or conferences in the city, which further benefits the city from these funds. Not many of us can expect an announcement such as the one that was made by DND to put \$1 million towards a full-sized gymnasium to complement the twin pad arena.

Another example, Mr. Speaker, is a recent email I received in my office as part of a mass email that was distributed by the Department of Resources, Wildlife and Economic Development. Mr. Speaker, RWED was seeking support for and studying the possibility of developing a convention centre here in Yellowknife for the future. Mr. Speaker, I might also add that RWED spent \$25,000 of public funds to have a study completed on the feasibility of having a convention centre in Yellowknife.

Mr. Speaker, I was taken aback to read in one of our local papers that the study stated the estimated cost of \$9,168,000 would be subsidized wholly or in part by government as an enterprise business to stimulate local economy.

MR. SPEAKER: Mr. Delorey, your time is up. Mr. Delorey.

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

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Delorey. The honourable Member is seeking unanimous consent to conclude his statement. Are there any nays? There are no nays. You may conclude, Mr. Delorey.

MR. DELOREY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and thank you, colleagues. We all know the North is in an economic boom. I have been told many times by this government that we cannot tell big corporations or industry where they are going to set up their business centres or offices. I cannot blame them for wanting to set up where the action is and where all the doors are that have to be knocked on.

Mr. Speaker, if this government is truly interested in stimulating local economic growth, and I suspect that we as a government are local across the Northwest Territories, we should look at other ways to spread the benefits around. Maybe, Mr. Speaker, we should look at what the Nunavut government is doing and move departments out of the capital to communities that have the capacity to take them. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

-- Applause

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Delorey. Item 3, Members' statements. The honourable Member for Inuvik Boot Lake, Mr. Roland.

Member's Statement on Inuvik Petroleum Show 2002

MR. ROLAND: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to inform the House and constituents back home that I will be travelling home tomorrow, so I will be missing the last day of session we have scheduled for now. I am returning home to attend the Inuvik Petroleum Show 2002, the title of which is Building Capacity in Northern Communities. It is being held from June 19th through to June 21st. I think it is an opportunity for many people across the North, businesses as well, to see and catch up on the work that is happening up in the Beaufort-Delta with the large companies and try to keep alive the discussion that is going on. I am sure we will hear many rumours about pipelines as we go back and discuss this with other professionals in the field. The thing I look forward to is the fact that I am going home to be with my family and to visit with my constituents once again. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

-- Applause

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Roland. Item 3, Members' statements. The honourable Member for Mackenzie Delta, Mr. Krutko.

Member's Statement on National Aboriginal Day

MR. KRUTKO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I would like to take this time to recognize National Aboriginal Day. It has been a long time coming. I am glad that we, the Territories, are the first jurisdiction in Canada to take the step of recognizing the First Nations people of this country, and for the obligation and commitments they have made over history by opening up this territory in Canada to the Europeans and other people from around the world.

Mr. Speaker, I think it is important to recognize our First Nations people. Hopefully, someday we will celebrate this day and make it a statutory holiday for all, not only in the Northwest Territories but right across Canada.

It is important to recognize the role aboriginal people have played in the history of the North and the contribution they have made to Canada in regard to the opportunities and benefits we see as a country compared to the rest of the world. It was the indigenous people who opened up their arms to our First Nation countries and other people to come here and make Canada their homes.

Mr. Speaker, I think it is important for us to take the time on Friday just to sit down and have a chance to be together, to celebrate the North, the people of the North, and, most importantly, our First Nations people.

At this time, Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank the government for taking this initiative to where it is today. Most importantly, I would like to thank those people who have assisted me to push this government to make this a statutory holiday, especially the band councils, the Metis locals, the hamlet councils, and also the people in the communities who filed petitions and letters supporting this day.

This is a people's holiday and that is important. I hope all people will enjoy the day with their families and that they take the time to enjoy it with their communities, and ourselves as a government to enjoy it for the people of the Northwest Territories. So for National Aboriginal Day, happy birthday, all the best and may we see you back home. Thank you.

-- Applause

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Krutko. Item 3, Members' statements. The honourable Member for Frame Lake, Mr. Dent.

Member's Statement on Knowledge Management Strategy Recommendations

MR. DENT: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, some time ago, a draft document entitled the Knowledge Management Strategy was prepared for the Informatics Policy Committee for the Financial Management Board Secretariat. It is my understanding the document was approved in principle last fall by FMB and is now set to go to the board for final approval this month. I have been told after that, it will be released publicly.

I have a number of concerns, Mr. Speaker, with the process that has taken place. Right now, this is a draft document, yet I am told that some of the recommendations in it are already being implemented. This in spite of the fact it has not officially seen the light of day nor been exposed to public review or comment.

Mr. Speaker, the document recommends centralizing informatics. We used to have a centralized system. That failed to meet the needs of specific departments and they therefore moved to decentralize the system by devolution. The draft document also recommends the implementation of an Office of the Chief Information Officer. The interim office was approved and I am concerned that there has already been an advertisement out asking for proposals to implement a technology service centre.

Mr. Speaker, while I understand bulk purchasing is also a recommendation, I now hear that individual departments are already being told that hardware and software licensing is to be done at a central level. Mr. Speaker, this is being done without a procedure in place as to how it should take place.

Mr. Speaker, I understand the document has been released to some third parties, yet it has not even been reviewed by the Information Technology Advisory Committee for government departments. These are the people who are supposed to provide technical advice to the senior management sub-committee, the Informatics Policy Committee, who are ultimately responsible for the document.

Mr. Speaker, there are likely other flaws in the recommendations that if scrutinized by the right people, might not hold up. If this is in fact a draft document, we should not be seeing the recommendations being put into place already. I call on the Minister responsible to immediately release the document to the public and to allow a period for comment on the Knowledge Management Strategy recommendations. Mr. Speaker, before we move to adopt the recommendations, let us make sure they stand up to public scrutiny. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

-- Applause

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Dent. Item 3, Members' statements. The honourable Member for Deh Cho, Mr. McLeod.

Member's Statement on Achievement Levels of High School Graduates

MR. MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, recently the newspapers have been printing congratulations to the high school graduates and pictures of grads. I am extremely proud of those who have graduated from high school and I support their educational and career aspirations. We need our youth to be highly educated and well trained in order to secure and retain employment. These graduates are our future. We must ensure the education they are receiving in our schools will allow them to pursue and fulfill their dreams of further education, training or employment.

However, the education system of the Northwest Territories seems to be failing some of our children, especially those who expect that the grade 12 diploma they receive will open doors to their future. Many people in our communities are reporting that the youth graduating with grade 12 do not have the educational skills to pass college or trades entrance exams. These exams have entrance requirements that range from a grade 8 to a grade 12 level.

With the emphasis that the GNWT is placing on the need for trades and other professionals, we need to ensure that our people are employable in all skill areas. For too long we have been complacent about Northerners being employed in menial, unskilled positions. The demand for employees in all of our trades and technical fields is great. There needs to be assurance that our youth have educational levels that match those of our southern neighbours.

Our graduates are bright, capable people. We do not want them short-changed by an educational system that is not delivering quality education. For example, Mr. Speaker, medical personnel are in high demand in the Northwest Territories, but how many students pursue further studies in medicine? Are we encouraging our youth to become doctors? Do our youth receive a science education that will allow them to pursue this type of a career?

We spend all of our time trying to convince people from other areas to move here and practice medicine when we should be encouraging academic achievement for our youth so they can pursue this type of career and stay in the North. I would like to have the Minister of Education confirm that our students are not being short-changed and that the education these students are receiving is equal to that of the rest of Canada.

Are there benchmarks that must be reached at a certain grade level? Are our students achieving those levels? Are we giving them false hopes by allowing them to graduate but they are not able to attend post-secondary schooling because their marks are not high enough?

MR. SPEAKER: Mr. McLeod, your time is up. Mr. McLeod.

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

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you. The honourable Member is seeking unanimous consent to conclude his statement. Are

there any nays? There are no nays. You may conclude your statement, Mr. McLeod.

MR. MCLEOD: Mr. Speaker, I do not wish to discredit those who are graduating. They have done their part. The question is, is the Department of Education doing theirs? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

-- Applause

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. McLeod. Item 3, Members' statements. The honourable Member for North Slave, Mr. Lafferty.

Member's Statement on Programs for Housing Maintenance and Repairs

MR. LAFFERTY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the Housing Corporation of the Northwest Territories offers a number of programs that help people obtain housing who may not be able to otherwise. This is commendable. As a government, we are here to serve our people by providing programs and services to better the lives of all Northerners.

As well as providing homes, the department has a responsibility to ensure that homes are built as structurally sound as possible, so that homeowners do not have extra costs. A number of constituents have come to me concerned with housing problems that are related to unstable foundations.

There are also other issues. For example, one constituent of mine has electrical problems, but because there is no warranty, this person is basically going to be financially drained just to make sure his home is safe from an electrical fire. Other constituents have called me about insulation that is missing from underneath the floor or outer walls.

Mr. Speaker, constituents who have called the Housing Corporation with their concerns have been told that since they are the owners of the homes, they are responsible for the repairs. Mr. Speaker, it is true that when you own a home you are responsible for its maintenance. However, when there are structural concerns related to the construction of a home, it is only fair that follow-up repairs be done after construction.

As a result of unstable ground construction and conditions in the North, sometimes structural problems do not appear in the first or the second year. I have had the good fortune of being able to attend many events throughout the Territories as an MLA. I know that these housing concerns are not only in my region. They are all over the North.

Mr. Speaker, we spend millions of dollars in the construction of new homes for our people. People assume mortgages to buy these homes and yet they can end up with a home that has structural deficiencies. Mr. Speaker, I think if the Housing Corporation followed up on the construction plans, it would give homeowners' security. I will have questions on this for the Minister. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

-- Applause

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Lafferty. Item 3, Members' statements. The honourable Member for Hay River South, Mrs. Groenewegen.

Member's Statement on Business Incentive Policy Limerick

MRS. GROENEWEGEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, it has been a busy day and I have not had time to write a Member's statement, so I thought I would just pass on a short message that I received from a constituent by e-mail.

There once was a Minister named Vince,
Whose words he would never once mince.
Large projects he builds,
But the BIP he has killed,
Consistency has disappeared ever since.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

-- Applause

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mrs. Groenewegen. Item 3, Members' statements. The honourable Member for Range Lake, Ms. Lee.

Member's Statement on Effect of Class Sizes on Learning

MS. LEE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I would like to advise my colleague from Hay River North that I stand here to beg today. Mr. Speaker, on May 16th, the Parent Advisory Group at Range Lake North School in my riding had an open forum on the effect of class sizes on children's learning. The goal of the forum was for all of the stakeholders to collectively address the issue of large class sizes and the impact it has on our children's ability to learn. The evening was well attended by parents, teachers and the representatives from both city school districts, departmental officials and MLAs, including the Minister of Education, the Honourable Joe Handley.

Mr. Speaker, the research that was presented clearly indicated that too many students in a class have a very negative effect on a student's ability to learn. The reality is that at Range Lake North School, the classrooms were designed for 22 students, but many classes have 28 to 30 students or more. In grades 4 to 8, numbers are up to 30 to 33 students per class. To make the situation worse, many of these are split classes.

This is simply intolerable, Mr. Speaker. Members, Ministers, and all of the officials in school districts, elected or otherwise, as a group of leaders we must do something about this. The students in grades 4 to 6 classes have written personal notes on how their big classes are making learning difficult. Later on today I will be tabling those letters from the children, as well as a petition from the parents in my riding. I would encourage the Minister and the government to read these letters from the children because they will tell you they cannot learn, they cannot concentrate and they cannot get the attention of the teachers when they need to. Nor can they take part in gym or music classes as much as they would like because there are just too many students.

Mr. Speaker, we must find a way to cap the maximum students in a classroom from grades 1 to 8 at 25. We must find the money to do this. I stand here begging, Mr. Speaker. Like many in this House and every parent and teacher out there, I have been put through a wringer, or more like a propaganda machine, about the technical difference between the classroom

size versus PTR ad nauseum, or the nuances of national averages, territorial averages, et cetera.

I want to borrow from Scarlet O'Hara and say, "Frankly my dear, I don't give a..." The only important thing I need to know is that this is not working and we need to think of...

MR. SPEAKER: Ms. Lee, your time is up. Ms. Lee.

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

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you. The honourable Member is seeking unanimous consent to conclude her statement. Are there any nays? There are no nays. You may conclude your statement, Ms. Lee.

MS. LEE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the only important thing I need to know is that this is not working for our children. We need to think outside of the box of maddening PTR versus class size arguments. The only thing I need to know as an MLA is what our children, the teachers and parents are telling us. That is that our class sizes are simply too big and children are not being given proper attention to learn.

We need to look at our specific needs in the North and respond to them head on. We owe it to our children to act now. I urge the government to be bold and place the learning needs of our children on the top of their spending priority list. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

-- Applause

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Ms. Lee. Item 3, Members' statements. The honourable Member for Great Slave, Mr. Braden.

Member's Statement on Mining Week 2002

MR. BRADEN: Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, this is Mining Week in the NWT. It brings to mind the contributions of many early prospectors, Mr. Speaker, names like Johnny Baker, Gilbert Labine, Darcy and Huey Arden, and more recently, Mr. Speaker, the diggers and the hunters and the finders, people like Gren Thomas, Chuck Fipke, Walt Humphries and Dave Smith, people around the North who are continuing to look for the foundation that we are building on in mining.

Gold was first found in the Yellowknife region in 1895. That is when Yellowknife started its first boom, by 1936, when the first shafts were sunk for the mines that, to some extent, are still operating.

In those 60 to 65 years, gold has seen a roller coaster ride on the price, but lately, cresting at about \$325 U.S., we are seeing a renewed interest in gold exploration. It is too early to say, Mr. Speaker, if we are on the edge of another gold boom but our gold mining heritage is certainly looking brighter.

Exploration and development have come a long way since the solitary prospector staking his claim may have tramped the countryside. It is hard to believe that a little over ten years ago, Dia Met Minerals and BHP announced the discovery of diamonds at lac de Gras. If we look ahead just a scant five years, we are going to see from the Ekati, Diavik and De Beers Windspear properties at least 12 percent of the world's diamonds by values.

In addition to exploration and mine development, we have seen the growth of cutting and polishing plants. Yellowknife is an even more cosmopolitan place now, Mr. Speaker, as we see travellers coming in and out of places like London, Antwerp and Israel.

Mr. Speaker, the NWT Chamber of Mines carries the flag for this industry. They have organized a number of activities, including a prospector's challenge, a mine rescue competition and tours of the Miramar Con Mine. Mr. Speaker, the official unveiling of the Walter A. Gibbons Memorial Mineral Display Case at its new home at the Northern Frontier Visitors' Association will take place tomorrow evening at 7:00 p.m.

I want to acknowledge the contribution of people past and present in the mining industry and I continue to look forward to great results. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

-- Applause

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Braden. Item 3, Members' statements. The honourable Member for Yellowknife South, Mr. Bell.

Member's Statement on Yellowknife High School Graduation Ceremonies

MR. BELL: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Today I would like to echo some of Mr. Delorey's comments from yesterday.

-- Laughter

This week, Mr. Speaker, 166 individuals in Yellowknife are in their final school days. I am referring to the graduates of the class of 2002 from Sir John Franklin and St. Patrick's High School. They are now currently writing their final exams and will soon be embarking on new challenges in their lives. Last month, Mr. Speaker, I was honoured to have the opportunity to stand in for the Minister of Education, Mr. Ootes, and deliver his speech to the graduates of Sir John Franklin during their convocation ceremonies.

It would be an understatement to say that I was impressed with the calibre of graduates this year, Mr. Speaker. Being a witness to the graduation ceremonies and the personal speeches, I cannot help but share in the pride that our community has in all of these young men and women.

Clearly graduation is a time of extreme emotion for students, parents, family, friends and yes, even teachers. High school graduation can be a very stressful time in the life of these students who may feel uncertain about the future.

Mr. Speaker, the pressures and challenges our youth face today are many, and more so than when I graduated. These young adults are clearly ready and raring to take on whatever comes forth.

Mr. Speaker, dedication and personal discipline help these students meet the challenge, but they did not do it alone. Support from parents, family, teachers, and friends has no doubt been critical. I strongly encourage each and every graduate to strive to do their best and not to get discouraged by little bumps on the road along the way. Mr. Speaker, each of us knows that successfully navigating the road builds character.

In closing, Mr. Speaker, I ask my fellow Members to please join me in congratulating not only the students from Yellowknife but also each and every graduate in the Northwest Territories, the class of 2002. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

-- Applause

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Bell. Item 3, Members' statements. The honourable Member for Nunakput, Mr. Steen.

Member's Statement on National Aboriginal Day

HON. VINCE STEEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, on June 21st, National Aboriginal Day, the communities of Nunakput are planning to hold celebrations. These will consist of traditional games, Arctic sports, drum dances, and square dances. Mr. Speaker, many of these events and activities are possible due to generous contributions from my honourable colleague, the Minister of Aboriginal Affairs, Mr. Antoine. On behalf of these communities, I would like to thank the Minister for these contributions.

The communities of Sachs Harbour, Holman, Paulatuk and Tuktoyaktuk will all be celebrating National Aboriginal Day. I will be taking part in these events and I encourage the residents in my communities to take part in National Aboriginal Day celebrations and make it a great day for everyone. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

-- Applause

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Steen. Item 3, Members' statements. The honourable Member for Nahendeh, Mr. Antoine.

Member's Statement on Thomas Simpson High School Graduation Ceremonies

HON. JIM ANTOINE: Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I also want to recognize the class of 2002. In Fort Simpson, we have the Thomas Simpson High School with eight graduates who have completed their work this year. I just wanted to say that we all know that it takes a lot of effort and time to encourage and keep the students focused and committed to finish their grade 12. I would like to congratulate the following graduates of Thomas Simpson High School, class of 2002: Josh Bellefontaine, Susie Hanna, Nathan Isaiah, Rebecca Jumbo, David Lafferty, Mark O'Neill, Tiffany Petersen, and Nathan Wright.

I also wanted to congratulate the families of the graduates, particularly the mothers and fathers. In those roles, you usually have to keep prodding on the students to make sure they go to school and stay focused. I would like to congratulate them all and good luck in the future. Thank you.

-- Applause

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Antoine. Item 3, Members' statements. The honourable Member for Inuvik Twin Lakes, Mr. Allen.

Member's Statement on Passing of Noah Selamio

HON. ROGER ALLEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. With the concurrence of my colleague for Inuvik Boot Lake, Mr. Floyd Roland, I would like to again take this opportunity to make a

statement in memory of a dear friend who recently passed away in Inuvik.

Mr. Speaker, it is with great sadness that during the past month, the town of Inuvik has lost a number of important members of our community. One such member is a gentleman by the name of Noah Selamio. Noah frequently attended our elders luncheons at Ingamo Hall, where I enjoyed sitting down and listening to his many stories.

Noah was born in Nunavut in the Yukon Territory. As a young man, Noah hunted and trapped in the northern part of the Yukon and eventually moved to the Mackenzie Delta.

Mr. Selamio's occupations varied throughout his life. He began working at the Moose Kerr School in Aklavik and when Inuvik came into being, he moved his family to Inuvik where he worked at Stringer Hall. After working there for several years, Noah worked as a labourer for Imperial Oil for several more years until the oil and gas industry left in the mid 80s.

Mr. Speaker, what continues to sadden me most is that many of our elders who are leaving us behind played such an integral part in developing Inuvik in its formative years.

So today, Mr. Speaker, I ask the Assembly to join me in expressing our deepest sorrow and to send our condolences to his family of two sisters, several children and grandchildren. Mr. Selamio's funeral will be held at the Pentecostal Church in Inuvik on Thursday, June 20th. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

-- Applause

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Allen. Indeed, the condolences of the House go to the Selamio family. Item 3, Members' statements. The honourable Member for Thebacha, Mr. Miltenberger.

Member's Statement on National Aboriginal Day

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, as has already been noted in this House by my colleagues, Friday the 21st is the first statutory holiday to formally recognize National Aboriginal Day. In my constituency, which is a multi-cultural constituency with an aboriginal majority, this particular time has a special significance.

Mr. Speaker, in addition to a full slate of community activities, of which I encourage all constituents to attend, the 21st will set the stage for the 22nd, where there will be a signing of the Salt River First Nations Land Claim Agreement through the TLE process, a process that has been 100 years in the works, falling on the Smiths Landing Settlement of slightly over a year ago.

This is a very historic day for the Salt River people and I want to commend them for their perseverance and diligence. They have chosen a path to a goal, of which they have reached. They have seen that their families and friends in Smiths Landing have benefited from the approach they have taken. It has been a very long struggle. While the land claim was actually ratified in February, this will be the formal signing with Minister Nault, the Premier and Minister Antoine.

In addition to that, Mr. Speaker, it is also a good day on the 22nd because the South Slave Metis plan to sign an interim

agreement that will help move their claims process along. Mr. Speaker, that is two claims settled with one to go. For us, that will be a singular achievement and something that we all look forward to. The Salt River First Nations will be like their companions in Smiths Landing. They will have lands, they will have cash, they will have economic means to engage in development as they see fit. Now the people from Salt River will have that benefit.

National Aboriginal Day for our community is going to have a special significance. It will be a milestone for many people. I would like to congratulate all people of the Salt River First Nations and thank them for their perseverance. I would like to thank the federal government and, of course, the territorial government for being there to make sure the process reached the conclusion that it did. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

-- Applause

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Miltenberger. Do we hear an invitation in there somewhere? Item 3, Members' statements. No further Members' statements, no further invitations. Item 4, returns to oral questions. The honourable Minister responsible for the NWT Housing Corporation, Mr. Allen.

ITEM 4: RETURNS TO ORAL QUESTIONS

Return to Question 224-14(5): Critical Social Housing Needs

HON. ROGER ALLEN: Mr. Speaker, I have a Return to Oral Question asked by Mr. Nitah on June 11, 2002, regarding critical social housing needs.

Specifically, the Member enquired as to the top six communities that have been identified by the Northwest Territories Housing Corporation as being in critical need. Mr. Speaker, these six communities are Lutselk'e, Hay River Reserve, Fort Providence, Fort Liard, Wha Ti and Fort Good Hope. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Minister. Item 4, returns to oral questions. Item 5, recognition of visitors in the gallery.

ITEM 5: RECOGNITION OF VISITORS IN THE GALLERY

Colleagues, I would like to direct your attention to the visitors gallery and the presence today of a former Government Leader, Minister and MLA, Mr. Dennis Patterson.

-- Applause

Also accompanying him is Mr. Ian Waddell. He is the former MP and Minister of the Environment in British Columbia, and special counsel to Judge Berger during the Berger Inquiry some years ago. Mr. Waddell.

-- Applause

As well, we have Diana Crosbie from Toronto who was also involved with the Berger Inquiry of some time ago. Ms. Crosbie.

-- Applause

Item 5, recognition of visitors in the gallery. The honourable Member for Sahtu, Mr. Kakfwi.

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI: Mr. Speaker, I would like to recognize Melody Morrison, the principal secretary to Cabinet and her father, Frank, from Ontario.

-- Applause

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you. At this point as well, colleagues, I take this opportunity to introduce to you and to thank the pages, because this is their last day of sitting. We have from the Range Lake School: Samantha Digness, Tegan Holmes, Norah McNaughton, Dustin Mercredi, Justin Russell, Jamie Ross and Ivy Yoder. Thank you pages for all the help you have given us. Item 5, recognition of visitors in the gallery. Item 6, oral questions. The honourable Member for Frame Lake, Mr. Dent.

ITEM 6: ORAL QUESTIONS

Question 284-14(5): GNWT Knowledge Management Strategy

MR. DENT: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister responsible for the Financial Management Board Secretariat. Mr. Speaker, could the Minister please advise this House when the Knowledge Management Strategy is expected to get final approval? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Dent. The honourable Minister responsible for the Financial Management Board Secretariat, Mr. Handley.

Return to Question 284-14(5): GNWT Knowledge Management Strategy

HON. JOE HANDLEY: Mr. Speaker, the Knowledge Management Strategy just recently went to Cabinet for approval within the last week. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Minister. Supplementary, Mr. Dent.

Supplementary to Question 284-14(5): GNWT Knowledge Management Strategy

MR. DENT: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The Minister did not say specifically that the policy has been approved, but if it has now been approved, will the Minister make sure that it is publicized and that copies are made available for public comment?

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Dent. The honourable Minister responsible for the Financial Management Board Secretariat, Mr. Handley.

Further Return to Question 284-14(5): GNWT Knowledge Management Strategy

HON. JOE HANDLEY: Mr. Speaker, when copies are available, then yes, we will make it available to the public. I want to point out that it is a document and a strategy that deals with how we manage knowledge internally within the government. I assume it will be of interest to some of the public. Yes, it will be available.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Minister. Supplementary, Mr. Dent.

Supplementary to Question 284-14(5): GNWT Knowledge Management Strategy

MR. DENT: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I expect that the issues of centralization and some other things will be of interest to Members in this House as well. Mr. Speaker, a year ago, I expressed some concern about the way in which the chief information officer's position was being staffed on an interim basis. When will the government decide whether or not the recommendation from the strategy to implement a permanent officer will be either approved or not approved, and then staffed?

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Dent. The honourable Minister responsible for the Financial Management Board Secretariat, Mr. Handley.

Further Return to Question 284-14(5): GNWT Knowledge Management Strategy

HON. JOE HANDLEY: Mr. Speaker, I think the Knowledge Management Strategy is a very positive document that will lead to a lot of cost savings as well as coordination among departments on how we manage our information. My intention right now is to make the position permanent and to have a much more streamlined, coordinated system of knowledge management in our government.

I would be pleased as well, Mr. Speaker, to share the final knowledge management document with the Member and any committees that may be interested, and certainly I am receptive to any feedback we may receive. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Minister. Final supplementary, Mr. Dent.

Supplementary to Question 284-14(5): GNWT Knowledge Management Strategy

MR. DENT: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I look forward to seeing that final strategy and I am sure that my colleagues will be interested in making comments on it as well. I would like to note that my office asked for a copy of the strategy a week ago and was told that it was still not final and therefore not available to the public.

If that is the case, why in the June 3^d News/North was there a request for proposals for consulting services on the development of a technology service centre, which is one of the recommendations found in the strategy?

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Dent. The honourable Minister responsible for the Financial Management Board Secretariat, Mr. Handley.

Further Return to Question 284-14(5): GNWT Knowledge Management Strategy

HON. JOE HANDLEY: Mr. Speaker, the strategy was approved in principle in June 2001. Since that time, we have taken a number of steps to streamline our knowledge management. This was shared with the Members a year ago. There are a number of things we have done that have streamlined what we are doing and certainly made things much less expensive and much better coordinated.

The establishment of a territorial service centre is one of the steps that I would like to go ahead with. Yes, there is an ad in the paper to see what interest there is for a position to manage that territorial service centre.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Minister. Item 6, oral questions. The honourable Member for Inuvik Boot Lake, Mr. Roland.

Question 285-14(5): Drug and Alcohol Treatment Programs

MR. ROLAND: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my question at this time is directed to the Minister of Health and Social Services and is in the area of drug and alcohol programming. I have worked with the Minister and his staff to try to find out what it would take to have clients referred to, for example, the Salvation Army facility here in Yellowknife, if that is a program that clients would like to take, as their programming is somewhat differently structured. It is the only one we have right now operating in the Northwest Territories that is approved by the department.

I would like to know from the Minister, what does it require to have an alcohol and drug program approved, or go on the department's approved list? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Roland. The honourable Minister responsible for the Department of Health and Social Services, Mr. Miltenberger.

Return to Question 285-14(5): Drug and Alcohol Treatment Programs

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, to get a new program approved would depend upon what is being proposed. It would take some work. If it is a request similar to those we have on the table right now from a number of regions to have alcohol and drug facilities built in their region or communities, then that is a situation that has to be looked at through the capital planning process, our alcohol and drug strategy that is tied into the family violence and the mental health strategy that is currently being completed. We also look at that.

We also have to make the fundamental decision about whether we want to put money into bricks and mortar or do we want to put money into programs at the community level?

In relation to this particular issue, there is also the factor that we are trying to come to grips with the socio-economic impact of major resource development. We want to have a frame for that as well as some funding to start working with communities to address some specific issues, many of which tend to be linked to alcohol. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Minister. Supplementary, Mr. Roland.

Supplementary to Question 285-14(5): Drug and Alcohol Treatment Programs

MR. ROLAND: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, right now in the community of Inuvik, we have people who are working in the field of counselling, the drug and alcohol area, trying to come up with support for individuals in the community and have selected some individuals that can go to a program

that is offered I believe here in the city and is already there, so there are no bricks and mortar that need to be put together for this. It is a matter of an approval.

There seems to be a silent wall out there running up against something here that we cannot seem to get people sent to the next level. What other drug and alcohol programming is available in the Northwest Territories for residents today? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Roland. The honourable Minister responsible for the Department of Health and Social Services, Mr. Miltenberger.

Further Return to Question 285-14(5): Drug and Alcohol Treatment Programs

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the program offered by the Salvation Army, the Withdrawal Management Program, is one of a kind. The process that is supposed to occur is that an alcohol and drug worker at the community level should do a referral. When that is approved, travel is covered through medical travel. They have to come down to Yellowknife with a return ticket. The program is anywhere from five to 14 days. It is a six-bed program. People can also self refer, but if a person chooses to self refer, the costs are the responsibility of the person doing the self referral. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Minister. Supplementary question, Mr. Roland.

Supplementary to Question 285-14(5): Drug and Alcohol Treatment Programs

MR. ROLAND: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, there are a number of other programs related to the area of drug and alcohol. Can they be combined so that we are not spending a huge amount of money for somebody to come down for five to 14 days? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Roland. The honourable Minister responsible for the Department of Health and Social Services, Mr. Miltenberger.

Further Return to Question 285-14(5): Drug and Alcohol Treatment Programs

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, that is and should be a possibility. The Salvation Army program, for example, would be a first step. If there is, through the case planning for the particular individual client, further need determined to use Nats'ejee K'eh or some residential resources or other kind of support outside of the alcohol issue, something to do with anger or other related issues, then yes, it would be good planning, as my colleague indicated, to make sure that when the person is in Yellowknife, they make use of those other ancillary services that would further supplement their program. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Minister. Final supplementary, Mr. Roland.

Supplementary to Question 285-14(5): Drug and Alcohol Treatment Programs

MR. ROLAND: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the Minister has stated that an alcohol and drug worker in the community would have to refer the client. Who would he refer the client to? Who would do the approval of travel like this? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Roland. The honourable Minister responsible for the Department of Health and Social Services, Mr. Miltenberger.

Further Return to Question 285-14(5): Drug and Alcohol Treatment Programs

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, there is a process for referral through residential addictions treatment. The process is laid out. Once that is approved, then the medical travel through the process that normally approves medical travel would be done, and that person's travel would be covered, the airline travel to Yellowknife, for example, from Inuvik. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Minister. Item 6, oral questions. The honourable Member for Hay River North, Mr. Delorey.

Question 286-14(5): Student Hiring at Hay River Hospital

MR. DELOREY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Minister responsible for Health and Social Services. It has to do with an issue I raised with the Minister some time ago regarding the student hiring policy at the hospital in Hay River.

I have reason to believe the original information I received was a little short of accurate. For example, Mr. Speaker, I was told the department does not fund the Student Hiring Program as a separate item on the budget allocation to the hospital. I was wondering if the Minister could confirm whether or not there is a separate line item for student hiring at the hospital? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Delorey. The honourable Minister responsible for the Department of Health and Social Services, Mr. Miltenberger.

Return to Question 286-14(5): Student Hiring at Hay River Hospital

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the Member and I have been in discussion on this particular item as we attempted to come up with the facts. What happened last year was that there was some funding available. Hay River ended up being eligible for approximately \$33,000. My understanding is they only spent about \$21,000 or \$22,000. This year, the funding that was made available was, as I indicated to the Member, \$17,000, so there is money for student hiring.

There was a circumstance last year that they had more money available. The initial information I gave to the Member in committee was not accurate. I did share with him that information. I do apologize for any misinformation. It was

unintentional. We did sort through this to come up with the facts. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Minister. Supplementary, Mr. Delorey.

Supplementary to Question 286-14(5): Student Hiring at Hay River Hospital

MR. DELOREY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, at a time when this government is putting a lot of emphasis and importance on hiring students and putting our post-secondary students to work for the summer, why would the department look at cutting a line item that is dealing specifically with hiring students in the summer? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Delorey. The honourable Minister responsible for the Department of Health and Social Services, Mr. Miltenberger.

Further Return to Question 286-14(5): Student Hiring at Hay River Hospital

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, there is a fund that is the same as last year. That is the \$17,000 that I am referring to. What happened last year was that there was some extra money that was apportioned out and made available to the authorities, which accounted for the increase up to \$33,000 and that was made eligible to the Hay River Authority. They only made use of about \$22,000. The amount of money that is actually in the budget is still the same. We just had the good fortune of having some extra last year. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Minister. Supplementary, Mr. Delorey.

Supplementary to Question 286-14(5): Student Hiring at Hay River Hospital

MR. DELOREY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, could the Minister inform me if there were any conditions attached to this money in previous years or in this year, as far as the health board having to commit to matching funds, or was the money given to the health board with no regulations? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Delorey. The honourable Minister responsible for the Department of Health and Social Services, Mr. Miltenberger.

Further Return to Question 286-14(5): Student Hiring at Hay River Hospital

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, given the information I initially gave to the Member, I am going to qualify my comment here. My understanding is that the money goes to the authority. If they want to hire more students, they can supplement it. I also know the wages went up from \$13 to \$14 an hour, which would also cut into what is available. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Minister. Final supplementary, Mr. Delorey.

Supplementary to Question 286-14(5): Student Hiring at Hay River Hospital

MR. DELOREY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would just like to confirm, Mr. Speaker, what the Minister said. Is he telling me there were no cuts to that line item in the budget this year compared to last year or previous years? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Delorey. The honourable Minister responsible for the Department of Health and Social Services, Mr. Miltenberger.

Further Return to Question 286-14(5): Student Hiring at Hay River Hospital

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the information I have, as I indicated, is that the money this year is the same as last year. In addition, there is also, which I neglected to mention, about \$6,600 for hiring high school students as well. The total allocated is \$23,400. Those are the numbers as I have them. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Minister. Item 6, oral questions. The honourable Member for Mackenzie Delta, Mr. Krutko.

Question 287-14(5): Status of Aboriginal Language Specialists

MR. KRUTKO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my question today is regarding status of the aboriginal language specialists. There have been concerns by these teachers in our schools as to what their status was compared to regular teachers in the classroom. I would like to ask the Minister responsible for Education, exactly where do these individuals stand? Are the language specialists employees of the public service or are they employees of the school boards? What is the status of those individuals?

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Krutko. The honourable Minister responsible for the Department of Education, Culture and Employment, Mr. Handley.

Return to Question 287-14(5): Status of Aboriginal Language Specialists

HON. JOE HANDLEY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, if they are hired as aboriginal language teachers who are teaching in the classroom, they will get a teaching certificate and thus, they will be regular members of the public service. The only ones who might be employees of the board would be if someone is hired on an hourly basis or on a casual basis for a short period of time for a specific exercise. If they are teaching in the school, then they should have teaching certificates and be regular employees, the same as the other teachers. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Minister. Supplementary, Mr. Krutko.

Supplementary to Question 287-14(5): Status of Aboriginal Language Specialists

MR. KRUTKO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I would like to ask the Minister, has the department followed up on a question that was asked in committee, which was to look at the

whole area of language specialists in light of the amendment to the Education Act that allowed the French school here in Yellowknife to be accepted into that process in which they fall within the Public Service Act.

I would like to ask the Minister, under the present Education Act, there is a definition of a teacher. Teacher is clearly defined as an employee, a teacher who teaches from kindergarten to grade 12. The aboriginal language specialists are teachers in that term. I would like to ask the Minister, when will these teachers be able to see the same benefits as all other teachers in our schools?

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Krutko. The honourable Minister responsible for the Department of Education, Culture and Employment, Mr. Handley.

Further Return to Question 287-14(5): Status of Aboriginal Language Specialists

HON. JOE HANDLEY: Mr. Speaker, if they are teaching in the school, if their responsibilities include teaching, then they will have a teaching certificate. As such, they will get the same benefits as any teacher in the school. As I said before, if they are just hired on a casual basis or for some specific project, then that may not be the case, but we would have to look at those case by case. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Minister. Supplementary, Mr. Krutko.

Supplementary to Question 287-14(5): Status of Aboriginal Language Specialists

MR. KRUTKO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, under the present act that is in place, the Department of Education, the department responsible for teachers, is clearly aware that the aboriginal language specialists cannot be hired outside the public service in regard to their status as being certified teachers. Has that directive been given to the education boards, that they have to hire certified teachers and pay them the same wages as other teachers in the public service?

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Krutko. The honourable Minister responsible for the Department of Education, Culture and Employment, Mr. Handley.

Further Return to Question 287-14(5): Status of Aboriginal Language Specialists

HON. JOE HANDLEY: Mr. Speaker, if the boards are hiring anyone to teach in the classrooms, then they have to acquire a teaching certificate for those individuals. In some cases, they will hire individuals who have the skills who may not have the teacher qualifications, so they will not necessarily go and hire someone who already has the qualifications. They will hire someone who knows the language and can teach it.

All of the boards have been advised that if they are hiring teachers, aboriginal language specialists as teachers, they have to have a certificate and they have to be paid according to the salary scale. The salary scale for teachers varies a lot, depending on the qualifications, but they will be put on that scale. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Minister. Final supplementary, Mr. Krutko.

Supplementary to Question 287-14(5): Status of Aboriginal Language Specialists

MR. KRUTKO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, in regard to this issue just coming to light lately, and knowing the response from the Minister, will the Minister look into retroactive pay for these individuals, knowing they have been unjustly paid at a lower level than teachers with similar qualifications?

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Krutko. The honourable Minister responsible for the Department of Education, Culture and Employment, Mr. Handley.

Further Return to Question 287-14(5): Status of Aboriginal Language Specialists

HON. JOE HANDLEY: Mr. Speaker, I will certainly look into any cases where people have been hired as aboriginal language teachers and have not been paid on that scale. We will look at what has happened in that case and try to come to some arrangement.

I am not familiar with any, so if there are individuals that the Member is aware of, I would appreciate knowing so I could follow up on that. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Minister. Item 6, oral questions. The honourable Member for Tu Nedhe, Mr. Nitah.

Question 288-14(5): Dogrib Self-Government and Land Claim Negotiations

MR. NITAH: Mahsi cho, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my question today is for the Minister responsible for the Ministry of Aboriginal Affairs, Mr. Antoine. Mr. Speaker, summer is approaching. Aboriginal assemblies are going to be happening throughout the Northwest Territories. The Dogrib people are indicating they will be initialling their final agreement. I do have some questions, Mr. Speaker, on the initialling of that final agreement.

My understanding, Mr. Speaker, is that the land they selected as Dogrib land is a block of land surrounding the four communities. They have also identified what they term as traditional lands north towards the Sahtu, west towards the Deh Cho, south towards Fort Resolution, encompassing the city of Yellowknife and Simpson Islands, east, just north of 60...

MR. SPEAKER: Mr. Nitah, could you get to a question? I just want to remind Members that I have a full slate. Everybody just wants to ask questions. If we go on with long preambles, we will not be able to get it all done. Short questions, reasonably short, Mr. Nitah.

MR. NITAH: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I apologize, but I need to set the context of the question. What I would like to ask the Minister, as a party to the negotiations, can he confirm that land selection as Dogrib lands and what has been identified as their traditional territory? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Nitah. The honourable Minister responsible for the Ministry of Aboriginal Affairs, Mr. Antoine.

Return to Question 288-14(5): Dogrib Self-Government and Land Claim Negotiations

HON. JIM ANTOINE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, there is a map that accompanied the agreement-in-principle to indicate the settlement area. The settlement area is all of the area of interest to the Dogrib. Contained in the settlement area are selected lands around the four communities. This map has been public. I think the honourable Member generally described this map and the area. I would say yes, if he is asking me to confirm that, the answer is yes. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Minister. Supplementary, Mr. Nitah.

Supplementary to Question 288-14(5): Dogrib Self-Government and Land Claim Negotiations

MR. NITAH: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Also part of the Dogrib claim is the provision of self-government. I understand from the Minister, in answers to questions from Members of the House, that there are still questions of incremental costs. Has the question of incremental costs been resolved? Who is going to pay for the self-government? What is the implication on this government? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Nitah. The honourable Minister responsible for the Ministry of Aboriginal Affairs, Mr. Antoine.

Further Return to Question 288-14(5): Dogrib Self-Government and Land Claim Negotiations

HON. JIM ANTOINE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the final agreement of the Dogrib Treaty 11 negotiations has not been concluded. There is a negotiating session in Ottawa this week as we speak. Subjects on the table are incremental costs, the financial issues, as well as the question of certainty and the whole area about boundary and overlap. These are the three very major issues that are on the table for discussion as we speak.

The position of our government has always been that Canada is responsible for 100 percent of the incremental costs required to implement the Dogrib final agreement. This government will provide funding for most programs and services, but as a small jurisdiction with a very limited revenue base, it will be very difficult, so we cannot afford to pay the incremental costs of implementing self-government without reducing the level of programs and services to all NWT residents. As a result, the GNWT's position has always been that Canada has to be responsible for the incremental costs. This is one of the issues that is still outstanding. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Minister. Supplementary, Mr. Nitah.

Supplementary to Question 288-14(5): Dogrib Self-Government and Land Claim Negotiations

MR. NITAH: Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, in the context of land selection, I understand the Dogrib are negotiating self-government and I want to know what the implications are for those people living in the city, the fishermen from Hay River who fish within waters identified as traditional territories, the business owners who own the hunting and fishing lodges, the trappers that own cabins within the traditional territory, and the

non-Dogrib people living in the Dogrib communities. What are the implications of this agreement on all these people? Also, Mr. Speaker, what are the implications for the Akaitcho, the Deh Cho and the South Slave Metis who want to negotiate their own rights within the traditional territory as identified by the Dogrib with the Government of Canada and this government? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Nitah. The honourable Minister responsible for the Ministry of Aboriginal Affairs, a lot of little questions in there, Mr. Antoine.

Further Return to Question 288-14(5): Dogrib Self-Government and Land Claim Negotiations

HON. JIM ANTOINE: Mr. Speaker, the land selection and aboriginal title to land is the federal government's jurisdiction. It is Canada's jurisdiction and it is Canada's mandate to protect existing rights and interest to lands, specifically legal rights and interests, such as producing mines or lands held in fee simple title. The outfitters the honourable Member mentioned do have such legal rights in these lands and they do have the privilege of operating their businesses according to the regulations of this government.

The Dogrib land selection includes only a small portion of the vast Crown lands that are available to outfitters in the North Slave area. The ability of this government to continue to authorize commercial activities on Crown land is not negatively impacted through this Dogrib land selection. If these businesses wish to operate on Dogrib lands, there is nothing to stop them from approaching the new landowners to operate once this claim is concluded. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Minister. Supplementary, Mr. Nitah.

Supplementary to Question 288-14(5): Dogrib Self-Government and Land Claim Negotiations

MR. NITAH: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The Dogrib land or settlement area outside of the Dogrib land that surrounds the four communities is huge. It almost goes right across the whole Northwest Territories, and it encompasses three diamond mines and potentially more diamond mines. We see examples around the world of how these kinds of conflicts can escalate to unmanageable levels.

I would like to ask the Minister, what are the implications for the Akaitcho, for the South Slave Metis and for the Deh Cho, who are negotiating their own processes with the federal government and this government, when they want to select lands within what is identified in the agreement-in-principle as Dogrib traditional territory or identified as Dogrib land? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Nitah. The honourable Minister responsible for the Ministry of Aboriginal Affairs, Mr. Antoine.

Further Return to Question 288-14(5): Dogrib Self-Government and Land Claim Negotiations

HON. JIM ANTOINE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the Dogrib leaders, Chief Joe Rabesca, and the Grand Chief, Mike Nadlii, I am told recently had a meeting with regard to the boundary between the Dogrib and the Deh Cho. I heard the

meeting was positive and I think that the Grand Chief of the Deh Cho is in the process of relaying the outcome of this meeting to the Deh Cho. At this point in time, I have not heard any reaction to the type of arrangements with respect to a boundary between the two First Nations areas. It seems to be going in a positive direction, but as we all know, in the case of the Akaitcho, there is currently a court or legal challenge through the federal court by the Akaitcho regarding the Dogrib settlement area.

The Member asked what the implication would be. At this point in time, it would only be speculation. There is the legal process in place, as well as the boundary issues. As we said, there are negotiations going on in Ottawa as we speak and one of the subjects to be talked about would be the boundary overlap. There are still processes in place to try to deal with this really tough issue and I cannot speculate at this time. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Minister. Item 6, oral questions. The honourable Member for Deh Cho, Mr. McLeod.

Question 289-14(5): Review of Financial Administration Manual Directive

MR. MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question today is for the Minister responsible for the Financial Management Board. As I stated yesterday, I am very disappointed that the government chose to ignore the financial administrative directive 302 by failing to inform me as the Member for Deh Cho of the decision to eliminate a substantial portion of the capital funding for the Lady Evelyn Falls campground. I want to ask the Minister if he will commit to conducting an FMB review of the failure to comply with financial administrative directive 302 and inform me of the changes to this capital project in my riding. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. McLeod. The honourable Minister responsible for the Financial Management Board, Mr. Handley.

Return to Question 289-14(5): Review of Financial Administration Manual Directive

HON. JOE HANDLEY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I am currently doing a review of this. I am not at all at this point convinced that there was any violation of the Financial Administration Act. I think there may have been some misunderstanding in the way this information was communicated, but right now I do not think it was violated, but I am looking into it.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Minister. Supplementary, Mr. McLeod.

Supplementary to Question 289-14(5): Review of Financial Administration Manual Directive

MR. MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to ask the Minister if he could also include in his review the provision of a chronological sequence of events that shows the history of the Lady Evelyn Falls campground expansion project. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. McLeod. The honourable Minister responsible for the Financial Management Board, Mr. Handley.

Further Return to Question 289-14(5): Review of Financial Administration Manual Directive

HON. JOE HANDLEY: Yes, Mr. Speaker, yesterday, I did take this question as notice and I will get back to the Member. I will give him a chronological order of how this project has evolved, as well as the communication that has gone from the department to the committees and to the Member.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Minister. Supplementary, Mr. McLeod.

Supplementary to Question 289-14(5): Review of Financial Administration Manual Directive

MR. MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to ask if he could also include in his review a summary or proposed actions to ensure that the FAA directive 302 is complied with in the future. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. McLeod. The honourable Minister responsible for the Financial Management Board, Mr. Handley.

Further Return to Question 289-14(5): Review of Financial Administration Manual Directive

HON. JOE HANDLEY: Yes, Mr. Speaker, we will make sure that the FAA is applied as diligently as we possibly can by all departments. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Minister. Final supplementary, Mr. McLeod.

Supplementary to Question 289-14(5): Review of Financial Administration Manual Directive

MR. MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would also ask him to include in his review information on future capital funding, or minor capital funding, for the Lady Evelyn Falls campground. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. McLeod. The honourable Minister responsible for the Financial Management Board, Mr. Handley.

Further Return to Question 289-14(5): Review of Financial Administration Manual Directive

HON. JOE HANDLEY: Yes, Mr. Speaker, I can do that. Again, looking into future years, whatever we build into future years is subject to review and subject to approval by the Legislative Assembly each year and so on. Looking at our future plans, they are certainly not clear commitments that we can make at this time. That is up to the Legislative Assembly, but I will include those as far as the department has developed them. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Minister. Item 6, oral questions. The honourable Member for North Slave, Mr. Lafferty.

Question 290-14(5): Maintenance Costs Incurred by NWT Housing Corporation Clients

MR. LAFFERTY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is for the Minister responsible for Housing, the Honourable Roger Allen. I would like to ask the Minister if he can tell me how the

department goes and makes sure the homes that are built for clients in the communities are not going to be costing the homeowners any extra dollars in future years? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Lafferty. The honourable Minister responsible for the NWT Housing Corporation, Mr. Allen.

Return to Question 290-14(5): Maintenance Costs Incurred by NWT Housing Corporation Clients

HON. ROGER ALLEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to respond to the Member, as well as convey to the Members of this House, that we do have a standard warranty clause in all of our new construction. That warranty clause exists for approximately one year after the home has received final certification.

Also, for the Member's information, we also expect that we are maintenance free on the new units for a period of approximately five years. There are other warranties there that we have no control over, that may be done on the various products that are incorporated under the construction of a new home. I would like to make the Member aware that we are continually doing inspections. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Minister. Supplementary, Mr. Lafferty.

Supplementary to Question 290-14(5): Maintenance Costs Incurred by NWT Housing Corporation Clients

MR. LAFFERTY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Upon making phone calls to the department, some of my constituents are being told that it is their own responsibility, but the Minister has said there is a maintenance free five-year time span. I would just like to know, how often do his department officials go into the community? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Lafferty. The honourable Minister responsible for the NWT Housing Corporation, Mr. Allen.

Further Return to Question 290-14(5): Maintenance Costs Incurred by NWT Housing Corporation Clients

HON. ROGER ALLEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I am not familiar with all of the technical reporting procedures at this point. From a policy perspective, we expect our technical staff to be on site and to make sure that the final inspections are conducted in accordance with the construction standards, and that we have our staff communicating with the potential homeowners in the various stages. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Minister. Supplementary, Mr. Lafferty.

Supplementary to Question 290-14(5): Maintenance Costs Incurred by NWT Housing Corporation Clients

MR. LAFFERTY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, as I understand it, the department has to go back for a warranty check. If the department has not gone back to this date, I guess the department is responsible for a lot of repairs that have to be done now because they did not go back. I would like to ask the Minister if he can tell me if they will do repairs for

some of the homeowners that have problems that arose from day one. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Lafferty. The honourable Minister responsible for the NWT Housing Corporation, Mr. Allen.

Further Return to Question 290-14(5): Maintenance Costs Incurred by NWT Housing Corporation Clients

HON. ROGER ALLEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, just to clarify my earlier point, we do have a warranty clause in effect for a period of one year after the final certification. What I was saying earlier is that the homes are hopefully maintenance free for a period of five years, just to clarify.

Once the individual signs off on the unit and takes possession of the unit, then they are responsible for the unit from then on. Yes, hopefully our technical people will be able to assist the potential homeowner to accept the unit as complete. From then on, Mr. Speaker, we expect the individual to assume full responsibility for the home. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Minister. Final supplementary, Mr. Lafferty.

Supplementary to Question 290-14(5): Maintenance Costs Incurred by NWT Housing Corporation Clients

MR. LAFFERTY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to ask the Minister if he can direct his department to go into my riding and look at all of the deficiencies that were there from day one for most of the homeowners, because the department did not go back to make sure there were no deficiencies. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Lafferty. The honourable Minister responsible for the NWT Housing Corporation, Mr. Allen.

Further Return to Question 290-14(5): Maintenance Costs Incurred by NWT Housing Corporation Clients

HON. ROGER ALLEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I will undertake to discuss this further with the department and ensure the Member is satisfied with the results of our review. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Minister. Item 6, oral questions. The honourable Member for Great Slave, Mr. Braden.

Question 291-14(5): Competition Bureau Ruling on Canadian Diamonds

MR. BRADEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my question is for Mr. Antoine, the Minister for Resources, Wildlife and Economic Development. It is about the diamond manufacturing and marketing industry in the NWT.

Mr. Speaker, the issue I would like to talk about concerns the federal government's Competition Bureau. They have let several rules regarding what constitutes a Canadian product. They have just recently ruled, Mr. Speaker, that a Canadian diamond is one that is only mined in Canada, not made in Canada. I wanted to ask the Minister, given that Canada has a considerable market advantage over the issue of conflict

diamonds, what does the international diamond market have to say about our Competition Bureau's ruling? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Braden. The honourable Minister responsible for the Department of Resources, Wildlife and Economic Development, Mr. Antoine.

Return to Question 291-14(5): Competition Bureau Ruling on Canadian Diamonds

HON. JIM ANTOINE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the industry of polishing and cutting our own diamond products is very new in the diamond industry. We have been doing that for less than four years. As you know, the diamond industry has a long history in the world and we are very new in this industry.

However, since we as a government have been able to work with BHP Billiton to provide rough diamonds to three manufacturing companies in the Northwest Territories for the last three years or so, and with our work through RWED in the diamond projects area, we have developed the certification program, which is very well received with the different retailers and wholesalers who have been buying the product from our manufacturer. It is very well received in the world. I would leave it at that for now. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Antoine. Supplementary, Mr. Braden.

Supplementary to Question 291-14(5): Competition Bureau Ruling on Canadian Diamonds

MR. BRADEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I know that the Competition Bureau's ruling is not meeting with a lot of favour among manufacturers in the Northwest Territories and probably across Canada. I want to ask, what is the Minister or the GNWT doing to bring the federal Competition Bureau around on this issue? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Braden. The honourable Minister responsible for the Department of Resources, Wildlife and Economic Development, Mr. Antoine.

Further Return to Question 291-14(5): Competition Bureau Ruling on Canadian Diamonds

HON. JIM ANTOINE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the Competition Bureau is an arms-length, federal agency under the Ministry of Industry. The federal Minister, Allan Rock, is ultimately responsible for this Competition Bureau. Ever since we became involved in the diamond industry some three to four years ago, the Competition Bureau started developing the definition of Canadian diamonds.

In our research, we as the Government of the Northwest Territories have had a lot of input to try to influence that definition. We have been developing our certification program. For our certification program, a Canadian diamond should be a diamond that is mined, cut and polished in Canada by Canadians. That is what our certification program is doing and they are certified by the Government of the Northwest Territories.

However, when the Competition Bureau came out with the definition about a year ago to mean that a Canadian diamond

is a diamond that is mined in Canada but it could be exported by the companies outside of the country -- Antwerp, India, maybe Israel or wherever they do the polishing and cutting -- and then they would polish and cut that diamond there and bring it back into Canada and call it a Canadian diamond, we have had a very difficult time with it. We have written letters to the Competition Bureau. We have written a letter to the Minister of Industry. Recently, about two weeks ago when our Premier and Finance Minister were in Ottawa, there was a meeting with Allan Rock and this was one of the subjects that was raised. From what I understand, he was not aware of the Competition Bureau's definition of Canadian diamonds. As you know, Allan Rock just took over that portfolio a few months ago and there are many things in his responsibility, so he was not aware of this.

We are making this known. I just came back from Vancouver yesterday from a World Diamond Congress, an international conference on mining diamonds. The whole focus was on diamonds from the North. The main message I delivered there was our concern and objection to the Competition Bureau's definition of Canadian diamonds. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Minister. Supplementary, Mr. Braden.

Supplementary to Question 291-14(5): Competition Bureau Ruling on Canadian Diamonds

MR. BRADEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. From the industry's point of view, can we solicit their support to go to the Competition Bureau and get this ruling changed? Is the international diamond industry on our side? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Braden. The honourable Minister responsible for the Department of Resources, Wildlife and Economic Development, Mr. Antoine.

Further Return to Question 291-14(5): Competition Bureau Ruling on Canadian Diamonds

HON. JIM ANTOINE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, as I indicated, there is a lot of support for our certification program, which is different from the Canadian Competition Bureau's definition of Canadian diamonds. Yes, we are getting a lot of support. There is a lot of support for our certification program where a Canadian diamond is a diamond that is mined and traced right through to a finished product. The Competition Bureau is getting the message. There is support from the international diamond community. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Minister. Final supplementary, Mr. Braden.

Supplementary to Question 291-14(5): Competition Bureau Ruling on Canadian Diamonds

MR. BRADEN: Mr. Speaker, I hope we can continue to get the support of our industry allies on that issue. The final question that I would like to ask is regarding a discussion paper that was circulated earlier this year on legislating standards for diamond manufacturing in the Northwest Territories. I would like to ask the Minister, what is the status of this legislative initiative? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Braden. The honourable Minister responsible for the Department of Resources, Wildlife and Economic Development, Mr. Antoine.

Further Return to Question 291-14(5): Competition Bureau Ruling on Canadian Diamonds

HON. JIM ANTOINE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, there was a diamond manufacturer's license proposed act that has gone off for consultation with all of the stakeholders. The results of this consultation on the discussion paper entitled A Proposal for the Northwest Territories Diamond Manufacturing Act, is being reviewed and it will shortly be going to Cabinet for their review. Eventually, out of this review, we would probably proceed with a legislative proposal. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Minister. Item 6, oral questions. The honourable Member for Range Lake, Ms. Lee.

Question 292-14(5): Staff Shortage at Stanton Hospital

MS. LEE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my question today goes to the Minister of Health and Social Services. I would like to continue on with the questioning I had yesterday. Mr. Speaker, I must say that the Minister has mastered the skill of being very verbose and saying a lot but not making any precise commitment or even answering questions.

I really need to hear from the Minister's lips that he is concerned about what is happening at Stanton, that he understands that this is a regional hospital and not fluff it off by saying he cares about every other place in the Territories. I need to know that he understands that this is the only acute treatment centre north of 60. This is where the specialists are. This is where people from all over the North have to go to emergency, surgery, ICU, medicine and the imaging centre.

Can he bring himself, Mr. Speaker, to say that this is so? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Ms. Lee. The honourable Minister responsible for the Department of Health and Social Services, Mr. Miltenberger.

Return to Question 292-14(5): Staff Shortage at Stanton Hospital

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, one correction: it is a territorial facility, not a regional facility or hospital. It serves the whole Northwest Territories. Mr. Speaker, as Minister of Health and Social Services, I am approached and aware of problems all day, wherever I go. There are issues everywhere.

Am I aware of the ICU issue in Yellowknife? Yes, I am. Have I checked into it? Yes, I have. Is it a serious concern? Yes, it is. We are attempting to deal with it. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Minister. Supplementary, Ms. Lee.

Supplementary to Question 292-14(5): Staff Shortage at Stanton Hospital

MS. LEE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the Minister worked really, really hard so he could be in this place where

everyone asks him to do things, so I do not feel at all sorry that he is getting all these requests. Mr. Speaker, I need to know that the Minister knows people do not schedule heart attacks or serious injury. They cannot just hold off for the summer until the ICU or surgery or emergency opens up in the fall. I need to know the Minister understands this and I need to know what actions he is taking to open this up before the fall. What specific actions, Mr. Speaker?

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Ms. Lee. The honourable Minister responsible for the Department of Health and Social Services, Mr. Miltenberger.

Further Return to Question 292-14(5): Staff Shortage at Stanton Hospital

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the Member was asking about my level of awareness. I am just trying to indicate to her that I am very aware of the circumstances and issues related to the ICU. I know people do not choose to have heart attacks, that they do not decide when they are going to get sick.

I indicated to this House, and I will indicate again today, that patient safety is not compromised. There is a carefully measured, thought-out plan put forward by the Stanton authority and the staff to make sure that we train some additional nurses over the summer. In the meantime, each client in need is assessed on a case-by-case basis. Many times their needs can be met in Stanton on other wards. When the specific ICU requirements are there, we have the Capital Health Authority to provide that service. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Minister. Supplementary, Ms. Lee.

Supplementary to Question 292-14(5): Staff Shortage at Stanton Hospital

MS. LEE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I thank the Minister for repeating exactly what he said yesterday, which still does not give me an answer. I do not understand what he means by training the staff there. What I understand is there are not enough staff. This is why they closed it. This is why all the staff there are working hundreds of hours of overtime. This is why they do not have enough specialists. They just hired an internist but she has no ICU to work in.

Training staff is not enough. The problem is there is not enough staff to start with. I need to ask the Minister again, what is he doing about that? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Ms. Lee. The honourable Minister responsible for the Department of Health and Social Services, Mr. Miltenberger.

Further Return to Question 292-14(5): Staff Shortage at Stanton Hospital

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Mr. Speaker, I would hope that I am being consistent in my responses. The problem seems to be that the honourable Member does not like my responses. I have indicated the plan of action. Does she think I can add water to something to create nurses out of nowhere? I cannot do that. If I could, I would. I am a Minister, not a magician.

This is a serious issue. We are taking careful, measured steps in close consultation with the Stanton authority, as I have indicated. Patient safety and needs have not been compromised. The ICU will reopen. It will reopen in due course as has been planned for September. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Minister. Ms. Lee, final supplementary.

Supplementary to Question 292-14(5): Staff Shortage at Stanton Hospital

MS. LEE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I agree with the Minister that the Minister is consistent in his answers of making no commitments. Mr. Speaker, I do not think you have to be a magician to get nurses. All you have to do is offer better packages. I am sure there are nurses to be hired. Will the Minister look into that? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Ms. Lee. The honourable Minister responsible for the Department of Health and Social Services, Mr. Miltenberger.

Further Return to Question 292-14(5): Staff Shortage at Stanton Hospital

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, it is simplistic in my mind to think that you are going to just put more money on the table and we will not have a shortage of nurses...

MS. LEE: Try it.

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: There is a package being ratified as we speak, Mr. Speaker. I have indicated that we are going to honour that process. Clearly the Member does not think it is acceptable, if she knows what is in the package, but the reality is it was negotiated. It was put on the table for the direction of the Members of the UNW. They will be providing that direction in short order. The nurses are part of that bargaining unit. The decision will be made and we will know what the answer is when the vote is counted. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Minister. Item 6, oral questions. The honourable Member for Yellowknife South, Mr. Bell.

Question 293-14(5): Conditions on Health Board Funding

MR. BELL: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is also for the Minister of Health and Social Services. I understand that funding flows from this government, from his department to health boards, and then boards deliver programs and services on behalf of our residents. I am wondering if there are any conditions on how that money can be spent, Mr. Speaker. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Bell. The honourable Minister responsible for the Department of Health and Social Services, Mr. Miltenberger.

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, it is not clear to me the intent of that question. Are there conditions from the government to the authorities, or from the authorities to the NGOs? I am not quite sure what the question is. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you. I am not sure whether that was an answer or a question. Mr. Bell, I will allow you to clarify your question. Just a very quick, short, positive, right-to-the-point question. Mr. Bell.

MR. BELL: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I was hoping the Minister would start to brag about his accountability framework and I was giving him that chance, but he clearly did not take me up on it. I am wondering if the Minister can tell me, are health boards free to spend the money in any manner they please? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Bell. The honourable Minister responsible for the Department of Health and Social Services, Mr. Miltenberger.

Return to Question 293-14(5): Conditions on Health Board Funding

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, we are in the process of firming up and improving our accountability processes. We are also in the process of coming up with a core services document on a service delivery model. Are authorities given carte blanche to do whatever they should choose with the millions of dollars, the \$150 million that we are giving authorities? No, they are not. There are funding areas, mandated services, legal requirements, and there are programs deemed necessary to be delivered. There is significant latitude, but not a carte blanche, if that is what the Member is asking. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Minister. Supplementary, Mr. Bell.

Supplementary to Question 293-14(5): Conditions on Health Board Funding

MR. BELL: Thank you. I am glad to hear that answer. I must say that I do recognize that this is a very difficult business and that, as the Minister has pointed out earlier, people do not choose when to get sick, and obviously we do not choose when to treat them. We treat everybody who comes to our doors. However, I am wondering if the Minister can tell me, what do we do in the event that health boards overspend what we have given them to spend? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Bell. The honourable Minister responsible for the Department of Health and Social Services, Mr. Miltenberger.

Further Return to Question 293-14(5): Conditions on Health Board Funding

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, this is a two-part answer. As the Member knows, in a supplementary appropriation, there is some funding to deal with the accumulated debt of some of the authorities. Up until last year, Mr. Speaker, that was an issue. Last year, there was a significant rebasing done. We are now of the opinion, along with the authorities, barring vibrant forced growth and emergencies, that there is sufficient money in the budgets for the health authorities to be able to live with those particular budgets.

In the past, up until last year, there was approximately a two-year process of protracted negotiation between the boards and the department trying to come to some resolution of the

outstanding accumulated debt issue that was not reached. Hence, the decision was made to go to the 60/40 split to move ahead, to clear that item off the books.

The rebasing was done. From here on in, the expectation is that, given our new processes and new accountability working as a system, the authorities and the department will make sure that we live within the fixed budget, still keeping in mind that there are going to be forced growth factors, such as union settlements, our Capital Health Authority contract when it is done, negotiated settlements with doctors, those type of things. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Minister. Supplementary, Mr. Bell.

Supplementary to Question 293-14(5): Conditions on Health Board Funding

MR. BELL: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Yes, I agree. We will still see forced growth, obviously, but it has to be justifiable forced growth. We have been saying this for years, Mr. Speaker, and still I do not think we have a real handle on the problem. What can the Minister do or say to assure us that he actually will recognize that only justifiable forced growth in the future will be bailed out? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Bell. The honourable Minister responsible for the Department of Health and Social Services, Mr. Miltenberger.

Further Return to Question 293-14(5): Conditions on Health Board Funding

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the Department of Health and Social Services and all of the authorities operate by the definition of forced growth set out by this government through FMBS. We are making every attempt, along with our colleagues, to be vigilant, efficient, and economical in how we run our operation. The commitment is to in fact stay within our budgets. We are taking the steps and we will be appearing before committee and this House on a regular basis. The business planning process is starting. We will be accountable all the way through this process to try to contain costs. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Minister. Final, short supplementary, Mr. Bell.

Supplementary to Question 293-14(5): Conditions on Health Board Funding

MR. BELL: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The Minister indicated that health boards would be on the hook for 40 percent of their accumulated debts and obviously will have to submit deficit elimination plans. What if they cannot recoup that money? What will the Minister do?

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Bell. The honourable Minister responsible for the Department of Health and Social Services, Mr. Miltenberger, your final, short answer.

Further Return to Question 293-14(5): Conditions on Health Board Funding

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, we are in the process of concluding that deficit

reduction plan as we speak. The majority of authorities that had an accumulated debt have come up with satisfactory plans. We are just in the process of finalizing the two outstanding plans with the authorities, where it is just a matter of looking through some of the detail. There has been correspondence on an ongoing basis. I am confident that those two authorities will be able to sign off their agreements in the very near future. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Minister. The time for question period has ended. The Chair recognizes the honourable Member for Mackenzie Delta, Mr. Krutko.

MR. KRUTKO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I seek unanimous consent to go back to item 6.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you. The honourable member is seeking unanimous consent to return to item 6, oral questions. Are there any nays? There are no nays. The Chair recognizes the honourable Member for Mackenzie Delta, Mr. Krutko.

REVERT TO ITEM 6: ORAL QUESTIONS

Question 294-14(5): Relief for Evicted Social Housing Clients

MR. KRUTKO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Housing. It is regarding a disabled individual who was given eviction notice this week. This individual is not able to work for the rest of her life because of her disability. She has a disability, she does not have any income, and this individual has been evicted.

I would like to ask the Minister, is there anything within the housing guidelines that we have to allow for elderly people, people with disabilities and also people who have chronic diseases, asthma and what not, knowing these people do not have the natural ability to pay the increases we are seeing, where do these people go? They are disabled. They do not have the ability to go to a private rental accommodation and to pay that high rent. These people are in social housing. They are socially dependant on this government. I would like to ask the Minister, where do these people go once they have an eviction notice from your department?

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Krutko. The honourable Minister responsible for the NWT Housing Corporation, Mr. Allen.

Return to Question 294-14(5): Relief for Evicted Social Housing Clients

HON. ROGER ALLEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I do not have the specific information regarding the individual in question, but the intent of the NWT Housing Corporation is certainly to provide suitable and adequate housing to those who are disabled, those who cannot work, or those who cannot enjoy the comfort of other programs or services provided by other departments. I will venture to take this to the department to check out further and respond directly to the Member. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Allen. Supplementary, Mr. Krutko.

Supplementary to Question 294-14(5): Relief for Evicted Social Housing Clients

MR. KRUTKO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, as the Minister of this department, he probably hears a lot of concerns. For myself, as a Member of this Legislature and for the constituents I represent, the Housing Corporation seems somehow being hard-handed in dealing with evictions as a means of getting people out of housing. Those people who will pay, get them into housing because that is where the rent is. This government has established a social housing policy to ensure we have social housing for those people who need it.

Again, I would like to ask the Minister, what is the appeals process for these individuals the department has evicted? Do you have a process in place to ensure there is some sort of consideration given to these people's economic situation, when they are disabled and unable to work? Where do they go?

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Krutko. The honourable Minister responsible for the NWT Housing Corporation, Mr. Allen.

Further Return to Question 294-14(5): Relief for Evicted Social Housing Clients

HON. ROGER ALLEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, for the record, there is an appeals process. The NWT Housing Corporation has a number of agents in various communities. Possibly 23 LHOs manage and maintain our homes. There is an association that deals directly with client-related incidents. We encourage the clients to approach the appeal boards through that process. If not, they have the ability to directly approach our district directors. Failing that avenue, they may appeal to the president and the president will appeal again to the Minister on a case-by-case basis. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Minister. Supplementary, Mr. Krutko.

Supplementary to Question 294-14(5): Relief for Evicted Social Housing Clients

MR. KRUTKO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I am glad the Minister said they should appeal it to the Minister, because this is the Minister's constituent who appealed it to the Minister and has not received a response.

Mr. Speaker, we as a government report a lot of money, getting tax payoffs. I think it is important that when it comes to people with disabilities or elders or people who are chronically ill, that we find it in our hearts to work within our policies to make sure these people...they do not have the financial resources to get a lawyer. They do not have the benefit to pay.

In this case, Mr. Speaker, the individual in question was charged an economic rate. I would like to know, why is it that a disabled person is being charged an economic rate?

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Krutko. The honourable Minister responsible for the NWT Housing Corporation, Mr. Allen.

Further Return to Question 294-14(5): Relief for Evicted Social Housing Clients

HON. ROGER ALLEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As I indicated earlier, I am not familiar with the individual's case or the circumstances surrounding the case. Again, if we are talking process, then I have made the Member aware of the process we use to try to eradicate some of those individual problems. If there is a requirement to appeal to a certain agency, then I have explained that. I am prepared to sit down and get the individual's problems and review it immediately. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Minister. Final supplementary, Mr. Krutko.

Supplementary to Question 294-14(5): Relief for Evicted Social Housing Clients

MR. KRUTKO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I would like to ask the Minister if he can look into some sort of change or amendment to the existing policy, because right now, the group that gives the eviction notice is the same group you appeal to. I for one feel there has to be an independent tribunal of some sort to help those people getting through the situation of dealing with the appeals. I think because of that problem, that is why we are having so many people being evicted. I do not think that is fair.

I would like to ask the Minister, will he look into the appeals process, especially with regard to this case? I believe the Minister is aware of it. Will you look at the policies that are in place when it comes to appeals and try to find an independent appeals process?

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Krutko. The honourable Minister responsible for the NWT Housing Corporation, Mr. Allen.

Further Return to Question 294-14(5): Relief for Evicted Social Housing Clients

HON. ROGER ALLEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We have already undertaken several reviews of the operational requirements of the LHOs to see if they are conforming and adhering to the fundamental management principles. We will undertake to further that study so that we have a fair process that those tenants can work through. I am willing to further those studies and see if we can get corrections to that process. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Minister. Item 6, oral questions. The honourable Member for Tu Nedhe, Mr. Nitah.

Question 295-14(5): Impact of Dust on Population Health

MR. NITAH: Mahsi cho, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister responsible for Health and Social Services. Mr. Speaker, the Department of Resources, Wildlife and Economic Development had established air quality monitoring stations here in Yellowknife to determine the level of arsenic in the air. After two years, they have published a report. They have determined there is a big spike in air particles in the air during the month of April, resulting from gravel that was put on the road during the winter for ice control.

In most communities in the Northwest Territories, Mr. Speaker, that spike goes up in April and does not go down until late October. I would like to ask the Minister, what are the implications on the health of people, especially young people and elders, of the dust particles in the air in the communities? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Nitah. The honourable Minister responsible for the Department of Health and Social Services, Mr. Miltenberger.

Return to Question 295-14(5): Impact of Dust on Population Health

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the Member started his question with reference to Yellowknife and the gravel and the dust and arsenic, and he ended up with dust in all of the communities. I am not sure if he is saying there is arsenic in all of the communities where gravel is used.

The issue of dust is one where there is concern by the government, which is why they engage, especially on highways, in dust control. In those communities that do not have paving, I assume potassium chloride would be used. The issue would be to keep the air quality as clear as possible for all the people in the communities. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Minister. Supplementary, Mr. Nitah.

Supplementary to Question 295-14(5): Impact of Dust on Population Health

MR. NITAH: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, with the introduction of vehicles, all-terrain vehicles like the quads, the four-wheelers, there is heavy traffic in our communities. I think the federal government is looking at designating salt, which is a big part of calcium chloride, as a hazardous material.

The question I asked the Minister, and I will rephrase it, there are high dust particles in the air. That has to have health implications. What is the implication on the health of people, not by arsenic, but by dust in the air? In Yellowknife, it spikes up in April. Once the street is cleaned, it goes down. In the communities, it goes up in April and the bar goes right across until October, so there is dust all the time. What is the implication on health, Mr. Speaker?

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Nitah. The honourable Minister responsible for the Department of Health and Social Services, Mr. Miltenberger.

Further Return to Question 295-14(5): Impact of Dust on Population Health

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I am not in a position to give you a medical assessment. I can give you what I would think would be some of the possible potential problems in a prolonged situation where there was a constant haze of dust. People with breathing and respiratory problems would probably be in difficulty. Seniors and young children may have some difficulty as well, and would possibly require to stay indoors or deal with the issue in some other way that is deemed appropriate.

Mr. Speaker, the issue of whether it is a medical hazard, it has not come to my attention that this is a pervasive problem. If it is, of course we would be prepared to look at it, along with MACA and Transportation. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Minister. Supplementary, Mr. Nitah.

Supplementary to Question 295-14(5): Impact of Dust on Population Health

MR. NITAH: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. From what I understand with the Minister's response, he wants the people in the small communities that do not have dust control to stay indoors all summer. I am not sure that is the direction the government would want to take to their people, Mr. Speaker.

I would like to ask the Minister, would he commit his department to determine the medical effects of dust particles and the fine particles of airborne dust on people's health, especially those who suffer from respiratory problems? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Nitah. The honourable Minister responsible for the Department of Health and Social Services, Mr. Miltenberger.

Further Return to Question 295-14(5): Impact of Dust on Population Health

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I am not suggesting that people lock themselves inside their houses to avoid the dust. If the issue is one of dust control in the community, then I would be more than happy to commit to the Member that we would look at that in conjunction with Municipal and Community Affairs and Transportation, depending on how the highway is ranked and how the roads are ranked and whose mandate they are. If it is an issue of dust control due to traffic, then we should be looking at that particular issue. I will commit to the Member that I will talk to the Ministers of MACA and Transportation about that. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Minister. Final, short supplementary, Mr. Nitah.

Supplementary to Question 295-14(5): Impact of Dust on Population Health

MR. NITAH: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, in committee of the whole during the last session, we passed a motion requesting the Department of Transportation pave the main streets in communities that are associated with the highways. What I am going to ask the Minister now is, I want to determine if there is a medical effect on people caused by dust so we can use that information to justify dust control programs in all northern communities. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Nitah. The honourable Minister responsible for the Department of Health and Social Services, Mr. Miltenberger.

Further Return to Question 295-14(5): Impact of Dust on Population Health

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, as we speak, there are staff in the department

making notes of this particular issue. I will talk to the deputy minister and I will also talk to the chief medical health officer, Dr. Corriveau, about the concerns raised by my colleague, Mr. Nitah. We will determine what the risk is, if any, on the issue of dust control. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Minister. Item 6, oral questions. The honourable Member for Mackenzie Delta, Mr. Krutko.

Question 296-14(5): Increase Under the Fur Pricing Program

MR. KRUTKO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my questions are to the Minister responsible for Resources, Wildlife and Economic Development. The department announced an increase to the Fur Pricing Program to increase the price of muskrat pelts from \$2.50 a pelt to \$4.75. I have received calls from my constituents saying they were under the understanding that this increase was going to take effect and they were going to be able to see an increase in the program. However, Mr. Speaker, people who have gone out and trapped muskrats are not getting the full \$4.75. I would like to ask the Minister, can he verify that this program is across the board and the increase to \$4.75 did take place?

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Krutko. The honourable Minister responsible for the Department of Resources, Wildlife and Economic Development, Mr. Antoine.

Return to Question 296-14(5): Increase Under the Fur Pricing Program

HON. JIM ANTOINE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, this program has received approval for the fur increase. I thought there was positive support for it. If it is not being applied, then I will check for the honourable Member and get back to him. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Minister. Supplementary, Mr. Krutko.

Supplementary to Question 296-14(5): Increase Under the Fur Pricing Program

MR. KRUTKO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I have received phone calls about people's concerns. People have made an investment to go out on the land trapping and have tried to get as many pelts as possible. The harvest has not been that great but they were able to get pelts. They were only getting a dollar a pelt and they would like to know why they made this investment and did not see the increase in that amount. Could the Minister check with his department and the people in the field to ensure they are fully implementing the change to this policy? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Krutko. The honourable Minister responsible for the Department of Resources, Wildlife and Economic Development, Mr. Antoine.

Further Return to Question 296-14(5): Increase Under the Fur Pricing Program

HON. JIM ANTOINE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, if the money for the fur prices has been increased and it is not being implemented, there is something wrong there and I will check that for the Member. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Minister. Supplementary, Mr. Krutko.

Supplementary to Question 296-14(5): Increase Under the Fur Pricing Program

MR. KRUTKO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, if the Minister could also check to ensure that those people who were underpaid or had the value of their pelts underestimated could be compensated to bring those amounts up to the increase that was announced?

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Krutko. The honourable Minister responsible for the Department of Resources, Wildlife and Economic Development, Mr. Antoine.

Further Return to Question 296-14(5): Increase Under the Fur Pricing Program

HON. JIM ANTOINE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, if they are quality pelts, then the full value of the pelts would be estimated. Whatever the problem is, we will check on that and get back to the Member. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Minister. Final supplementary, Mr. Krutko.

Supplementary to Question 296-14(5): Increase Under the Fur Pricing Program

MR. KRUTKO: I would like to receive some assurance from the Minister that he can also make a public statement on this. Also, could he look at the possibility of extending this program into the next fiscal year, so we know what the price will be next year? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Krutko. The honourable Minister responsible for the Department of Resources, Wildlife and Economic Development, Mr. Antoine.

Further Return to Question 296-14(5): Increase Under the Fur Pricing Program

HON. JIM ANTOINE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, we will check all that out and make a statement. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Minister. Item 6, oral questions. The honourable Member for Hay River North, Mr. Delorey.

Question 297-14(5): Mackenzie Valley Oil and Gas Pipeline

MR. DELOREY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I want to ask this question to the Minister responsible for Resources, Wildlife and Economic Development. It has to do with oil and gas development in the Northwest Territories. After a long day yesterday, Mr. Speaker, I was sitting at home and listening to the news. It seems to me I heard, coming from a meeting in Toronto, that Imperial Oil was pressing the federal government to put some subsidies in place to help promote the Mackenzie Valley gas pipeline. Could the Minister tell us whether he is aware of any moves by the producer groups to get the federal government to provide subsidies to promote an oil and gas pipeline? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Delorey. The honourable Minister responsible for the Department of Resources, Wildlife and Economic Development, Mr. Antoine.

Return to Question 297-14(5): Mackenzie Valley Oil and Gas Pipeline

HON. JIM ANTOINE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the Mackenzie Valley pipeline and the producer group, Imperial Oil, is the lead company in this regard. I have not had the opportunity to meet with Imperial Oil recently. If there was a media report on the radio or TV that indicates they are seeking support, I am not aware of it. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Minister. Supplementary, Mr. Delorey.

Supplementary to Question 297-14(5): Mackenzie Valley Oil and Gas Pipeline

MR. DELOREY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I do not want this to be hypothetical, but would this government be supportive of producer groups going to the federal government for subsidies to promote a gas pipeline? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Delorey. The honourable Minister responsible for the Department of Resources, Wildlife and Economic Development, Mr. Antoine.

Further Return to Question 297-14(5): Mackenzie Valley Oil and Gas Pipeline

HON. JIM ANTOINE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, as you know, the producer groups are working with the Aboriginal Pipeline Group. There was a study done trying to put together a financial package to come up with the Aboriginal Pipeline Group's share of money for the preliminary work, as well as for the project to build the pipeline. There is a requirement to get the funding in place for the Aboriginal Pipeline Group.

To comment on the honourable Member's report that there was a media release in this area, I need to know what it is they are referring to, so I do not really want to comment on that at this point. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Minister. Supplementary, Mr. Delorey.

Supplementary to Question 297-14(5): Mackenzie Valley Oil and Gas Pipeline

MR. DELOREY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, we have put a lot of emphasis on trips to Washington and the United States to provide the gas pipeline down the Mackenzie Valley. I have not heard much on it lately. I am wondering, has our government switched its attention now from Washington to Ottawa to try and educate our federal government as to the importance of a Mackenzie Valley pipeline? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Delorey. The honourable Minister responsible for the Department of Resources, Wildlife and Economic Development, Mr. Antoine.

Further Return to Question 297-14(5): Mackenzie Valley Oil and Gas Pipeline

HON. JIM ANTOINE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Yes, there is a lot of focus now in Ottawa by the Premier and the Finance Minister, who have gone there in the past number of visits to Ottawa. I was there once. In the series of meetings we had with the federal Ministers, the different Members of Parliament and different standing committees, the Mackenzie Valley pipeline was a big topic. Every time we go to Ottawa it has always been discussed. There is a lot of interest and there is also a lot of support for the Mackenzie Valley pipeline. Yes, our focus has switched to try to educate not only Ottawa, but people in southern Canada about the Mackenzie Valley pipeline. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Minister. Final supplementary, Mr. Delorey.

Supplementary to Question 297-14(5): Mackenzie Valley Oil and Gas Pipeline

MR. DELOREY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Back in the 70s when there was talk of a Mackenzie Valley pipeline, there was a lot of interest at the federal government level. They had a huge oil and gas secretariat. Is there any indication that the federal government is starting to support a pipeline and re-establishing their secretariat in Ottawa? Have there been any positions filled in Ottawa in that secretariat? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Delorey. The honourable Minister responsible for the Department of Resources, Wildlife and Economic Development, Mr. Antoine.

Further Return to Question 297-14(5): Mackenzie Valley Oil and Gas Pipeline

HON. JIM ANTOINE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, we are not aware that they are putting together any pipeline secretariat similar to the one back in the 70s. We are not aware of that at this point in time. The federal government has not publicly come out and officially supported the pipeline as of yet. However, the individual Ministers that we talk to are in full support, but as a government, they have not fully come out yet. I do not anticipate the creation of a departmental secretariat to oversee a pipeline operation until there is an official confirmation or official support as a government. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Minister. Item 6, oral questions. The honourable Member for Tu Nedhe, Mr. Nitah.

Question 298-14(5): Addressing Critical Housing Needs

MR. NITAH: Mahsi cho, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my question is for the honourable Minister responsible for the Housing Corporation, Mr. Roger Allen. I would like to thank the Minister for answering my questions of June 11th. Mr. Speaker, it is important that we identify communities that are in critical need of housing. The Minister has identified six, Lutselk'e being one of them. I would argue that Fort Resolution could be there as well. What is the corporation's action plan to address these critical needs? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Nitah. The honourable Minister responsible for the NWT Housing Corporation, Mr. Allen.

Return to Question 298-14(5): Addressing Critical Housing Needs

HON. ROGER ALLEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. A number of contingencies will be considered. First of all, we need to reflect, in the context of what those communities' greatest needs are, consistent with our policies. We hope that we can address them through what we call the universal project agreement. Hopefully those arrangements will be finalized some time during the summer months for those six communities.

As well, Mr. Speaker, we are trying to balance the mandate of the homeless versus those who are in core need. We are taking those into consideration as well. Our overall strategy is to review the existing policy and see where we can fit the current trends. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Minister. Supplementary, Mr. Nitah.

Supplementary to Question 298-14(5): Addressing Critical Housing Needs

MR. NITAH: Thank you. Very quickly, Mr. Speaker, would we be initiating those action plans this construction season? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Nitah. The honourable Minister responsible for the NWT Housing Corporation, Mr. Allen.

Further Return to Question 298-14(5): Addressing Critical Housing Needs

HON. ROGER ALLEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I cannot commit to that overall plan, but hopefully, with some quick consultation and support throughout the system, we can manage to address some of the issues. That will hopefully be done over the course of the summer. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Minister. Item 6, oral questions. The honourable Member for the Mackenzie Delta, Mr. Krutko.

Question 299-14(5): Water Service in Fort McPherson

MR. KRUTKO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister responsible for Municipal and Community Affairs. It is regarding the water problem in Fort McPherson. It seems like when you think everything is going great and starting to work, everything seems to fall apart.

There has been a motion passed by the Hamlet of Fort McPherson to withdraw from the water delivery contract for the water source to the community. I would like to ask the Minister, do they have any contingency plans to step in when communities realize they cannot afford the operation of that responsibility and hand it back to the Department of Municipal and Community Affairs? What is the department doing, knowing that the community has withdrawn from that service? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Krutko. The honourable Minister responsible for the Department of Municipal and Community Affairs, Mr. Steen.

Return to Question 299-14(5): Water Service in Fort McPherson

HON. VINCE STEEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I am aware that Public Works has been advised that the community wishes to withdraw. Public Works will be taking on the responsibility now to operate the water facility in Fort McPherson. MACA has been working with Public Works and the community as to what the overall cost is going to be in this, to see if the community is going to be in need of more funding in order to meet their budget. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Minister. Supplementary, Mr. Krutko.

Supplementary to Question 299-14(5): Water Service in Fort McPherson

MR. KRUTKO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the community of Fort McPherson has had nothing but problems with the new water source and the delivery of water. Their water trucks are presently running 20 hours a day, seven days a week because the equipment that the vehicles have, where they have these pups that are pulled behind the vehicles, have broken down and they are only running the smaller units, which is just a tank on the back of a truck.

I would like to ask the Minister, would you investigate to see if those lead vehicles meet the requirement to do justice to this job? That seems to be where the problem is. Will you look at the whole operation of the water vehicles themselves and the movement of the water from the source to the plant?

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Krutko. The honourable Minister responsible for the Department of Municipal and Community Affairs, Mr. Steen.

Further Return to Question 299-14(5): Water Service in Fort McPherson

HON. VINCE STEEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, both as Minister of MACA and as Minister of Public Works, I have been involved in the overall problems with the water project in Fort McPherson, including the operation of the new trucks. Public Works has been advising me on an ongoing basis as to how they can possibly resolve the problems with the trucks.

Part of the major problem is that the community has no mechanic. Public Works has been working with a local trucking outfit to see if we can get the mechanical work done through them. We have also been working with the trucking company, and I believe it is a local trucking company, to see if there is any interest there in them taking over the operation of the trucks on behalf of the Department of Public Works.

MACA is involved only from the point of assuring the project continues and the community has a water supply. We are well aware of the problems with the maintenance of the trucks and the relationship of the problems of the truck to the condition of the highway. We are working with Transportation as well to see if something can be done with the conditions of the highway to

help resolve the problem with the trucks. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Minister. Supplementary, Mr. Krutko.

Supplementary to Question 299-14(5): Water Service in Fort McPherson

MR. KRUTKO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I think the ideal situation in this case will be the replacement of the existing water trucks and putting vehicles there that can handle the conditions of the climate, the road and also the environment that you are working in. Those vehicles have been having problems since the first day out. They have been freezing up at 28 below, which is not really cold, and we have been having problems time and time again. Will the Minister consider replacing these units and getting some units that can do the job?

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Krutko. The honourable Minister responsible for the Department of Municipal and Community Affairs, Mr. Steen.

Further Return to Question 299-14(5): Water Service in Fort McPherson

HON. VINCE STEEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, it is going to be a serious decision whether we are going to replace these vehicles because they are very expensive. Everyone was involved, including the community, in the choice of the vehicle selected in the end. There was a suggestion that the community may wish to go with tractor-trailers, but in the end it was decided by all stakeholders, including the hamlet, that the preferred option would be tandems with pups. That is what was chosen.

Mr. Speaker, the trucks and the quality of the trucks and the brand name of the trucks do not suggest that these trucks are in any way poor quality vehicles. They are the standard highway vehicles. They are not internationals, or some other brand that is not known locally. As a matter of fact, I believe they are White Freightliners, and they are quite well known in the Territories as very reliable vehicles. It would take a very serious decision on the part of MACA and Public Works to replace these trucks with some other form of truck. Someone has to pay for these trucks. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Minister. Final supplementary, Mr. Krutko.

Supplementary to Question 299-14(5): Water Service in Fort McPherson

MR. KRUTKO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, someone has paid for those trucks and paid dearly in cost overruns and expense to this government and the residents of Fort McPherson. These vehicles have been nothing but a headache from the word go. I think as a government, we have to do something drastic to ensure the water supply is available to the residents of Fort McPherson.

The water is great. The problem is the delivery mechanism that we have. Will the Minister report back to me and the Hamlet of Fort McPherson as soon as possible as to what his department is going to do to ensure this problem is dealt with?

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Krutko. The honourable Minister responsible for the Department of Municipal and Community Affairs, Mr. Steen.

Further Return to Question 299-14(5): Water Service in Fort McPherson

HON. VINCE STEEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I have a short answer, Mr. Speaker. Yes, I will get back to the Member after we have reviewed the issue with the community and the Department of Public Works. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Minister. Item 6, oral questions. The honourable Member for Tu Nedhe, Mr. Nitah.

Question 300-14(5): Stockpiling of Crushed Gravel

MR. NITAH: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister responsible for Municipal and Community Affairs. Mr. Speaker, I have been made to understand that two communities, Lutselk'e and Fort Providence, have been identified as in core need for the stockpiling of crushed gravel. Would the Minister commit to ensuring those two communities will get their crushed gravel this year? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Nitah. The honourable Minister responsible for the Department of Municipal and Community Affairs, Mr. Steen.

Return to Question 300-14(5): Stockpiling of Crushed Gravel

HON. VINCE STEEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, Public Works had done, on behalf of MACA, a core needs assessment of gravel in a number of communities in the South Slave region, including Lutselk'e and Fort Providence. I am told that it was done between May and December of 2001. I will get back to the Member as to what Public Works and Services came up with and as to what they identified as the core needs for the community.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Minister. Supplementary, Mr. Nitah.

Supplementary to Question 300-14(5): Stockpiling Crushed Gravel

MR. NITAH: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I would appreciate it if we could get an answer fairly quickly as this gravel is needed for community dust control and other areas of responsibility of municipal works. Mahsi cho, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Nitah. The honourable Minister responsible for the Department of Municipal and Community Affairs, Mr. Steen.

Further Return to Question 300-14(5): Stockpiling Crushed Gravel

HON. VINCE STEEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I will pass that on immediately to the department to have a look into this for the Member. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Minister. Item 6, oral questions. The honourable Member for Mackenzie Delta, Mr. Krutko.

Question 301-14(5): Impacts of Resource Development

MR. KRUTKO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Minister of Resources, Wildlife and Economic Development regarding the Mackenzie Valley Resource Management Act. Presently, through the environmental assessment process, it is clearly identified in there that one of the things they have to look at are the socio-economic impacts on small communities. We have seen the effects on small communities, such as the community of Tsiigehtchic, which I represent, and Trout Lake and other communities.

I would like to ask the Minister, have you had a chance to look at that issue with your department? It has been raised by myself and my colleague, Mr. McLeod, in the House, and also outside the House with yourself and members of the department. I would like to ask the Minister, what have you done to date regarding this matter?

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Krutko. The honourable Minister responsible for the Department of Resources, Wildlife and Economic Development, Mr. Antoine.

Return to Question 301-14(5): Impacts of Resource Development

HON. JIM ANTOINE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the Mackenzie Valley Resource Management Act, being a federal legislation, does have a board, the Mackenzie Valley Environmental Impact Review Board. That is a board that is composed of federal appointees, territorial appointees, and aboriginal appointees. It is a board that is made up of representatives from up and down the valley. They have the very important and tough task of reviewing any development that happens down the valley. Their task is to look at the socio-economic impact.

I have met with the board. We have talked about the issues that were raised here in the House, as well as issues that I have heard from the communities themselves. The representatives on the board are true representatives of people across the valley and they are very receptive to the concerns that are raised out here. It is an independent board that does that work, and yes, we follow up and we will continue to follow up and continue working with the board, because that is their task. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Minister. Supplementary, Mr. Krutko.

Supplementary to Question 301-14(5): Impacts of Resource Development

MR. KRUTKO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I have to agree with the Minister. They are responsible for implementing the legislation, but we as a government are responsible to the residents of the Northwest Territories to ensure the social impacts on our communities are minimized.

What we have seen in a lot of our communities is housing shortages, the increased cost of goods and services in our communities, and the assurance that the communities will receive economic opportunities by way of jobs and employment opportunities and business opportunities. That is where your department comes in.

Have you developed a strategy regarding how your department and the Government of the Northwest Territories will ensure that we protect the interests of our small communities when development takes place?

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you. The honourable Minister responsible for the Department of Resources, Wildlife and Economic Development, Mr. Antoine.

Further Return to Question 301-14(5): Impacts of Resource Development

HON. JIM ANTOINE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, in terms of development, there are all kinds of different developments. Mining development is happening here in the Yellowknife area, north of Yellowknife, and also in some small areas in the Nahendeh riding. As well, oil and gas exploration is going on in the southern Nahendeh area, as well as in the Sahtu, mainly in the Delta. The whole discussion of the pipeline is also right across the Mackenzie Valley. Those are the two different types of development.

In the case of mining, there are impact benefit agreements that the mining companies have been able to negotiate with the four affected communities around them. So in terms of development, there is a mechanism in place that seems to be working fairly well.

In the oil and gas sector, in the Canadian oil and gas legislation, there is a provision in there for socio-economic arrangements that the First Nations could make with the developers. I think it is more applicable once exploration has happened and they have a significant find, and they are going to develop the gas and oil resources by putting a pipeline in. I think that is where the socio-economic agreement comes in.

Yes, I have instructed RWED, even though it is not really our mandate to do it, to look at some sort of template that the communities could use. In looking at the examples in Fort Liard as well as Cameron Hills, we want to make sure there is some protection there, so we are developing a set of rules, a set of guidelines that could be applicable in these circumstances if the communities agree to use that type of arrangement and agreement. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Minister. Supplementary, Mr. Krutko.

Supplementary to Question 301-14(5): Impacts of Resource Development

MR. KRUTKO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the Minister and his department have all of the expertise, the professions, the people with the backgrounds to deal with socio-economic benefit agreements, and also to look at the development of benefit agreements. All I am asking for is a similar process that was used with the diamond industry.

We as a government had a socio-economic development agreement signed between the Government of the Northwest Territories and the industry. Will the Minister look at establishing a similar arrangement with the oil and gas industry up and down the Mackenzie Valley, to ensure that our government starts taking advantage of those developments? Will the...

MR. SPEAKER: Mr. Krutko, a question, please.

MR. KRUTKO: Will the Minister look at a similar arrangement for those communities up and down the Mackenzie Valley dealing with oil and gas?

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Krutko. The honourable Minister responsible for the Department of Resources, Wildlife and Economic Development, Mr. Antoine.

Further Return to Question 301-14(5): Impacts of Resource Development

HON. JIM ANTOINE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I asked similar questions to the department when I took over. I thought it was a simple matter, but it is not. In the mining industry, they have the Mining Act, which does not include any socio-economic or impact benefit agreements. However, with this government, and working with the First Nations that are affected with the diamond mines, we are able to work with BHP to agree to a socio-economic arrangement with the First Nations that are affected. So even though it is not legislated, we are able to do that.

In the case of the oil and gas, there are provisions in the oil and gas federal legislation for a socio-economic agreement during the development phase once a significant find is made. I was told we cannot do the same exact thing we did with the mining companies with an oil and gas company.

However, we are looking at something similar, in regard to making sure there are socio-economic arrangements with oil and gas companies that operate in the North and close to an affected community. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Minister. Final supplementary, Mr. Krutko.

Supplementary to Question 301-14(5): Impacts of Resource Development

MR. KRUTKO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, under the existing oil and gas regulations, there is an aspect to that where it talks about benefit agreements. This government has the responsibility to ensure that those benefit agreements really benefit communities. To date, a lot of these agreements have not. All I am asking for from the Minister is to look at these benefit agreements and ensure the communities are receiving the maximum benefit possible in regard to the social impacts we are seeing in our small communities. Will he look at that?

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Krutko. The honourable Minister responsible for the Department of Resources, Wildlife and Economic Development, Mr. Antoine.

Further Return to Question 301-14(5): Impacts of Resource Development

HON. JIM ANTOINE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Yes, we are already looking at those aspects. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you. Item 6, oral questions. The honourable Member for Tu Nedhe, Mr. Nitah.

Question 302-14(5): Municipal Taxation and Treaty Rights

MR. NITAH: Mahsi cho, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister responsible for the Financial

Management Board. Mr. Speaker, again, this is one area where multiple departments are responsible for municipal lands, taxation issues. This is an issue that has been ongoing for years and it is an issue that is concerning my constituents, especially those who only work seasonally. There has been direction given to communities not to pay municipal taxes until land claims are resolved. These people who are working for government are having their wages garnisheed. The government is imposing their will on people. They use aerial surveys to take photographs and determine the taxation based on that.

I would like to ask the Minister, would he commit that his department will not garnishee wages from people who are not paying municipal taxes based on their land claims until land claims and self-government arrangements and ownership of the properties are determined? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Nitah. The honourable Minister responsible for the Financial Management Board, Mr. Handley.

Return to Question 302-14(5): Municipal Taxation and Treaty Rights

HON. JOE HANDLEY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The Financial Management Board will not garnishee any wages, but the collection services for our government is through the Department of Finance. Finance will proceed with collections processes when departments refer those requests to it. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Minister. Supplementary, Mr. Nitah.

Supplementary to Question 302-14(5): Municipal Taxation and Treaty Rights

MR. NITAH: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Would the Minister direct the Department of Finance not to garnishee wages from people who are still negotiating their rights in Canada based on their treaties?

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Nitah. The honourable Minister responsible for the Financial Management Board, Mr. Handley.

Further Return to Question 302-14(5): Municipal Taxation and Treaty Rights

HON. JOE HANDLEY: Mr. Speaker, no, I cannot do that. Under our legislation, we have to collect the money that is owed to the government. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you. Supplementary, Mr. Nitah.

Supplementary to Question 302-14(5): Municipal Taxation and Treaty Rights

MR. NITAH: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Is it part of the government's responsibility to impose its will on people when the people are still negotiating their rights in Canada? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Nitah. The honourable Minister responsible for the Financial Management Board, Mr. Handley.

Further Return to Question 302-14(5): Municipal Taxation and Treaty Rights

HON. JOE HANDLEY: Mr. Speaker, yes, within our legislation, we have to treat people equally. We cannot make exceptions. We have to follow the laws of our government. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you. Final supplementary, Mr. Nitah.

Supplementary to Question 302-14(5): Municipal Taxation and Treaty Rights

MR. NITAH: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Without resolving the issue of aboriginal and treaty rights, and ownership of lands in communities, how does the government have the gall to create legislation that imposes its will on people? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Nitah. The honourable Minister responsible for the Financial Management Board, Mr. Handley.

Further Return to Question 302-14(5): Municipal Taxation and Treaty Rights

HON. JOE HANDLEY: Mr. Speaker, some responsibilities have been devolved or transferred to the territorial government. We have a responsibility as Ministers and departments to carry out those responsibilities. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Minister. Item 6, oral questions. The honourable Member for Mackenzie Delta, Mr. Krutko.

Question 303-14(5): Poor Condition of the Fort McPherson Water Source Access Road

MR. KRUTKO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Minister of Transportation regarding a question I asked earlier to the Minister of Municipal and Community Affairs, about the wear and tear and the breakdown of the community's water supply vehicles from some 20 kilometres out of the community.

One of the main problems we are seeing is the wear and tear on the highway, especially the Dempster Highway. It has caused a lot of the breakdowns on these vehicles because of the bad condition of that road.

I would like to ask the Minister, will you consider looking at a different type of surface material so the highway system for this 20 kilometres does not continue to erode to the point where vehicles are actually breaking down and the parts on those vehicles are breaking because of the bad condition of those roads?

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Krutko. The honourable Minister responsible for the Department of Transportation, Mr. Handley.

Return to Question 303-14(5): Poor Condition of the Fort McPherson Water Source Access Road

HON. JOE HANDLEY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Yes.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Minister. Supplementary, Mr. Krutko.

Supplementary to Question 303-14(5): Poor Condition of the Fort McPherson Water Source Access Road

MR. KRUTKO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I would like to ask the Minister, how soon can he get something back from his department to see exactly how we can deal with this problem?

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Krutko. The honourable Minister responsible for the Department of Transportation, Mr. Handley.

Further Return to Question 303-14(5): Poor Condition of the Fort McPherson Water Source Access Road

HON. JOE HANDLEY: Mr. Speaker, I would be happy to meet with the Member tomorrow. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Minister. Supplementary, Mr. Krutko.

Supplementary to Question 303-14(5): Poor Condition of the Fort McPherson Water Source Access Road

MR. KRUTKO: I would just like to ensure that the Minister has the resources to take care of this problem tomorrow. Will he have the adequate resources to deal with this problem in our discussions tomorrow?

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Krutko. The honourable Minister responsible for the Department of Transportation, Mr. Handley.

Further Return to Question 303-14(5): Poor Condition of the Fort McPherson Water Source Access Road

HON. JOE HANDLEY: Mr. Speaker, it would mean transferring some money from another project into that one. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Minister. Final supplementary, Mr. Krutko.

Supplementary to Question 303-14(5): Poor Condition of the Fort McPherson Water Source Access Road

MR. KRUTKO: Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank the Minister for that. I definitely will sit down with the Minister tomorrow, but I would also like to invite the Minister to my riding to check out for himself the condition of this road. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Krutko. The honourable Minister responsible for the Department of Transportation, Mr. Handley.

Further Return to Question 303-14(5): Poor Condition of the Fort McPherson Water Source Access Road

HON. JOE HANDLEY: Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the invitation. I am coming up there in August. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Minister. Item 6, oral questions. The honourable Member for Tu Nedhe, Mr. Nitah.

Question 304-14(5): Municipal Taxation and Treaty Rights

MR. NITAH: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I would like to direct this question to the Minister responsible for Finance.

Land claims are a big issue and have been a big issue in the Northwest Territories for many years. We have three settled and three in negotiations.

I would argue that the Government of the Northwest Territories is also in its own land claims negotiations through the Intergovernmental Forum. Would the Minister not agree that the Government of the Northwest Territories is negotiating a land claims in the Northwest Territories? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Nitah. The honourable Minister responsible for the Department of Finance, Mr. Handley.

Return to Question 304-14(5): Municipal Taxation and Treaty Rights

HON. JOE HANDLEY: Mr. Speaker, we are involved in a number of land claims negotiations, as well as beginning a devolution process soon. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Minister. Supplementary, Mr. Nitah.

Supplementary to Question 304-14(5): Municipal Taxation and Treaty Rights

MR. NITAH: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, would the Minister not agree that when these processes are complete, the GNWT will have a clear idea of its roles and responsibilities in the Northwest Territories?

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Nitah. The honourable Minister responsible for the Department of Finance, Mr. Handley.

Further Return to Question 304-14(5): Municipal Taxation and Treaty Rights

HON. JOE HANDLEY: Mr. Speaker, I would agree.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you. Supplementary, Mr. Nitah.

Supplementary to Question 304-14(5): Municipal Taxation and Treaty Rights

MR. NITAH: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I appreciate the answer. Then would the Minister not agree that imposing taxes on those whom they are negotiating with at a government-to-government level is negotiating in bad faith? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Nitah. The honourable Minister responsible for the Department of Finance, Mr. Handley.

Further Return to Question 304-14(5): Municipal Taxation and Treaty Rights

HON. JOE HANDLEY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, while negotiations are going on, life has to carry on. People have to abide by the existing rules. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Minister. Final supplementary, Mr. Nitah.

Supplementary to Question 304-14(5): Municipal Taxation and Treaty Rights

MR. NITAH: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, Treaty 8 was signed in 1900, long before this government was created, long before the federal government as we understand it today was created. I would like to ask for a commitment from the Minister responsible for Finance to go to Fort Resolution and discuss this issue with the people in the community who are having problems with their taxation and are having their badly needed wages garnisheed. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Nitah. The honourable Minister responsible for the Department of Finance, Mr. Handley.

Further Return to Question 304-14(5): Municipal Taxation and Treaty Rights

HON. JOE HANDLEY: Mr. Speaker, I would be pleased to take up that invitation to go to Fort Resolution. The Department of Finance does not set the rules on who pays what. Our role in this sort of situation is to collect when it is referred to us. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Minister. Item 6, oral questions. The honourable Member for Mackenzie Delta, Mr. Krutko.

Question 305-14(5): Fire Core Training Certification

MR. KRUTKO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Minister of Municipal and Community Affairs regarding the Minister's statement about the Fire Core Training Certificate Program. How do those communities that do not have individuals or people who are certified get certified so they can also come back to those communities that did not take part in this program?

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Krutko. The honourable Minister responsible for the Department of Municipal and Community Affairs, Mr. Steen.

Return to Question 305-14(5): Fire Core Training Certification

HON. VINCE STEEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I believe my statement indicated there are some people who were trained as instructors and there are some who trained as just ordinary firemen. When they get back to their communities, they would then take on training their own local crews, so that improves the fire fighting system within the communities. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Minister. Supplementary, Mr. Krutko.

Supplementary to Question 305-14(5): Fire Core Training Certification

MR. KRUTKO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, that is exactly my point, for those communities that were not able to take part in this program, which is there to assist communities to get people trained so they can train other people in the communities. At present, the communities I represent are not part of this program. How do those communities that did not

take part in this program have an opportunity to do so in the future? Will that opportunity still be there?

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Krutko. The honourable Minister responsible for the Department of Municipal and Community Affairs, Mr. Steen.

Further Return to Question 305-14(5): Fire Core Training Certification

HON. VINCE STEEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the fire fighter training program is ongoing. Those communities that have not taken part will have the opportunity to put forward people they would like to see trained, and MACA will take that on from there. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Minister. Supplementary, Mr. Krutko.

Supplementary to Question 305-14(5): Fire Core Training Certification

MR. KRUTKO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Can the Minister tell me, are there only so many seats allowed for this program? How does a community get an assurance that, say in my riding, there will be a guarantee that we will have people here from the Mackenzie Delta to take part in this? Will they be guaranteed a seat?

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Krutko. The honourable Minister responsible for the Department of Municipal and Community Affairs, Mr. Steen.

Further Return to Question 305-14(5): Fire Core Training Certification

HON. VINCE STEEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I am not sure how many trainees they take on at one time, but I can get back to the Member with that information. I am sure that the Member's communities would have an opportunity to take part at some point, if they have not already taken part. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Minister. Final supplementary, Mr. Krutko.

Supplementary to Question 305-14(5): Fire Core Training Certification

MR. KRUTKO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Could the Minister give me an assurance or a guarantee that there will be allowance for each of the different regions to have people participate in such a program, so we have people in all of the regions of the Northwest Territories with that certification, so they can assist our communities?

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Krutko. The honourable Minister responsible for the Department of Municipal and Community Affairs, Mr. Steen.

Further Return to Question 305-14(5): Fire Core Training Certification

HON. VINCE STEEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I have no problem making that commitment. The program is meant to offer training for people from all of the communities. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Minister. Item 6, oral questions. The honourable Member for Tu Nedhe, Mr. Nitah.

Question 306-14(5): Municipal Taxation and Treaty Rights

MR. NITAH: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Finance. The Minister had committed to going to Fort Resolution with me to discuss the municipal tax issues and ownership of land in general, but he also indicated that his department is not responsible for it. As I stated earlier, there are multiple departments that are responsible. Could he also commit that he will ask those Ministers who are responsible for that whole issue to accompany us, so we can try to resolve this issue once and for all? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Nitah. The honourable Minister responsible for the Department of Finance, Mr. Handley.

Return to Question 306-14(5): Municipal Taxation and Treaty Rights

HON. JOE HANDLEY: Mr. Speaker, as soon as I know when, I will ask the Ministers who have a role in this. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Minister. Supplementary, Mr. Nitah.

Supplementary to Question 306-14(5): Municipal Taxation and Treaty Rights

MR. NITAH: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my earlier questions have gone to the Minister of Municipal and Community Affairs, the Minister of Justice, the Minister responsible for Aboriginal Affairs and the Minister responsible for Finance and FMBS, and probably even Housing. It could be a Cabinet meeting over there, Mr. Speaker. Those are the Ministers responsible. Would he talk with those Ministers and see if we could get this thing resolved? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Nitah. The honourable Minister responsible for the Department of Finance, Mr. Handley.

Further Return to Question 306-14(5): Municipal Taxation and Treaty Rights

HON. JOE HANDLEY: Yes, I will speak to those Ministers, any that the Member wants to invite. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Minister. Supplementary, Mr. Nitah.

Supplementary to Question 306-14(5): Municipal Taxation and Treaty Rights

MR. NITAH: Mr. Speaker, they are all invited. Mahsi cho.

MR. SPEAKER: Okay, thank you. That was more of a comment than a question. Item 6, oral questions. The honourable Member for Mackenzie Delta, Mr. Krutko.

Question 307-14(5): Fort McPherson Fire Truck

MR. KRUTKO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is for the Minister responsible for Municipal and Community Affairs. There has been some confusion between the five-year capital planning process and the fire truck in Fort McPherson. I did receive a commitment from the Minister in committee of the whole that the fire truck in Fort McPherson was going to be moved up to 2003-2004. Previously it was in 2004-2005. Yet someone within the system seems to have not received that message, so I would like to ask the Minister exactly, with respect to his statement, where is the fire truck for Fort McPherson? Is it for 2003-2004?

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Krutko. The honourable Minister responsible for the Department of Municipal and Community Affairs, Mr. Steen.

Return to Question 307-14(5): Fort McPherson Fire Truck

HON. VINCE STEEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I do not know where the confusion comes from. It may be that the information the community had was not updated as far as capital was concerned. I did commit, I believe it was in the March session, that the fire truck was moved up and that is still the situation. The fire truck is for 2003-2004. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Minister. Supplementary, Mr. Krutko.

Supplementary to Question 307-14(5): Fort McPherson Fire Truck

MR. KRUTKO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to thank the Minister for that assurance, but I would like to ask the Minister if he could ensure that message gets to the people at the regional level, who seem to have not received the message. Could the Minister communicate that to his department to ensure that those people within the department understand that is the situation?

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Krutko. The honourable Minister responsible for the Department of Municipal and Community Affairs, Mr. Steen.

Further Return to Question 307-14(5): Fort McPherson Fire Truck

HON. VINCE STEEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I am sure the regional staff have this information. I can assure the Member that whatever we decide to do here, and whatever I have told the Member as far as moving the fire truck up to 2003-2004, will be passed on to the regional staff and they will be made aware of it. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Minister. The time for question period has ended. Item 7, written questions. The honourable Member for Tu Nedhe, Mr. Nitah.

ITEM 7: WRITTEN QUESTIONS

Written Question 4-14(5): Initialling of the Final Dogrib Claim

MR. NITAH: Mahsi cho, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my written question is entitled Initialling of the Final Dogrib Claim. My question is for the Minister of Aboriginal Affairs. There are

many unresolved issues and unanswered questions surrounding the Final Dogrib Claim, such as the incremental costs of Dogrib self-government, implications of self-government on non-Dogrib citizens living in Dogrib communities, and those that do business or visit Dogrib communities and/or within the Dogrib settlement region; and implications of other First Nations governments, such as the Akaitcho, the Deh Cho and the South Slave Metis, who are also negotiating their place in modern day Canada.

These aboriginal governments are also claiming the same lands that have been identified in the Dogrib claim. The question is, Mr. Speaker, will the Minister of Aboriginal Affairs or his negotiators initial the Dogrib Final Agreement before the issues and questions mentioned above are resolved? Mahsi cho, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Mahsi, Mr. Nitah. Item 7, written questions. The honourable Member for Range Lake, Ms. Lee.

Written Question 5-14(5): Financial Assistance for Students with Disabilities

MS. LEE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my written question is for the Minister of Education, Culture and Employment. Please provide the following information with respect to financial assistance programs to those students with disabilities: detailed information on what financial assistance programs are available for those students with disabilities wanting to attend educational institutions, post-secondary or otherwise, in the NWT and/or south of 60.

The second part of this question, Mr. Speaker, is a copy of any policy that speaks to or determines what or how educational institutions in the North and/or south of 60 qualify as schools for which students can apply for student financial assistance.

Mr. Speaker, I have another written question.

Written Question 6-14(5): Aurora College Nursing Program

This question is for the Minister of Education, Culture and Employment. Please provide the following information with respect to the nursing program at Aurora College.

1. How many students applied and how many were accepted to the Nursing Access Program during the last five school years, 1997-1998 to 2001-2002?
2. How many of these students above completed the nursing access program and advanced to the Northern Nursing Program?
3. How many students of the above number 1 have completed or are still attending the northern nursing program?
4. Please provide regional/community breakdowns of the students above, numbers 1 to 3.
5. How many students applied for the northern nursing program in the last five school years 1997-1998 to 2001-2002?
6. How many of the above number 5 were from Yellowknife?

7. How many of the above students in number 5 were accepted?

8. How many of the above number 7 were from Yellowknife?

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Mahsi, Ms. Lee. Item 7, written questions. Item 8, returns to written questions. Item 9, replies to the opening address. Item 10, petitions. The honourable Member for Range Lake, Ms. Lee.

ITEM 10: PETITIONS

Petition 2-14(5): Funding for Educating Bodies

MS. LEE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I would like to present a petition dealing with the matter of funding for educating bodies. Mr. Speaker, the petition contains 26 signatures of Yellowknife residents and, Mr. Speaker, the petitioners request that the Government of the Northwest Territories change the regulation to provide that each educating body not be funded at a level less than the legislated rate. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Ms. Lee. Item 10, petitions. Item 11, reports of standing and special committees. The honourable Member for Tu Nedhe, Mr. Nitah.

ITEM 11: REPORTS OF STANDING AND SPECIAL COMMITTEES

Committee Report 9-14(5): Progress Report on the Review of the Official Languages Act

MR. NITAH: Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, as I indicated in my Member's statement, the Special Committee on the Review of the Official Languages Act has a progress report entitled One Land -- Many Voices, to inform the Legislative Assembly and the people of the Northwest Territories of its activities and to ask for more comments and suggestions. Over the next six months, the committee will be preparing a final report that will affect the future development of official languages in the Northwest Territories. It is important for NWT residents to make their voices heard during this time. The special committee wants to make sure that its final recommendations are practical and useful, so that all of our official languages are strengthened.

Introduction

In 1984, the Government of the Northwest Territories passed the Official Languages Ordinance which recognized English and French as official languages. The ordinance also gave recognition to the aboriginal languages of the NWT. In 1985, the Official Languages Ordinance became the Official Languages Act. This act was amended in 1990 to recognize Cree, Chipewyan, Dogrib, Inuktitut, Inuvialuktun, Inuinnaqtun, Gwich'in, North Slavey, and South Slavey as official languages within institutions of the Legislative Assembly and GNWT, along with French and English. It also established the Office of the Languages Commissioner. Since that time, the government has been carrying out activities to promote the use of all of the official languages.

The Special Committee on the Review of the Official Languages Act was established in 2000 by the Legislative

Assembly to review the effectiveness of the Official Languages Act. The committee has had to respond to the following questions:

- Do people understand the Official Languages Act?
- Is the act working to protect and preserve all of the official languages?
- Are the needs of the official languages being met?
- What can be done to improve the act?
- What can be done to improve the delivery of language programs and services in the NWT?

In the spring of 2001, the committee hired staff and began to carry out planning and research activities. In October, the committee hosted a territorial languages assembly in Yellowknife. Representatives from all of the official language communities attended this gathering. The committee also began to travel to communities throughout the NWT to meet with people who were concerned about their languages. At the same time, the committee communicated regularly with all of the people and organizations interested in the NWT's official languages.

In March, the committee held public hearings in Yellowknife. At these hearings, presentations were made by aboriginal organizations, the Francophone community, past and current territorial languages commissioners, non-governmental organizations, Senator Sibbeston and the Languages Commissioner of Canada.

The special committee is continuing to do research on government language services, the Office of the Languages Commissioner, language education, and aboriginal language rights. The committee still has a few communities to visit and also plans to hold another territorial languages assembly in the fall of 2002. Then, during the fall of 2002, the committee will prepare its final report, which may recommend changes to the Official Languages Act and to the way the act is implemented.

The Importance of Language and Culture

Mr. Speaker, the special committee has learned that preserving our languages is very important. We express our special identity and culture through our language. If we truly want to preserve our distinct cultures, then we have to preserve our languages as well.

In order to preserve the official languages of the NWT, we have to use these languages on a day-to-day basis. This is not an easy task for the aboriginal and French languages, because English is such a dominant language in the NWT and Canada. Preserving languages means that everyone in the NWT -- including governments, community organizations, and individuals -- has to make an effort to use our official languages more often.

Language Shift and Language Revitalization

"Language shift" refers to a significant decline or increase in language use. For example, if elders speak their traditional language, but their grandchildren speak only English, then language shift has occurred. Language shift usually happens because another language becomes dominant. It can also

happen when people are forced to speak another language through intercultural marriage, or when people move to an area where another language is spoken. In the NWT, statistics clearly show that use of the aboriginal languages has declined over the past few generations. Some languages have declined more than others. French language use in the NWT also appears to be declining.

Taking steps to revive a language that has been declining is called "reversing language shift". It can also be referred to as "language revitalization", which is the term used in this report. Language revitalization usually begins with language planning. Over the past few years, each language community in the NWT has prepared a language plan and is now carrying out this plan. The Francophone community has also been taking actions to preserve and promote the French language in the NWT. The GNWT has recently prepared an aboriginal languages strategy for the NWT.

Effective planning for language revitalization focuses on helping families to teach and learn their traditional language in the home. It also includes creating a social environment throughout the community that encourages and supports the use of a traditional language.

Language planning in the NWT is complicated by the fact that there are 11 official languages, along with different dialects within each of the aboriginal languages.

Other countries in the world have carried out language revitalization activities. The most promising of these have generally combined:

- language legislation;
- language research and preservation;
- language promotion;
- learning the traditional language in the home and family;
- language instruction in the schools; and
- community-based language programming.

Mr Speaker, I will now ask my colleague, Mr. David Krutko, the Member for Mackenzie Delta and deputy chair of the special committee, to continue.

MR. KRUTKO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Language History in the NWT

Mr. Speaker, the aboriginal and French languages did not have much government support in the NWT up until the 1970s. For many years, neither French nor the aboriginal languages were officially recognized by the federal government in the NWT. In fact, the government had a policy of assimilation toward aboriginal people. Aboriginal culture was not respected. Many aboriginal people were forced to speak English in residential schools, and English was the working language of government and business.

Provincial and territorial boundaries established in western Canada did not respect traditional aboriginal nations. Language and cultural communities were split between different provincial

and territorial jurisdictions, which made collective action more difficult.

In 1969, the Official Languages Act of Canada was passed. This act recognized the language rights of Francophones across Canada. In the same year, opposition to the Statement of the Government of Canada on Indian Policy, 1969 (the White Paper) forced the federal government to change its assimilation policy toward aboriginal peoples.

In the early 1970s, government policies in the NWT began to change. The GNWT began to provide French language instruction in the schools. Aboriginal language programming was also developed for the schools. The government began to train and hire professional interpreter/translators. Language promotion activities were carried out.

Since 1984, the federal government has provided the GNWT with funding for French language services and the development of the aboriginal languages. Government services have been provided, where reasonable, in all official languages. More recently, aboriginal language communities have taken significant responsibility for regional language planning and community projects. Divisional education councils have maintained responsibility for aboriginal language instruction in the schools. A French language school board has been established to govern French first language programming.

Mr Speaker, I will now ask my colleague, the Honourable Roger Allen, Member for Inuvik Twin Lakes and member of the special committee, to continue.

HON. ROGER ALLEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The Condition of Our Languages

Mr. Speaker, throughout the NWT, less people are speaking the aboriginal languages. Many aboriginal people, particularly young people, now use English as their first language at home. Statistics indicate that approximately 25 percent of aboriginal people under the age of 25 speak their traditional language, but these young speakers may not be as fluent as older speakers. By comparison, approximately 76 percent of aboriginal people aged 45 years or older speak their language. These rates differ for each of the official aboriginal languages. These rates also differ from community to community in the NWT.

This decline in aboriginal language use is significant because the NWT is the only homeland for the North Slavey and Dogrib languages and one of few homelands in the world for the other official aboriginal languages.

Use of the French language among the Francophone population also appears to be declining in the NWT. The only language that shows an increase in usage is English. English is the most common language used in homes throughout the NWT.

NWT Language Goals

Each of the NWT's aboriginal language communities has developed language goals. These goals generally include:

- preserving the language (through oral histories, dictionaries, etc.);

- promoting the importance of the language;
- developing language curricula and materials for the schools;
- training interpreter/translators and language instructors;
- supporting the languages through policy and legislation;
- strengthening school programs; and
- coordinating community language projects.

The Francophone community has developed priorities that include promoting French language and culture, strengthening school programs, increasing French language services, and supporting French language media.

The GNWT is currently working with the official language communities to help them achieve their goals.

Language Rights

The United Nations has established protocols, conventions, and declarations to support language rights throughout the world. According to the UN, all people have the right to speak their own language. As well, education must develop respect for a child's cultural identity, language, and values. One international declaration states that people have the right to maintain their language within their own traditional territory. People who move into that territory must make an effort to adapt to the language and culture of the indigenous people.

In Canada, the Constitution Act (1982) guarantees French and English minority language rights across Canada. This means that Francophones can request and operate French language schools anywhere in Canada where there are enough Francophone students. The Constitution Act also states that the Government of Canada must provide services in both French and English across Canada. The Official Languages Act (1988) of Canada reaffirms and further defines language rights established through the Constitution Act. Both acts provide for interpreter services, where needed, in all Canadian court proceedings.

Section 35(1) of the Constitution Act recognizes the "...existing aboriginal and treaty rights of the aboriginal peoples of Canada." Aboriginal rights are not fully defined in the act, but may include languages rights. Aboriginal self-government agreements currently being negotiated in the NWT are beginning to address language rights issues.

The NWT and Nunavut are the only jurisdictions in Canada that recognize aboriginal languages as official languages. The Official Languages Act of the NWT (1990) states that all official languages can be used in the Legislative Assembly. It also states that GNWT services may be provided in the official languages where there is sufficient demand. The Official Languages Commissioner is appointed to ensure that the government meets its obligations under the act.

The Official Languages Guidelines Manual (1997) provides guidelines for the delivery of GNWT services in the official languages. The guidelines identify which languages may be used for government services in each community of the NWT. People should be informed that they have the right to use their language in certain designated areas.

The Education Act (1996) allows district education authorities to select the language of instruction for their schools. However, there must be sufficient demand, fluent teachers, and sufficient resource materials. For these reasons, among others, many DEAs have not offered aboriginal first language programs. French language rights are defined in the French First Language Education Regulations, which are attached to the Education Act. French language schools operate in Yellowknife and Hay River.

Many other NWT acts contain references to language. In most cases, interpreters and/or translation must be used to provide essential information or services.

Mr Speaker, I will now ask my colleague, Mr. Michael McLeod, Member for Deh Cho and member of the special committee, to continue.

MR. MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Funding and Accountability

Mr. Speaker, the federal Department of Canadian Heritage provides the GNWT with approximately \$3.5 million per year for official languages; \$1.6 million of this funding is for French language services. The remaining \$1.9 million is to revitalize, maintain, and enhance the aboriginal languages. These monies are managed by the GNWT Department of Education, Culture and Employment.

Most of the aboriginal languages funding goes directly to language communities for community projects. The rest is used for aboriginal language training, broadcasting, research, and material development. As well, the GNWT commits approximately \$7.1 million per year of its own money for the aboriginal languages. Most of this money goes to the divisional education councils for aboriginal language school programming.

French language funding goes primarily toward translation, bilingual bonuses, and French language advertising, signs, and printing. Some funding is also allocated to the Francophone community for language projects. The Department of Canadian Heritage also provides ECE with approximately \$1.1 million per year for French language instruction in the schools.

GNWT departments must provide standard financial and activity reports regarding the Canadian Heritage funding. The special committee is continuing to review how federal and territorial funding is spent and accounted for. The committee is also very interested in assessing what is accomplished with this funding.

Public Comments

Over the past year, the special committee has received many comments and suggestions from individuals and organizations. The most frequent of these have been summarized below:

- We need stronger and clearer legislation to support the official languages;
- We need strong leadership to address language issues, especially with the aboriginal languages declining so rapidly;

- Funding needs to be better coordinated and accounted for;
- School instruction is very important, so we have to take immediate steps to train more teachers, establish curricula, develop resources, and provide effective language programs;
- We need family and community-based programs to support and reinforce school programs;
- We need to improve official languages program and service delivery; and
- We need to promote all of the official languages and change negative attitudes toward the aboriginal languages and toward French.

Our Guiding Principles

In carrying out our work as a special committee, we have maintained the spirit and intent of the preamble of the Official Languages Act. We have remained committed to the preservation, development and enhancement of the aboriginal languages. We have maintained the belief that legal protection of the languages will assist in preserving our distinct aboriginal cultures. We have upheld the desire to establish equality of status, rights, and privileges among all of the official languages.

We have also found ourselves guided by the following unofficial principles, which have arisen from our research and community consultations:

- Languages belong, first and foremost, to their respective language communities;
- Language and cultural diversity is of value to all citizens of the NWT and contributes to the holistic development of our communities;
- Establishing and maintaining the functional value of the official languages in the NWT is an important, shared responsibility;
- The governance, funding, accountability, and service delivery structures for official languages must be clear, fair, consistent, efficient, and sustainable;
- Effective language revitalization efforts must incorporate a combination of the following:
 - a supportive legislative framework;
 - fair and adequate allocation of resources;
 - language promotion;
 - coordinated program and service delivery systems; and
 - family, school, and community-based initiatives.

Mr Speaker, I will now ask my colleague, Mr. Brendan Bell, Member for Yellowknife South and member of the special committee, to continue.

MR. BELL: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Directions for Change: Encouraging Dialogue

Mr. Speaker, based on our research and public consultations, we have prepared the following strategic directions for change in order to stimulate further dialogue as we move toward preparing our final report. Some of these directions may not prove to be suitable. Others may require revision and refinement. Some people may want to consider other directions. We have numbered these directions for change so that they can be readily identified throughout our next round of discussions.

- 1) The preamble of the Official Languages Act could be expanded to include some of the guiding principles the committee has followed. In particular, the preamble could acknowledge:
 - a) the role and responsibility of language communities in the preservation and development of their respective languages;
 - b) the value of language diversity for all citizens;
 - c) the shared responsibility of language communities and governments for language enhancement;
 - d) the need for effective and sustainable program and service delivery systems; and
 - e) the need for a variety of language revitalization approaches.
- 2) The Official Languages Act might be revised to address the following issues:
 - a) Scope of Application: The act has limited application outside of the Legislative Assembly, GNWT departments, and designated boards and agencies of the GNWT. Although it would be difficult to apply the act to all NWT businesses and organizations, it may be feasible to have the act apply to persons and organizations providing public services on behalf of the GNWT and to a wider range of agencies fulfilling obligations under GNWT legislation, such as municipalities.
 - b) Accountability: At the present time, it is not clear what individual, agency, or body is responsible for, and therefore accountable for, implementing the act. It may be time to designate within the act itself a lead agency for the implementation of the act, reporting directly to the Legislative Assembly. Suggestions to date have included a Territorial Languages Board, the Financial Management Board (as is the case with the Official Languages Act of Canada), a designated Minister for Official Languages, or an expanded Office of the Languages Commissioner. Other suggestions may be put forward during the next few months.
 - c) Role of the Languages Commissioner: We have received a number of different recommendations regarding the role, responsibilities, and authority of the Office of the

Languages Commissioner. Previous recommendations have included disbanding the office, combining the complaints/investigative functions of the office with another office (such as the Information and Privacy Commissioner), increasing the investigative authority of the office, and/or expanding the role of the office to include language promotion and enhancement activities.

Given the complexity of this matter, the special committee is currently having an independent study of the office done. This study is scheduled for completion in July 2002 and will guide further deliberations.

- d) Dene Terms: The act uses English terms for some of the Dene official languages. The act could be amended to utilize the proper Dene names for the current official languages, where applicable.
- e) Official Languages Designations: with the creation of the NWT and Nunavut and the constitutional recognition of Metis rights, the act might be reviewed with respect to the Inuktitut and Michif languages.

- 3) Implementation of the act could be strengthened by developing official languages regulations, as well as by enhancing existing policies and guidelines. For example, regulations or policies could provide clearer definitions of "significant demand", "the nature of the office", and "active offer". These definitions would have to articulate a level of service delivery that is appropriate to the needs of the language communities and is sustainable.

The designated areas established in the Official Languages Guidelines Manual must be reviewed and revised to reflect the creation of two territories and any jurisdictional matters arising from recent and pending aboriginal governance agreements.

- 4) Aboriginal language rights might be strengthened through changes to the Official Languages Act and its associated regulations and policies or through amendments to the Education Act. The Education Act could be made more prescriptive with respect to the aboriginal languages, by requiring education authorities to provide aboriginal language immersion programming within designated areas or by establishing language education rights for aboriginal people similar to those currently held by Francophones. Stronger linkages between the education system and language communities might also be established.

Broadening aboriginal language education rights has both cost and programming implications that would have to be addressed. We are currently carrying out a study on how legislation and policy can best support the teaching and learning of languages in the school system.

- 5) Education authorities may need to take a more structured and systematic approach to aboriginal language instruction by developing language curricula and resources, enhancing the training and certification of language instructors, utilizing immersion programming, and properly evaluating language proficiency. Schools would still utilize culture-based approaches to instruction, but the measurable outcomes would be directly linked to fluency and literacy.
- enhancing aboriginal language media; and
 - convincing industry, non-governmental agencies, federal departments, and other agencies (through language promotion) that providing official languages services in designated language areas should be considered a basic cost of doing business in the North, rather than a special cost.
- 6) Investments in aboriginal and French language programming and services could be increased and current investments consolidated. Funding should be long term and consistent, allowing organizations to plan and develop the capacity necessary to support language development. The GNWT, federal government, and other agencies need to work together to identify ways to ensure consistent, multi-year funding for language services and language enhancement initiatives. Special funding for threatened languages might be considered.
- 7) The administrative structures for the delivery of French and aboriginal language programs and services by government departments could be clarified and strengthened to improve overall efficiency and accountability. Official language service centres in designated areas that would provide professional interpreter/translator services to the public, courts, and government departments should be considered.
- An internal study on the delivery systems and accountability processes within the GNWT is currently being carried out. Our final report will contain specific comments and recommendations regarding this matter.
- 8) Formal linkages between the GNWT and language communities could be established, taking into account the principle that language communities are responsible for their languages while ensuring that the GNWT meets all of its own legal and fiscal obligations under legislation and funding agreements. These linkages would allow for coordinated planning and decision-making and more effective use of existing resources. Linkages might be created through the establishment of regional and/or territorial-level language management boards or through other intergovernmental means.
- 9) The functional use of the official languages at all levels of society could be enhanced by:
- increasing interpreter/translator services (which would also increase the opportunity for professional employment in this field and the need for more I/T training and certification);
 - implementing mandatory staff training and enhancing the bilingual bonuses program, in order to improve direct service delivery by existing staff;
 - expanding terminology development initiatives;
- Mr. Speaker, I will now ask my colleague, Mr. Steven Nitah, Member for Tu Nedhe and chair of the special committee, to conclude our report.
- MR. NITAH:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker.
- Mr. Speaker, the Progress Report of the Special Committee on the Review of the Official Languages Act could not have been completed without the hard work of its staff and the assistance and input of many people working or volunteering in the languages field. I would like to take this opportunity to acknowledge the work of Mr. Benoit Boutin, the committee coordinator, and Ms. Denise Bekkema, manager of research and information. As well, I would like to recognize the support of the Office of the Clerk and the collaborations with the Office of the Languages Commissioner, the Languages Commissioner of Canada, the Government of the Northwest Territories and the Department of Canadian Heritage.
- Mr. Speaker, I would also like to thank all those people at the community level:
- those who attended the First Territorial Languages Assembly and provided guidance to the committee in its consultation process;
 - those key people in each community who assisted in organizing our public meetings and our visits to schools and other language-related facilities;
 - all the citizens of the NWT who attended the community meetings;
 - all the aboriginal and French leaders who gave us their insight and support; and
 - those individuals and organizations who took the time to develop and make presentations at the public hearings.
- We received a wealth of information and insights from all of these people and organizations and we have tried to reflect their knowledge and experiences in the progress report.
- Mr. Speaker, during the last year, as we travelled to communities across the Territories, we had opportunities to learn from the vast knowledge and experience within each of the language communities. We also had opportunities to experience the warm hospitality of those who provided us with good food and lodging, for which we are forever grateful.
- Finally, I would like to thank my colleagues on the Special Committee on the Review of the Official Languages Act. Each one of them has shown great commitment, both in the many long hours they spent at meetings and travelling -- taking time away from their families -- and in their genuine interest in language issues.

In closing, Mr. Speaker, our special committee has come to recognize that aboriginal language decline in many communities and regions of the NWT is at the point where the ideal language goal, multi-generational transmission of the language in the home, may not be feasible at the present time. If we want to preserve our languages, we cannot reasonably place the entire responsibility for language transmission on the family, or it will not happen. Nor can we revitalize languages solely through legislation or through schooling.

We all have to acknowledge that language revitalization is a shared social responsibility that will require balanced, structured and coordinated language strategies involving all stakeholders. At this point in time, we must therefore collectively determine the extent to which we wish to maintain our aboriginal languages as functional languages of the NWT and then take active and strong measures to support and revive them.

Mr. Speaker, that concludes the Progress Report of the Special Committee on the Review of the Official Languages Act, and this is the act as we see it physically, Mr. Speaker.

Therefore I move, seconded by the honourable Member for Mackenzie Delta, that the progress report of the special committee, entitled One Land -- Many Voices, be received and adopted.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to say a few words in my language, the Denesuline language, known as Chipewyan language, in the Northwest Territories.

(Translation begins) People talked to us and they talked about exactly what they thought about their culture. They fear they are going to lose their culture, their children are going to lose their culture. Our tradition, the way we came here, using the word, a lot of work has been done on this. Since the beginning of the work, we have done a lot of work and it is still not finished. We have a big job to do yet. We learned one very important thing, though. Even though we are losing our language, the young generation that is coming up, they will want to re-learn their language. The young people, when they reach about 16 years old, they lose interest. After, when they get to 25, 30 years old, it seems like they want to learn their language again. All of the people who live in this Territory, if we help each other, we will get our language back.

Some people lost their language. In the Mackenzie Delta, where Mr. Krutko is a Member, the Inuvialuit are in the process of losing their language and they are really worried about it. The Dogrib language is very strong. What makes their language so strong? How do they work it? That is what we should ask them. That is what we can learn.

Today, we had some kids singing for us in the Dogrib language. We went to Fort Simpson and they sang in the Slavey language. Everybody is working on it, and still we have a big job to do. We still have six months. We will go to Fort Resolution, Snowdrift, Aklavik, Fort Providence -- we still have to go there. We still not have finished community consultations. In the fall, we are going to get together again and we are going to talk about it. If we all agree, we are going to go forward.

If we are going to make the act, if we are going to make a big word, we are going to make a word that is very powerful. We still have to work on it. If we spent too much money on it, it will

not be used. We do not have too much money in this part of the world. If it is very hard, we cannot use it. People are not going to use it. So if we are going to make an act, we are going to make it in such a way that the job can be completed, obtainable.

I would like to thank the committee and everyone who did the job. We think about it a lot. We travelled a long ways. The way we live on this earth, we study their language. Brendan Bell is sitting here with me. He understands all that, how different people think, the Dogrib, Slavey, everything. Roger Allen is like that. Michael McLeod is like that. All those people who work for us, that is how they think. That is why we have a strong mind and we have one mind. That is why we are going ahead.

I would like to thank everybody, all those people in our Territory, especially those who helped us. I would like to thank them very much. If we are going to go forward, we still need some more consultation. Do not stop. Do not stop. We are not finished. We still have a great, big job to do. Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. (Translation ends)

-- Applause

MR. SPEAKER: Mahsi, Mr. Nitah. We have a motion. There is a motion on the floor. The motion is in order. To the motion. Question has been called. All those in favour, please signify. All those opposed? The motion is carried. The report will be received and adopted. Item 11, reports of standing and special committees. Item 12, reports of committees on the review of bills. Item 13, tabling of documents. The honourable Member for Range Lake, Ms. Lee.

ITEM 13: TABLING OF DOCUMENTS

Tabled Document 48-14(5): Package of Letters Regarding the Detrimental Effects of Classroom Overcrowding

MS. LEE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I wish to table a package of 54 letters from educators, parents and students of Range Lake North School in Yellowknife that deal with the detrimental effects of overcrowding in the classroom. In fact, Mr. Speaker, 45 of the letters were written by Range Lake North School students, offering their perspective on the impact of class size on their ability to learn and function in the classroom. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Ms. Lee. Item 13, tabling of documents. Item 14, notices of motion. The Chair recognizes the honourable Member for Great Slave, Mr. Braden.

ITEM 14: NOTICES OF MOTION

Motion 11-14(5): Extended Adjournment of the House to October 16, 2002

MR. BRADEN: Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. I give notice that on Thursday, June 20, 2002, I will move the following motion: I move, seconded by the honourable Member for Weledeh, that notwithstanding Rule 4, that when this House adjourns on Wednesday, June 19, 2002, it shall be adjourned until Wednesday, October 16, 2002;

And further, that any time prior to October 16, 2002, if the Speaker is satisfied, after consultation with the Executive Council and Members of the Legislative Assembly, that the public interest requires that the House should meet at an

earlier time during the adjournment, the Speaker may give notice and thereupon the House shall meet at the time stated in such notice and transact its business as it has been duly adjourned to that time.

Mr. Speaker, at the appropriate time, I will seek unanimous consent to deal with this motion today. Mahsi, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Mahsi, Mr. Braden. Item 14, notices of motion. Item 15, notices of motion for the first reading of bills. Item 16, motions. The honourable Member for Great Slave, Mr. Braden.

MR. BRADEN: Mr. Speaker, I seek unanimous consent to deal with the motion I gave notice of earlier today. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you. The honourable Member is seeking unanimous consent to deal with his motion today. Are there any nays? There are no nays, Mr. Braden, you may proceed with your motion.

ITEM 16: MOTIONS

Motion 11-14(5): Extended Adjournment of the House to October 16, 2002 (Carried)

MR. BRADEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I MOVE, seconded by the honourable Member for Weledeh, that notwithstanding Rule 4, that when this House adjourns on Wednesday, June 19, 2002 it shall be adjourned until Wednesday, October 16, 2002;

AND FURTHER, that any time prior to October 16, 2002, if the Speaker is satisfied, after consultation with the Executive Council and Members of the Legislative Assembly, that the public interest requires that the House should meet at an earlier time during the adjournment, the Speaker may give notice and thereupon the House shall meet at the time stated in such notice and transact its business as it has been duly adjourned to that time.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Braden. We have a motion on the floor. The motion is in order. To the motion. Question has been called. All those in favour, please signify. All those opposed? The motion is carried. Item 16, motions. Item 17, first reading of bills. The honourable Member for Weledeh, Mr. Handley.

ITEM 17: FIRST READING OF BILLS

Bill 17: Supplementary Appropriation Act, No. 1, 2002-2003

HON. JOE HANDLEY: Mr. Speaker,

I MOVE, seconded by the honourable Member for Nahendeh, that Bill 17, Supplementary Appropriation Act, No. 1, 2002-2003, be read for the first time. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Handley. We have a motion on the floor. The motion is in order. All those in favour, please signify. All those opposed? The motion is carried. Bill 17 has had first reading. Item 17, first reading of bills. Item 18, second reading of bills. The honourable Minister responsible for the Department of Finance, Mr. Handley.

ITEM 18: SECOND READING OF BILLS

Bill 17: Supplementary Appropriations Act, No. 1, 2002-2003

HON. JOE HANDLEY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker,

I MOVE, seconded by the honourable Member for Nahendeh, that Bill 17, Supplementary Appropriations Act, No. 1, 2002-2003, be read for the second time. Mr. Speaker, this bill makes supplementary appropriations for the Government of the Northwest Territories for the 2002-2003 fiscal year. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Minister. We have a motion on the floor. The motion is in order. To the principle of the bill. Question has been called. All those in favour, please signify. All those opposed? The motion is carried. Bill 17 has had second reading and accordingly, the bill stands referred to committee of the whole.

Item 18, second reading of bills. The honourable Minister responsible for the Department of Finance, Mr. Handley.

Bill 18: Forgiveness of Debts Act, 2002-2003

HON. JOE HANDLEY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker,

I MOVE, seconded by the honourable Member for Inuvik Twin Lakes, that Bill 18, Forgiveness of Debts Act, 2002-2003, be read for the second time. Mr. Speaker, this bill authorizes the forgiveness of debts in accordance with section 25 of the Financial Administration Act. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Minister. We have a motion on the floor. The motion is in order. To the principle of the bill. Question has been called. All those in favour, please signify. All those opposed? The motion is carried. Bill 18 has had second reading and accordingly, the bill stands referred to committee of the whole.

Item 18, second reading of bills. The honourable Minister responsible for the Department of Finance, Mr. Handley.

Bill 19: Write-off of Debts Act, 2002-2003

HON. JOE HANDLEY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker,

I MOVE, seconded by the honourable Member for Thebacha, that Bill 19, Write-off of Debts Act, 2002-2003, be read for the second time. Mr. Speaker, this bill authorizes the write-off of debts in accordance with section 24 of the Financial Administration Act. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Minister. We have a motion on the floor. The motion is in order. To the principle of the bill. Question has been called. All those in favour, please signify. All those opposed? The motion is carried. Bill 19 has had second reading and accordingly, the bill stands referred to a committee.

Item 18, second reading of bills. The honourable Minister responsible for the Department of Health and Social Services, Mr. Miltenberger.

Bill 21: Health Statutes Amendment Act

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker,

I MOVE, seconded by the honourable Member for Nunakput, that Bill 21, Health Statutes Amendment Act, be read for the second time. Mr. Speaker, this bill amends the Certified Nursing Assistants Act, the Dental Auxiliaries Act, the Dental Mechanics Act, the Dental Profession Act, the Guardianship and Trusteeship Act, the Hospital Insurance and Health and Social Services Administration Act, the Medical Care Act, the Medical Profession Act, the Optometry Act, the Pharmacy Act, the Public Health Act, the Veterinary Profession Act and the Vital Statistics Act.

The bill also includes consequential amendments to the Evidence Act and the Marriage Act.

Schedule A -- Amendments to Certified Nursing Assistants Act

The Certified Nursing Assistants Act is amended to:

- retitle the act as the Licensed Practical Nurses Act;
- substitute the title "licensed practical nurse" for "certified nursing assistant";
- replace the requirement for a certificate with a requirement for a licence;
- substitute the Minister for the Commissioner in respect of certain authorities for licensing and discipline;
- provide for a licensed practical nurse register; and
- provide a regulation-making power in respect of fees.

In addition, the Evidence Act is consequentially amended to replace a reference to the Certified Nursing Assistants Act with a reference to the Licensed Practical Nurses Act.

Schedule B -- Amendments to the Dental Auxiliaries Act

The Dental Auxiliaries Act is amended to substitute the Minister for the Commissioner in respect of certain authorities for registration and discipline. References to a "province or the Yukon Territory" are replaced with references to a "province or territory".

Schedule C -- Amendments to Dental Mechanics Act

The Dental Mechanics Act is amended to substitute the Minister for the Commissioner in respect of certain authorities for registration and discipline. References to a "province or the Yukon Territory" are replaced with a reference to a "province or territory".

Schedule D -- Amendments to Dental Profession Act

The Dental Profession Act is amended to replace references to a "province or the Yukon Territory" with references to a "province or territory".

Schedule E -- Amendments to Guardianship and Trusteeship Act

The Guardianship and Trusteeship Act is amended to provide some discretion in the form that may be used when making an application for temporary guardianship, to clarify that an alternate trustee has the duties of a trustee, and to clarify the wording of a provision.

Schedule F -- Amendments to Hospital Insurance and Health and Social Services Administration Act

The Hospital Insurance and Health and Social Services Administration Act is amended to:

- relieve an injured person who sues for damages of the requirement to include a claim on behalf of the Minister if the Minister waives that requirement;
- update a reference to the Minister of Health Canada;
- replace references to a "province or the Yukon Territory" with references to a "province or territory"; and
- clarify the wording of various provisions.

Schedule G -- Amendments to Medical Care Act

The Medical Care Act is amended to:

- relieve an injured person who sues for damages of the requirement to include a claim on behalf of the Minister if the Minister waives that requirement;
- replace references to a "province or the Yukon Territory" with references to a "province or territory"; and
- clarify the wording of various provisions.

Schedule H -- Amendments to Medical Health Profession Act

The Medical Health Profession Act is amended to allow the appointment of alternate members to the Medical Registration Committee.

Schedule I -- Amendments to Optometry Act

The Optometry Act is amended to:

- substitute the Minister for the Commissioner in respect of certain authorities for licensing and discipline;
- replace references to a "province or the Yukon Territory" with references to a "province or territory"; and
- clarify the wording of various provisions.

Schedule J -- Amendments to Pharmacy Act

The Pharmacy Act is amended to:

- substitute the Minister for the Commissioner in respect of certain authorities for licensing and discipline;
- delete a provision grandfathering the registration of persons who were entitled to practice pharmaceutical chemistry on December 12, 1953;

- replace references to a "province or the Yukon Territory" with references to a "province or territory"; and
- clarify the wording of various provisions.

Schedule K – Amendments to Public Health Act

The Public Health Act is amended to substitute the Minister for the Commissioner in respect of certain authorities under the act. A reference to a "province or the Yukon Territory" is replaced with a reference to a "province or territory".

Schedule L – Amendments to Veterinary Profession Act

The Veterinary Profession Act is amended to:

- substitute the Minister for the Commissioner in respect of certain authorities for licensing and discipline;
- replace references to a "province or the Yukon Territory" with references to a "province or territory"; and
- clarify the wording of various provisions.

Schedule M – Amendments to Vital Statistics Act

The Vital Statistics Act is amended to:

- remove an outdated reference to "lawful wedlock";
- allow a nurse in charge of a health centre to complete a medical certificate if a death is not a reportable death under the Coroners Act and if a medical practitioner is not available;
- remove the requirement that the Registrar General retain church records;
- remove the requirement that the Registrar General forward notifications of change of name made in the Northwest Territories to other jurisdictions if the person whose name was changed was married outside the Territories;
- remove the requirement that the Registrar General issue a certificate or annulment of marriage;
- replace references to a "province or the Yukon Territory" with references to a "province or territory"; and
- remove redundant regulation-making powers dealing with registration in respect of Indians.

In addition, the Marriage Act is consequentially amended to remove a reference to a certificate of the dissolution or annulment of a marriage under the Vital Statistics Act. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Minister. We have a motion on the floor. The motion is in order. To the principle of the bill. Question has been called. All those in favour, please signify. All those opposed? The motion is carried. Bill 21 has had second reading. Accordingly, the bill stands referred to a committee.

Item 18, second reading of bills. The honourable Minister responsible for the Department of Health and Social Services, Mr. Miltenberger.

Bill 22: An Act to Amend the Child and Family Services Act

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker,

I MOVE, seconded by the honourable Member for Nahendeh, that Bill 22, An Act to Amend the Child and Family Services Act, be read for the second time. Mr. Speaker, this bill amends the Child and Family Services Act to:

- provide that voluntary support services agreements may be entered into with persons who are 16 to 18 years of age and who reside with their parents;
- provide that a court order may be made with respect to a person who is apprehended and who attains the age of 16 years before the protection concerns that led to the apprehension have been dealt with;
- clarify and expand the grounds on which a child may be considered to be in need of protection;
- clarify the duty to report that a child may be in need of protection and to require that all reports respecting a child who may be in need of protection are investigated;
- extend the time limits for establishing a plan of care committee, entering into a plan of care agreement and making an application to a court respecting a child who is in need of protection;
- provide that a person who is under investigation for or has been charged with or convicted of an offence with respect to a child who is the subject of a plan of care committee or a person who is a member of a plan of care committee or who is restrained from having contact with such a person, is ineligible to sit on the committee;
- provide that the applicable aboriginal organization receives a copy of an originating notice of an application for a declaration that an aboriginal child is in need of protection, but not the affidavit in support of the application, and receives a copy of an order placing an aboriginal child in the permanent custody of the director;
- provide that the applicable aboriginal organization may make representations respecting a plan of care for the child;
- enable a child protection worker and a person who has been granted access under the terms of a court order to apply to the court for a variation of the provisions of the order that relate to access;
- clarify the provisions respecting the confidentiality of and disclosure of information under the act, and in particular to clarify that the Access to Information and Protection of Privacy Act does not apply to the disclosure of information received, obtained or retained by persons under the act;
- provide that the provisions of the act with respect to the confidentiality of and disclosure of information apply to information obtained under the Child Welfare Act;
- provide for the appointment of deputy directors; and
- make other minor amendments.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Minister. We have a motion on the floor. The motion is in order. To the principle of the bill. Question has been called. All those in favour, please signify. All those opposed? The motion is carried. Bill 22 has had second reading. Accordingly, the bill stands referred to a committee.

Item 18, second reading of bills. Before we proceed to the next item, I would just like to draw your attention to the presence in the Speaker's gallery of Mr. Monte Hummel of the World Wildlife Fund.

-- Applause

Item 19, consideration of committee of the whole of bills and other matters. Ministers' Statements 46-14(5), 47-14(5), Tabled Document 35-14(5), Committee Report 614(5) and Bills 8, 13 and 17. Prior to going into committee of the whole, by the authority given the Speaker by Motion 214(5), the House is resolved into committee of the whole to sit beyond the time of adjournment until the committee is prepared to report. Mr. Krutko will be in the chair.

ITEM 19: CONSIDERATION IN COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE OF BILLS AND OTHER MATTERS

MR. CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): I will call the committee to order. We have several items to deal with: Ministers' Statements 46-14(5), 47-14(5), Tabled Document 35-14(5), Committee Report 614(5) and Bills 8, 13 and 17. What is the wish of the committee? Mr. Dent.

MR. DENT: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I would like to recommend that the committee consider Bill 8, followed by Bill 13, and then Bill 17, and then move on to Committee Report 614(5). Thank you.

MR. CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Does the committee agree?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): With that, we will begin with Bill 8. I will ask the Minister responsible for Health and Social Services if he has any opening comments in regard to Bill 8.

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Yes, I do, Mr. Chairman. I am pleased to have an opportunity to speak with the members of the committee about Bill 8, which proposes to change the Nursing Profession Act and the Pharmacy Act.

This bill is a step towards recognition of expanded nursing functions as performed by nurse practitioners. Nurse practitioners are registered nurses with advanced training in nursing and health sciences. They perform expanded nursing functions, including diagnosis and prescribing medications. Currently in the Northwest Territories, there is no legislation that allows for the registration and licensing of nurse practitioners. This bill is interim legislation until a new Nursing Profession Act is passed.

This bill will amend the Nursing Profession Act to authorize the practice of nurse practitioners under certain specified conditions. The bill sets the qualifications for the registration of nurse practitioners and provides for the approval of scope of practice guidelines. The bill provides the framework for nurse practitioners to practice while this interim legislation is in place.

The nurse practitioner must be party to a collaborative practice agreement and must practice at a designated site. Other minor amendments have been made to ensure that certificates of registration, temporary certificates of exemption and certificates of registrations as a nurse practitioner are treated consistently throughout the act.

The Pharmacy Act is also amended by this bill to allow prescriptions signed by nurse practitioners in accordance with the regulations to be filled by pharmacists.

I would like to thank the members of the standing committee for their consideration of this bill and I look forward to discussing Bill 8 with the Members in committee of the whole. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Thank you, Mr. Minister. At this time, I would like to ask the committee responsible for reviewing this bill if they have any comments. Mr. Bell.

MR. BELL: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The Standing Committee on Social Programs reviewed Bill 6, An Act to Amend the Nursing Profession Act and the Pharmacy Act, at its meetings on June 12 and 14, 2002.

This bill amends the Nursing Profession Act to authorize the practice of qualified nurse practitioners who are parties to collaborative practice agreements to practice at pilot project sites designated by the Minister. The bill sets qualifications for the registration of nurse practitioners and provides for the development and approval of guidelines respecting their practice. The bill authorizes a nurse practitioner who is a party to a collaborative practice agreement to make a diagnosis, order and interpret screening and diagnostic tests, prescribe and monitor drugs and perform other procedures as authorized by the Minister.

The bill also amends the Pharmacy Act so that prescriptions signed by nurse practitioners may be filled by pharmaceutical chemists.

The committee would like to thank the Honourable Michael Miltenberger, Minister of Health and Social Services, his officials and those of the Department of Justice who appeared before the committee to present the bill and respond to the issues raised by committee.

The committee would also like to thank the Honourable Roger Allen, Minister of Justice, who represented the Minister of Health and Social Services at the resumption of the public hearing on June 14, 2002.

The committee would also like to thank the Northwest Territories Registered Nurses Association and the Northwest Territories Medical Association for their helpful presentations. In particular, with respect to the presentation by the Northwest Territories Medical Association, the committee would suggest to the association that their concerns be brought back to the committee when the government brings forward new nursing legislation, which is likely to deal more comprehensively with the question of nurse practitioners.

During our review of Bill 8, three motions were passed to amend the bill. The motions provided for consequential amendments to the Disease Registries Act, Emergency Medical Aid Act, Interpretation Act and Labour Standards Act,

and clarified that only persons holding registrations as nurses or nurse practitioners are entitled to be so designated by title and initials. The bill as amended and reprinted is before Members today.

Mr. Chairman, this concludes the committee's comments on Bill 8, An Act to Amend the Nursing Profession Act and the Pharmacy Act. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Thank you, Mr. Bell. At this time, I would like to ask the Minister if he would like to bring in any witnesses. Mr. Minister.

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Yes, Mr. Chairman, I would.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Does the committee agree that the Minister brings in his witnesses?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Sergeant-at-Arms, would you please escort the witnesses in? Mr. Minister, for the record, could you introduce your witness?

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, I have with me Ms. Janice Cooper, legislative counsel from the legislation division of Justice. I expect to be joined in the not-too-distant future by Mark Cleveland, deputy minister. We are prepared to proceed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Thank you, Mr. Minister. Welcome, witness. General comments. Mr. Roland.

MR. ROLAND: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Just on the Minister's opening comments, you referred to "The bill sets qualifications for the registration of nurse practitioners and provides for the approval of scope of practice guidelines." Can we have further clarification on what that is to entail?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Mr. Minister.

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, in terms of scope of practice, would the Member like some specific examples?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Thank you, Mr. Minister. Mr. Roland.

MR. ROLAND: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I would like to know what it would be. I had a call the other day regarding what this bill would mean and how it would be set up and the transfer of responsibilities and so on, so some clarification as to what is required that provides for the scope of practice guidelines. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Thank you, Mr. Roland. Mr. Minister.

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, I would like to first point out that the nurse practitioners are here to work in conjunction with doctors and nurses. In many cases, especially in the communities where there are only nurses, they are going to be given the legislative base to cover off the many cases of work that they have done for many years.

There are going to be issues in terms of diagnosis, being able to order and interpret selected diagnostic tests. There is the issue of therapeutics, which is the selection, recommending, prescribing and monitoring of the effect of selected drugs, the interventions. If you, in the broad sense, touch on those, I can go into greater detail in terms of the scope of practice.

This is going to be done, Mr. Chairman, on a pilot project basis to allow us to clearly see how this process works. As you can see here, I have extensive and detailed information in terms of the scope of practice, which I would be happy to share with the committee. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Thank you, Mr. Minister. Mr. Roland.

MR. ROLAND: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I would be happy to receive that information the Minister has. I think a lot of people have been waiting for an act of this nature, even though it is interim at this point, to move to the nurse practitioners and establish them in the Northwest Territories, but it is still unclear as to the extent. What would actually be set up? The Minister has referred to pilot projects. Maybe he can tell the committee if in fact they have designated where those pilot projects will take place. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Thank you, Mr. Krutko. Mr. Minister.

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, we have had some interest expressed by various authorities. We have not yet determined the specific sites. When we do, there will be an agreement signed. The scope of practice will be laid out clearly. Each site will in all probability be somewhat unique, since they do not necessarily all have the same type of services available, but all the service providers will be involved -- the doctors, the nurses, the nurse practitioners, and other allied health professions -- so that it is truly a collaborative effort. Once the legislation has passed, we will be moving to determine with the authorities the sites that are best suited for this particular initiative. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Thank you, Mr. Minister. Mr. Roland.

MR. ROLAND: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Can the Minister inform us as to how long he thinks this will take?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Thank you, Mr. Roland. Mr. Miltenberger.

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, we are interested in moving on this, as are the authorities, as soon as we have the legislative authority to do so. That has been the one piece that is missing. As I indicated, we do have expressions of interest from various authorities for being involved in this particular initiative. As the Member knows, and as the committee has mentioned numerous times, it is long overdue to get underway. We are prepared to move immediately upon the passing of the legislation.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Thank you, Mr. Minister. Mr. Roland.

MR. ROLAND: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Can the Minister inform us if the regulations along with the legislation are already ready to go? Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Thank you, Mr. Roland. Mr. Minister.

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, they are not finalized at this point.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Thank you, Mr. Minister. Mr. Roland.

MR. ROLAND: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Can the Minister inform us as to when they might be finalized?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Thank you, Mr. Roland. Mr. Miltenberger.

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, once the legislation has passed, we hopefully plan to be operational by this fall. Given that we are upon the summer break, we will get the regulations done to get the agreement signed and various terms clarified so we can start this initiative by this fall. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Thank you, Mr. Minister. Mr. Roland.

MR. ROLAND: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Earlier the Minister said he would provide information to the committee. Is he going to provide it during our sitting here or later on? Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Thank you, Mr. Roland. Mr. Minister.

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, I am prepared to share this now. I can just give this to you to be copied, keeping in mind it encompasses the whole range and we may not be in fact taking advantage of the entire scope of practice, but it gives you a very clear idea of the detailed information on what is entailed. I would be prepared to share that. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Thank you, Mr. Minister. General comments on Bill 8, an Act to Amend the Nursing Profession Act and the Pharmacy Act.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Detail.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Clause by clause?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Part 1, Nursing Profession Act, clause 1.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Clause 2

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Clause 3.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Clause 4.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Clause 5.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Clause 6.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Clause 7.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Clause 8.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Clause 9.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Page 3, clause 10.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Clause 11.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Page 4, clause 12.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Clause 13.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Clause 14.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Clause 15.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Clause 16.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Clause 17.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Ms. Lee.

MS. LEE: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I have a question on page 5, on section 27.2(1).

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Excuse me, Ms. Lee, but we are not at that section yet. We are dealing with clause 18. We will get there momentarily. Page 5, clause 18.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Clause 19.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Clause 20. Ms. Lee.

MS. LEE: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, I have a question for the Minister with regard to section 27.2(1).

Reading that, it is not entirely clear what exactly the Minister's power is in terms of what can be included in a collaborative practice agreement. Specifically, the wording halfway down, where it says: "Subject to this act, the regulations and the guidelines approved by the Minister may include the following." I am just wondering if the intent of this is to limit the scope of the practice by saying may, or is it to say the agreement will include this plus whatever the Minister may deem appropriate?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Mr. Minister.

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, given Ms. Lee's background, I will ask Ms. Cooper to give a legal interpretation.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Ms. Cooper.

MS. COOPER: Mr. Chairman, the intention of this section is that the agreement may not go beyond the guidelines approved by the Minister, and those guidelines would be approved under sub-section 6.3, sub 2, which was dealt with in clause 6. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Ms. Lee.

MS. LEE: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I have to seek your guidance. Are we allowed to go back and look at it and have the clause be considered at the same time as this clause?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): To clarify your question, I would like to ask the Minister if he can elaborate a little more with regard to clause 6, so we can deal with the question that has been asked by Ms. Lee? Mr. Minister.

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Mr. Chairman, I would once again ask Ms. Cooper to provide legal interpretation.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Thank you, Mr. Minister. Ms. Cooper.

MS. COOPER: Mr. Chairman, under clause 6, section 6.3, under sub-section 1, the board of directors may recommend to the Minister guidelines respecting the practice of nurse practitioners, so these would be general guidelines dealing with the outer limit of the scope of the practice. Under the proposed section 6.3, sub 2, the Minister is given the discretion to approve guidelines respecting the practice of nurse practitioners. I do not know if that is of assistance.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Ms. Lee.

MS. LEE: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. On the answer that has been given by legal counsel, I understood it to mean that this section 27.2 limits the scope, or at least draws the boundary within which the Minister can operate in and describes the power of the Minister. However, going by the second part of the answer that was just given, under section 6.3, one would think that the Minister is being given more power, depending on what the direction of the board of directors is.

I would like to seek more clarification with best advice from the officials in this House. Perhaps the Law Clerk could intervene on this. I would like to be clearer about exactly what power the Minister is being given under this section. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Thank you, Ms. Lee. I do not know if the Law Clerk has anything to add to clarify your question, but I will pass it on to the Law Clerk. Ms. Peterson.

LAW CLERK (Ms. Peterson): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Section 27.2, as I read it, gives the Minister authority to craft guidelines in the areas that are set out in paragraphs (a), (b), and (c), so he cannot craft guidelines falling outside of those general descriptions.

However, I think what may be more important to remember about paragraph 27.2 is that this refers to a written agreement, in which authorized acts as set out may be included. That written agreement would be signed by one or more nurse practitioners, one or more medical practitioners, and the person or body responsible for the operation of the designated site or the administrative person on site. The authority contemplated in that section is always going to be bound within the agreement that is signed by those parties. I do not know whether that is of assistance to the Member.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Thank you, Ms. Peterson. Ms. Lee.

MS. LEE: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I appreciate the advice of the Law Clerk, that subsections (a), (b), and (c) limits and clearly defines the scope of the Minister's power under this section. I think I am prepared to accept that, but I would like to seek one more clarification on the same topic. Why is it then that the word "may" is used under that paragraph instead of "shall"? In the Law Clerk's opinion, would the sections previously mentioned, section 6.3(1), does that in your view change anything in your interpretation of section 27.2, subsection 1? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Thank you, Ms. Lee. Ms. Peterson.

LAW CLERK (Ms. Peterson): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I do not believe section 6 materially changes section 27. The concern I would have, if section 27 read "The regulations and the guidelines approved by the Minister shall include the following acts authorized" that each of those acts would have to be included. So if, for example, at a designated site, it was decided that a particular collaborative practice agreement would not include the authority to prescribe drugs, this section, worded in that fashion, would require a collaborative agreement to include that.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Ms. Lee.

MS. LEE: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I appreciate that. I could see that interpretation of the word "shall" if that was included. Just one more question -- sorry, but I think these words are important because words are what matter in law.

In this same section, 27.2, subsection 1, on the fourth line, there is another "may" there. I just want to be assured that the word "may" is not to be interpreted in any way to make it discretionary to enter into an agreement. I believe I read somewhere else that these people who are practicing as a nurse practitioner have to be under a collaborative agreement, yet here it says "may together enter into an agreement." I am just wondering if that is optional in any way. I just want to be assured that it is not. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Thank you, Ms. Lee. I will direct the question to the Minister and see if that is his understanding of that wording in the agreement. Mr. Minister.

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, the term is in the permissive because it implies an effort to reach a collaboration and agreement among different parties to sign an agreement and initiate a collaborative practice. Therefore it is permissive because we need everybody to agree to sign on. It is not imperative because we cannot force people, practitioners, nurses or doctors, to sign unless they are satisfied that the scope of practice and all the other terms of the collaborative practice site are adequate. That is why it is permissive. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Thank you, Mr. Minister. Ms. Lee.

MS. LEE: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Then while the Minister cannot make these parties sign an agreement, the nurse practitioners could not practice unless there is an agreement signed?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Mr. Minister.

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Mr. Chairman, this bill is an interim bill. It gives us the interim ability to initiate collaborative practice at certain sites, and it will be bound by the parameters of this bill until such time as we finish the further passing of the Nurses Act. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Thank you, Mr. Minister. Ms. Lee.

MS. LEE: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I do not believe that the Minister answered my specific question because I do not believe that the fact that this is interim legislation makes any difference as to our responsibility, and my desire to learn exactly what this clause is meant to do. We know that legislative changes often take a long time. I think it is reasonable to assume that this legislation will be in place until such time as the permanent one comes, and even if the Minister has the intention of introducing the permanent legislation in the fall, who knows what is going to happen in the fall?

It is really important that we put on record exactly what is the power that the Minister is being given under this legislation. I want to be assured that there is a requirement -- and this is how I am reading it and I want to get confirmation on that -- for the nurse practitioners and medical practitioners, and whoever else is involved, to sign an agreement about what their practices are, and that the scope and extent of the practices that nurse practitioners will be engaged in are clearly stated and limited in scope as per the Minister's direction. That is how I understand section 27.2(1) to be and I want that confirmation. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Mr. Minister.

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I am not sure who the Member would like the confirmation from, but I can tell you that the intent is to do as the Member has indicated, to give us the legislative authority to proceed with this initiative within the clearly defined frame that is outlined in legislation as it is so stated here, as the Member has summarized.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Thank you, Mr. Minister. Ms. Lee.

MS. LEE: So is the Minister confirming that as far as he understands, a nurse practitioner has to have an agreement to practice as a nurse practitioner?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Mr. Minister.

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, I will just comment and I will ask Ms. Cooper to speak as well. I have stated that and will get Ms. Cooper here to speak to that issue, and maybe that will give her the comfort she needs. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Thank you, Mr. Minister. Ms. Cooper.

MS. COOPER: I think one of the proposed sections of the act, section 27.3(2), may address the concern. It was a for-greater-certainty clause -- "For greater certainty, a nurse practitioner may only engage in the practice of a nurse practitioner if he or she is a party to a collaborative practice agreement."

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): It is on page 6, Ms. Lee. Ms. Lee.

MS. LEE: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I guess that is what I was thinking of because I did read this before and I wanted the Minister to confirm what I had already read. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Thank you, Ms. Lee. Clause 20.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Clause 21.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Clause 22. Ms. Lee.

MS. LEE: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I had a question on section 27.4, which I believe is under section 20? Does that make sense? I have a question.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Does the committee agree that we go back to clause 20 to allow Ms. Lee to ask her question?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Ms. Lee.

MS. LEE: Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and thank you, colleagues. I have a question on section 27.4 and it has to do with the possibility of conflict between the Medical Profession Act and the Nurse Practitioners Act. I do not know if the Minister has been made aware of the concern raised by myself during the committee hearings. In the Social Programs Committee's report about this legislation, it was mentioned that the Minister address or consult with the medical association prior to the Minister proceeding with the permanent legislation regarding this concern. I believe the concern of the medical association was a lack of clarity about what would happen if there was for some reason a conflict between, or maybe there was the potential likelihood of a conflict between the Nurse Practitioners Act and the Medical Profession Act. My question is whether or not the Minister has been made aware of this and what is his response to that concern? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Thank you, Ms. Lee. The Minister of Health.

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, the medical association has been involved in

this particular process. We are aware that they have some concerns and I think fundamentally, that is why the collaborative practice agreement has to include nurse practitioners and the doctors as signatories to the agreement that is going to be entered into. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Thank you, Mr. Minister. Ms. Lee.

MS. LEE: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I believe the concern of the medical association was that the requirement for the practitioners to have a collaborative practice agreement will not address sufficiently the concerns that the medical profession has. As we know, in the North we have locum doctors who work in many facilities and not all of them may understand, realize or appreciate when they enter into these agreements that they may enter into something that may get them into trouble under the Medical Professions Act, or something like that. I do not believe that the fact that there is a requirement for a collaborative practice agreement will address that. I would like to know if the Minister could commit to working with the medical association to address their concerns in this regard, rather than just relying on that requirement for the agreement. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Thank you, Ms. Lee. The Minister of Health and Social Services.

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, that is a commitment that I am prepared to make. We have a relationship with the medical association, involving them in issues like the nurse practitioners. We are involving them in a number of other issues through the medical directors and access to the table when we look at other action plan issues. This nurse practitioner pilot project is a new initiative. Very clearly, we are going to have to stay very engaged with both the nursing association and the medical association as we work through the implementation to make sure that things are being done as they were anticipated and hoped to be carried out when the process started. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Thank you, Mr. Minister. When we left off, we were at clause 20.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Clause 21.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Clause 22.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Page 7, clause 23.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Clause 24. Ms. Lee.

MS. LEE: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I have a question under this section, section 34.1, subsection 1, where it gives powers to the Minister to make regulations. In subsection 2, "The Minister shall consult with the association before making or amending regulations," but it does not make any reference to the medical association. My concerns are the same. I would like to seek a commitment.

Actually, I would like to first ask why the requirement to consult with the medical association is not in this clause? Secondly, I would like to ask whether or not the Minister could give us a commitment to work with the medical association for improvement in this area in preparation for the permanent legislation. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Thank you, Ms. Lee. The Minister of Health and Social Services.

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, the NWT Nurses Association is a self-regulating profession. As I have indicated, given the importance of this new initiative, we will continue to commit to work with the medical association, but given the fact that they are a self-regulating profession, it is not deemed appropriate to enshrine in legislation the medical association having to be consulted about a self-regulating profession any more than we would contemplate possibly including the nurses association and having that same kind of consultative capacity in a medical association legislation. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Ms. Lee.

MS. LEE: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I do not understand that answer. I do not know why the commitment of a Minister to consult with interested parties pertaining to something like nurse practitioners who have to work very closely with the medical profession in this territory in delivering health care services, why is it that the Minister has to rely on a fine difference between whether an association is self-regulating or not to decide whether or not he should consult with them in deciding regulations as to conditions, limits and everything else that has to do with nurse practitioners? Can the Minister give a better answer than that? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): The Minister of Health and Social Services, Mr. Miltenberger.

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, it is an important distinction. The Nursing Association is a self-regulating profession. This act pertains and deals with nurses. As they are a self-regulating profession, it is imperative, as I stated, "shall consult with the association." That is the intent, to work collaboratively with them and to make it imperative that it be done, because they are self-regulating. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Thank you, Mr. Minister. Ms. Lee.

MS. LEE: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Given the answers he has given earlier about the need for all the parties involved in this to work together, and given the regulation-making power he has under subsection 1, in the interest of working together with everyone involved, could he not make the commitment to consult with the medical profession, or the medical association, or however they can be consulted, to work with them prior to the permanent legislation coming in?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Mr. Minister.

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, I have made that commitment approximately three times. I could put it in writing, if the Member would like, but I am on record as saying that I am committed to consulting. This is a collaborative practice initiative. We need to have the medical association and the nurses working along with the

department and the authorities to make this a reality. We have to make this a shared responsibility. So yes, I am prepared and will continue to consult and work with all the partners involved in this particular initiative. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Thank you, Mr. Minister. Clause 24.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Part 2, clause 25.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Clause 26.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Clause 27.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Page 8, clause 28.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Clause 29.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Clause 30.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Clause 31.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Clause 32.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Clause 33.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Clause 34.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Clause 35.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Bill as a whole?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Does the committee agree that Bill 8 is now ready for third reading? Bill 8 is now ready for third reading. With that, I would like to thank the Minister and his witnesses. We will take a short break.

-- Break

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): I will call the committee of the whole back to order. We are here to review Bill 13, An Act to Amend the Income Tax Act, No. 2. Does the Minister have any opening comments? Mr. Handley.

HON. JOE HANDLEY: Mr. Chairman, I am pleased to introduce Bill 13, An Act to Amend the Income Tax Act, No. 2. This bill proposes to reduce Northwest Territories corporate income tax rates effective July 1, 2002.

If the Legislative Assembly agrees:

- The general corporate income tax rate will be reduced from 14 percent to 12 percent, a reduction of 14 percent; and,
- The "small business" rate, that is, the rate applicable to the first \$200,000 in income of Canadian controlled private corporations, will be reduced from 5 percent to 4 percent. This represents a reduction of 20 percent in the small business tax rate.

The Northwest Territories has long maintained a very competitive tax environment with both personal and corporate tax rates among the lowest in Canada. These competitive rates have helped us attract individuals and businesses to the North. In fact, our competitive corporate tax rates have, in the last two years, resulted in several large revenue gains. As Members are aware, these corporate tax revenues have allowed this government to make important investments in programs and infrastructure that would not otherwise be possible.

Recently, however, a number of provinces and territories have announced significant reductions in their personal and corporate income tax rates. These changes have reduced the Northwest Territories' overall competitiveness. Our position relative to other jurisdictions could have negative effects on our tax base as companies look to do business where the tax climate is more favourable. Even companies currently paying tax in the NWT may re-examine their corporate structures to minimize their tax liability.

The changes in Bill 13 would result in the Northwest Territories having, along with Nunavut, the lowest corporate income tax rate on investment income, the second lowest general corporate income tax rate after Quebec, and the second lowest small business rate after New Brunswick.

I am looking forward to an early indication of Members' response to this proposed change in order to be able to confirm the effective date with the federal government, who administer the corporate income tax on our behalf. Finance Canada must be notified no later than 90 days after the effective date of any corporate tax change. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Handley. I call upon the chair of the AOC committee for comments. Mr. Dent.

MR. DENT: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The Standing Committee on Accountability and Oversight conducted a public review of Bill 13, An Act to Amend the Income Tax Act, No. 2, on June 17, 2002. The committee would like to thank the Minister of Finance and his officials for presenting the bill.

Effective July 1, 2002 the bill would reduce the current general corporate income tax rate from the existing 14 percent to 12 percent, representing a 14 percent savings, and reduce the existing small business income tax rate from the current 5 percent to 4 percent, a savings of 20 percent.

During discussions on the bill, the committee had three major issues: the bill's impact on our formula funding, territorial corporate tax revenues, and small northern businesses.

Mr. Chairman, the committee was concerned that reductions to our corporate income tax rates may indicate that our formula funding is more than sufficient. The Minister assured the committee that he had discussed this issue with the federal government. The federal government is aware that a number of provinces and territories have already reduced, or announced reductions in, their personal and corporate income tax rates and that the Northwest Territories has proposed its own reduced rates to remain competitive.

Further, committee members were concerned that a reduction in the territorial corporate tax rates may result in a decline in our corporate tax revenues. The committee recognized that if the territorial government did not remain competitive with other jurisdictions, corporations that are able to do so would file taxes or like to do business where the tax climate is more favourable.

Finally, some committee members suggested to the Minister that the small business threshold should be increased from \$200,000 to at least \$300,000 similar to Alberta, Ontario, Manitoba, Saskatchewan and New Brunswick. This would allow small businesses to retain more of their earnings so they can reinvest in the territorial economy through new ventures, jobs and lower prices, thus creating a stronger, more sustainable and diversified northern economy.

The committee added that the tax rate is just part of the overall picture. The Minister replied that the government would consider the committee members' suggestion in future tax policy.

Mr. Chairman, following the committee's review, a motion was carried to report Bill 13, An Act to Amend the Income Tax Act, No. 2, to the Assembly as ready for committee of the whole. Additional comments or questions by Members may be posed as we proceed. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Dent. Does the Minister wish to bring in any witnesses? Mr. Handley.

HON. JOE HANDLEY: Yes, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Does the committee agree?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Sergeant-at-Arms, escort the witnesses in please. Mr. Minister, please introduce your witnesses for the record.

HON. JOE HANDLEY: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. On my right is Margaret Melhorn, deputy minister of Finance; and Patricia Gall-Smith, legislative counsel with the Department of Justice; on my left is John Monroe, director of fiscal policy for the Department of Finance.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Handley. General comments. Mr. Krutko.

MR. KRUTKO: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, in regard to Bill 13, I did raise concerns in committee on this bill. My concern is that with the existing formula financing arrangement we have with Ottawa where the federal

government receives 80 percent of any corporate taxes and the revenues we generate, I think what we are doing is going to continue to improve the financial coffers in Ottawa.

I think we have to somehow maximize those corporate dollars and the taxes that are paid in the Northwest Territories so they stay in the Northwest Territories so we can reinvest in the Northwest Territories. I know that the Minister has basically stated that we are looking at our new formula financing agreement, but I would just like to ask the Minister, realistically, will we see a shift in those percentages in the next formula financing agreement? Perhaps looking at 50 percent, where we maintain 50 percent of those revenues and 50 percent flow to Ottawa, instead of the system we have right now where 80 percent of the corporate taxes generated in the North flow to Ottawa and we only keep 20 percent of that. Again, it is deducted from our formula financing agreement.

I would like to ask the Minister, realistically, is there going to be an increase in the formula financing agreement so we can keep more of these corporate taxes in the Northwest Territories?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Krutko. Mr. Handley.

HON. JOE HANDLEY: Mr. Chairman, I think we have two opportunities to improve our situation. First of all, we have begun initial discussions and the sharing of information as the first step of negotiating a new financing formula with the federal government. On that, of course, our objective is to have as good a net result as possible for our government. I do not know if we can reach 50 percent, but we will negotiate as thoroughly as we can.

Secondly, through the devolution of resource revenue sharing arrangements, negotiations that are starting now between ourselves, the federal government and the aboriginal governments through the Intergovernmental Forum is the second opportunity. Certainly our objective is to get as good a return for Northwest Territories residents as possible.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Handley. Mr. Krutko.

MR. KRUTKO: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Like the good politician that he is, the Minister of Finance did not answer my question again, but I will ask it again. Do we have any idea, through the negotiation with the formula financing agreement, if we will be able to increase the amount of revenues that Ottawa receives? Will that change in the next formula financing agreement?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Krutko. Mr. Handley.

HON. JOE HANDLEY: Mr. Chairman, in my understanding, this current formula that we have now is an improvement over the past one. I think given the amount of economic growth in the Northwest Territories, and the revenue we are generating for the federal government through that, then there is a very good chance of being able to do better than what we have now.

I cannot predict the results. All I can say is we are going to work as hard as we can to get as good a deal as we can for the Northwest Territories. I cannot confirm that right now. I feel good about it. It is in negotiations. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Handley. Mr. Krutko.

MR. KRUTKO: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. As it sits right now, the benefactor of these decreases is the federal government because of the corporate filings in the Northwest Territories from these large companies, where 80 percent of those dollars that are filed flow to Ottawa. We may have \$300 million filed by a corporation in the Northwest Territories, but we may retain \$60 million with \$240 million going to Ottawa.

Again, you make it sound like we have a pretty picture here, but at the end of the day we are penalized on our formula financing agreement because of those extra revenues that we generate.

I think to be honest to the people of the Northwest Territories, unless we change that situation where the federal government continues to be the benefactor of all filings of corporate taxes, personal income taxes, royalties and revenues that flow in the Northwest Territories, until we change that situation, we will always be going to Ottawa with hat in hand giving them revenues to run programs and services.

At the end of the day, when we find ourselves in a situation where we have a deficit, cutting programs and services, it is the residents of the Northwest Territories who are going to be the ones having to pay because we are going to have to cut programs and services. Ottawa, at the end of the day, for them we are just a cash cow and they will continue to keep it that way until we decide to change something or go to the federal government and seriously ask to change the formula that is there.

From what you are telling me, you just like the rosy picture you think we are in, but as far as I am concerned, it is not rosy when the federal government gets 80 percent of all of these corporate taxes that have been filed in the Northwest Territories. I would like to ask the Minister again, realistically, can we see a change with regard to the present formula we have with Ottawa where they retain less of the corporate taxes than they do right now?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Krutko. Mr. Handley.

HON. JOE HANDLEY: Mr. Chairman, as I said, that is clearly our objective and I appreciate the Member's support. I agree with his analysis, but because it is a negotiation and it is a long process, we do not know for sure what the results are. I believe that we can improve on this financing formula and I believe that through resource revenue sharing with the aboriginal governments and the federal government, we can improve on that even more. I cannot say with certainty that we will be able to, although I feel because of the economic activity here that we will.

I agree with the Member that us only retaining roughly 20 percent is not a good situation, especially at a time when we need infrastructure, we need support for programs and so on. We have to improve on that, and that is going to be my objective over the next few years as we negotiate that formula.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Handley. Mr. Krutko.

MR. KRUTKO: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Could the Minister state exactly what our opening position is when we go to negotiate with Ottawa? Is it still going to be 20 percent? Is the 20 percent that is there now going to be what we ask for at the next negotiation process? Do we have a set amount that we agree to? If I was a negotiator going to the table, I would ask for 100 percent and maybe you will get 20 percent. However, if it is 20 percent now and it has always been 20 percent, unless you go there with a position -- what is it?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Krutko. Mr. Handley.

HON. JOE HANDLEY: Mr. Chairman, as I said earlier, what we have been doing so far is sharing information in order to establish our positions. We do not have a specific number right now. I have in the committee agreed to discuss our strategy with the committee before we get too far down the road. I also want to know more about the negotiating position that is going to be taken through the IGF process as well, so we do not cross anything up on that side. Clearly if we were to get to 50 percent, that would be a very desirable goal. In fact, it would be better than most provinces. I do not want to aim low either. I would be happy to discuss the negotiating strategy with the committee at some point. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Handley. Mr. Krutko.

MR. KRUTKO: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. On the east coast, the Maritimes, Nova Scotia and Newfoundland, they are presently developing a campaign to look at the fairness and equity of revenues that flow to Ottawa compared to what flows back to those jurisdictions. They have been working with the Senate to see if there are ways to ensure that the majority of those revenues stay within those jurisdictions, especially from resource development such as oil and gas and what is happening offshore. I would like to ask the Minister exactly what are we doing to deal with such a situation where we can try to get a fair distribution of wealth here, where we do not see all the royalties, revenues and taxes flowing to Ottawa?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Krutko. Mr. Handley.

HON. JOE HANDLEY: Mr. Chairman, through the Ministers of Finance, both provincial and territorial as well as the federal Minister of Finance, we have been working closely on the same objective of having more resource revenues stay with the provinces and the territories. Right now in the Atlantic Provinces, for example, they are at 30 percent and are very dissatisfied, particularly in Nova Scotia, with oil and gas. I am not sure what their bottom line or bargaining position is. They have not shared that with us. We are all working together as provinces and territories to try to achieve a more equitable arrangement with the federal government. There are meetings a couple of times a year among Ministers and more frequently with deputies and officials. We are all working together on it. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Handley. Ms. Lee.

MS. LEE: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I just wanted to make a brief comment with respect to this legislation. Obviously it is hard to vote against a reduction in taxes and I will be voting in favour of this legislation, but I must express some contradiction

and irony in what this legislation is doing and how it is perceived by the public out there. For example, and I think the Member for Mackenzie Delta has mentioned this already, on the one hand, for as long as I can remember in my time here, we have been saying we do not have enough money to do a lot of things that we need, such as building roads and infrastructure.

Today I talked about the fact that the classrooms we have, I am sure not just in Yellowknife but everywhere else in the Territories, are very crowded. We can always use some more money for our schools. We are inundated every day with the shortage of health care professionals. Some people out there are questioning what the priorities are.

Another contradiction that I cannot fail to see is the fact that this government arbitrarily cancelled the Business Incentive Policy, which has a lot of businesses up in arms about the direction of this government. On one hand, the government has done something that really offended the businesses in the North and on the other hand, the next day we say that we will give you a tax break. I think that contradiction there is quite stark.

I must state also that I participated in the rally at Stanton Hospital last week where health care professionals had engaged in a walk out during the lunch hour to express their concern about the lack of adequacy in the compensation packages for health care officials. One of them said to me that the government has all the money in the world to give corporations a break but does not seem to have enough money to address this very serious issue. I would like to state that for the record and convey that expression to the Minister.

Mr. Chairman, recently the Canadian Federation of Independent Business had prepared a briefing note on a research study. Their study showed that most of the businesses in the North state that the top of their list of difficulties they face in doing business in the North is not necessarily the taxation rate, although they would always advocate for as low a tax as possible. Right up there with the tax rate is the red tape and amount of government paperwork they have to do to operate a business here. Increasingly, all the businesses, whether they are small or big, anyone who is doing business in the North, is having an extremely difficult time finding skilled labour. I am sure that the Minister is aware of the fact that this is a challenge that is more problematic for businesses than the tax rate.

We as a government have not gone far enough in producing skilled labour in order that the businesses in the North, whether they are small mom-and-pop shops or resource producing industries such as diamond mines, can hire. That is another issue that I want to put on the table.

Another thing that I think we should really put our mind to is the high level of fuel tax. I believe I have posed this question and issue before in the House and the Minister made a statement about the fact that the high rate of fuel tax in this part of the world does not really have to do with taxation, but there are other contributing factors as to why our cost of fuel up here, whether it is for housing or for vehicles, is almost twice as much as our neighbours in Edmonton. I do believe we could take some steps in that area, because the Yukon and Nunavut have lower taxation on the fuel than we do. While I appreciate the taxation that the GNWT charges on the fuel is not the most

responsible factor in the high cost of fuel, I think this is something we should be able to address.

I do believe there are people out there who are doing business, who have kids in school, or who use our health facilities and services, and may be willing to forego a reduction in taxation in exchange for some of these issues being addressed. So while it would be very hard for me to vote against this legislation, I think that it is important to note that the government has to pay attention and be cognizant of the contradictions in the messages the government is sending. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Ms. Lee. I did not hear a question in there, but I will give you a chance to respond, Mr. Handley.

HON. JOE HANDLEY: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I will try to be brief. There is no contradiction. First of all, as a government, in order to hire nurses and train people and subsidize the price of fuel, we need money to do that. Where do we get our money? We get our money from a grant or we get it from taxes. The biggest source of taxes is corporate taxes.

The objective of this legislation is not to give companies a break. The objective of this tax is to encourage companies to stay here, to pay their tax here, and hopefully to generate more tax revenue for us so we can afford to do the things that Ms. Lee is talking about.

If we did not lower our tax, we would soon possibly find companies that had been paying substantial tax in the Territories moving their tax payments elsewhere and we would lose in a big way.

Secondly, if we did not keep a competitive tax rate, then we may also find those big corporate taxpayers not paying their taxes here but paying it somewhere else. Again, a loss for us.

The objective of our legislation here is to generate more tax revenue from the corporations, both small and large, by making this a better environment for them to work in, thus being able to pay for the programs that Ms. Lee quite rightly points out we need. It is not a gift to corporations. It is a strategy to get more tax revenue from corporations. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Handley. The Chair recognizes Mr. Braden.

MR. BRADEN: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I will be voting in favour of the bill. There is an aspect of it I wanted to explore a little bit, and that is the dynamic of this from one jurisdiction to another in Canada. Each province is free to adjust its corporate tax rates at will. That creates a little bit of a poker game among provinces and territories. Who wants to dare go to the lowest rate in hopes of attracting the most corporate dollars? We are kind of chasing that game right now, but it is the right thing to do.

The question I wanted to ask relates to the position that Alberta has. I wanted to ask for some confirmation of this. My understanding, Mr. Chairman, is that Alberta has in effect signalled that over the course of the next few years, they will be setting a progressively lower and lower and lower tax rate. I am wondering if this is something that we can even hope to continue to pursue, or are we going to sort of hit a point where we have to fold our hand and leave the table? What is Alberta's

situation? Are we really in a sustainable tax picture here? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Braden. Mr. Handley.

HON. JOE HANDLEY: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, right now, Alberta's corporate taxes are 13 percent for large corporations. This brings us to 12 percent, so we have an advantage over them. Next year, they are lowering theirs to 12.5 percent. In 2004, they are going to 11.5 percent. Then in 2005, down to 8 percent. That is their schedule. We do not know if they are going to stick to it or whether they are going to do like Ontario. Yesterday, Ontario deferred their reductions. Alberta has deferred theirs once already as well in their last budget.

We know we can go down to 12 percent with our current financing formula and still come out ahead. We cannot go lower than 12 percent on the current formula. We will begin to lose money rapidly if we go any lower than that. With the changes we are proposing here, it does give us the advantage until at least 2004. In 2004, a number of things can happen; our economy can change, our financing formula will be renegotiated. There are a number of things happening.

In a lot of ways, we are dealing with unknowns and we are dealing with a lot of players. As you said, it is something of a poker game, but by doing it the way we have, we have managed to retain our advantage for at least the next couple of years. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Handley. Mr. Braden.

MR. BRADEN: Thank you. I appreciate the information. What steps are we taking to make sure the corporate world knows about our very attractive corporate tax rate, Mr. Chairman? How are we getting the message out? What are we doing to attract those corporate tax dollars? Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Braden. Mr. Handley.

HON. JOE HANDLEY: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, I think the tax lawyers with the big corporations watch very carefully what is happening in each jurisdiction, so we do not have to put an ad out in the paper or anything to tell them about it. The word will get out very fast. Over the next couple of weeks, I am meeting with two groups of investors to let them know about the benefits of doing business in the Northwest Territories or with the Northwest Territories. We have issued a press release. We will just continue to ensure that the business world is aware of the changes that are made. That is for the large, out-of-territory corporations. Everyone in the Northwest Territories, large corporations and small companies, are already very aware of what we have done here.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Handley. The Chair recognizes Mr. Roland.

MR. ROLAND: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, the idea of lowering income tax rates would be troubling to some, when we consider our fiscal situation. Although we have had some good fortune during this term to date, the debt wall is still

looming out there. It has been some time since I have talked about that issue, but it still looms out there. From time to time, we are given a reminder about the possibilities.

At the same time, one of the things we are made very aware of, and the thing that has benefited the Northwest Territories to date, is that we have had large corporate tax filings in the Northwest Territories. If it was not for those, we would definitely be looking at curtailing expenditures of government in a very serious way.

During the business planning sessions when we were provided with this information, committee members asked if the department would in fact look at lowering corporate tax rates. Initially, the department said no, that it was not something that would be considered. It is good to see that we are moving in this direction. We do have to stay competitive, especially if we are going to try to get those one-time filers in the Northwest Territories. Keeping the ones who have just started to file here is something that would make good sense, in light of the impact that they have had in the Northwest Territories when it comes to filing the taxes.

In any other jurisdictions, the amount that gets filed would probably mean very little. When you look at the other provinces, it is not a large amount on their side of the books. However, here in the Northwest Territories, \$60 million net to us is a huge impact. It has kept us able to spend and improve on programs and services to a certain degree. In that sense, I support this move and I hope it works out. I know the Minister had cautioned committee members when we first asked about the fact of potentially losing some revenue, but hopefully it will work out and we will still find corporate tax filers that will file in the Northwest Territories and bring benefit to us.

There are so many other issues, as we have heard today, around revenue and how it is counted with the federal government. One question for the Minister is, with our lowering our corporate taxes, I know the federal government, in formula financing discussions, looks at our tax effort. Lately, in fact, it has been a benefit to us because other jurisdictions have lowered theirs and we were starting to go on the high side. Would this just bring us back to the levels we were at previously when it comes to tax effort in the Northwest Territories? Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Roland. Mr. Handley.

HON. JOE HANDLEY: Mr. Chairman, I think when we look at our tax effort, it is always measured relative to what the other provinces are doing. If the provinces are lowering theirs and we are lowering ours, then the relationship between the two does not change. If we were lowering our taxes and no one else was doing it, then I think it would have some impact.

I do not think we will lose on the tax effort factor, given what the provinces are doing and what our economy is doing. I do not think there is much risk there, at least for the life of this formula. We have to weigh whatever small loss may be there against the potential for the one-time revenues that we have benefited from. Again, we are dealing with unknowns here and trying to pick the best options to work with. Right now, and the last couple of years have shown us, that looking to the one-time tax revenues and also paying attention to our large corporate taxpayers in the Northwest Territories has been the best route

for us. I do not think we are going to lose much on the tax effort adjustment factor, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Minister Handley. Mr. Bell.

MR. BELL: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Just quickly, I will be supporting the bill and we talked about this at committee. I will not rehash the same discussions. I do think it is important though that we pay keen attention to being competitive and that we stay at the front of the pack. I think this Minister is aware of that and his department is aware of that and they are looking to move in that direction. Some Members have talked about contradictions. I think the Minister is right. I think what we are trying to do here is go after money. Yes, we do not have enough money for programs and services that we want to deliver, but lowering taxes is not necessarily counter-intuitive to that, Mr. Chairman.

If you think about it in terms of if we were to tax people at 100 percent, nobody would work, so lowering taxes would certainly generate more income for us. If we did not tax at all, everybody would work and we would not generate any revenue. Somewhere in the middle ground you find the point at which you can collect the most revenue. I think we are searching for that. Sometimes you raise and sometimes you lower. These are our options, Mr. Chairman, we have fiscal stimulus, that is it. We can either spend money or we can lower taxes if we want to see money pumped into the Northwest Territories economy.

We are not a country. We do not have the benefit of monetary stimulus. We cannot tweak interest rates. We cannot buy or sell government bonds. There is a lot we cannot do. This we can do and I am glad to see the Minister doing it. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Bell. Mr. Dent.

MR. DENT: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I too just wanted to go on record as supporting the bill. You often hear the question about what the federal government is going to think if we are cutting taxes and then going to them to try and ask for contributions. You know, I remember not too long ago looking at a budget that was presented that showed \$6 million in total corporate tax revenues to this government -- \$6 million. In the last two years, we have had tremendous windfalls that have made that \$6 million look absolutely puny. Ten times that amount, \$60 million, we have received in a very short period of time, which is an amazing increase when you compare it to what we were getting on a regular basis.

I think we do have to, given our fiscal climate, look for those one-time windfalls. There is going to come a time when we can no longer stay in the race to be the lowest or among the lowest. I suspect that is not too far off. I hope the Minister is right that we will have until 2004 when we are still extremely competitive. For the past two or three years, it has made a tremendous difference to us having a low tax rate. We have had a tremendous amount of money that we can put into education. We have only been able to increase the amount of funding that we put into education to the extent that we have because of things like the corporate tax windfall that we have had in the past couple of years. For health care, the only reason that we have been able to add into health care at all is because we have had those windfalls.

It may seem like it is a counter-intuitive way to raise government revenues, but it certainly has worked for us over the past few years. Yes, it is a gamble, but I have been convinced, as have most members of our committee, that this is the right gamble to take. We will have to see if it does not pay off for another couple of years. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Dent. General comments. Is the committee ready to go clause by clause?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): We will turn to tab 13 in your binders to Bill 13, An Act to Amend the Income Tax Act, No. 2. Clause 1.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Clause 2.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Clause 3.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Clause 4.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Bill as a whole?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Does the committee agree that Bill 13 is ready for third reading?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Bill 13 is now ready for third reading. I would like to thank the Minister and his witnesses for appearing. As previously agreed, we will go on to Bill 17, Supplementary Appropriation Act, No 1, 2002-2003. Does the Minister have any opening comments? Mr. Handley.

HON. JOE HANDLEY: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Supplementary Appropriation Act No. 1 requests authority for additional appropriations of \$12,720,000 for operations expenditures and \$31,581,000 for capital investment expenditures.

The request for additional operations supplementary appropriation requirements is within the estimated supplementary reserves established in the budget. Major items included in this request are as follows:

1. \$3.5 million for the Department of Health and Social Services to provide funding to the boards of management for 60 percent of their accumulated deficits as reported as of March 31, 2001;
2. \$2 million for the Department of Justice to re-establish previously approved one-time operations funding for two new young offenders facilities in Yellowknife and Inuvik. This funding was lapsed in the 2001-2002 fiscal period due to delays in the opening of the facilities;

3. \$1.8 million for the Department of Education, Culture and Employment for advanced payments associated with an alternative dispute resolution process respecting student abuse in the education system; and
4. \$1.2 million for the Department of the Executive, Ministry of Aboriginal Affairs to establish a devolution negotiation division.

The major requests for capital investment expenditures include:

1. \$28 million in capital carry-overs from the 2001-2002 fiscal year. The funding was approved and lapsed in 2001-2002; and
2. \$1.2 million for the Department of Education, Culture and Employment for additional capital investment required for the Aurora College building in Inuvik.

The request for additional capital supplementary appropriation requirements exceeds estimated supplementary capital reserves by \$20 million. However, the net impact on the GNWT's accumulated cash position has improved by \$2 million because the 2001-2002 lapses exceeded projects by \$22 million. Mr. Chairman, I am prepared to review the details of the supplementary appropriation document. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Handley. Mr. Handley, would you like to bring in any witnesses?

HON. JOE HANDLEY: Yes, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Does the committee agree?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Sergeant-at-Arms, please escort the witness in. Mr. Minister, for the record, would you please introduce your witness?

HON. JOE HANDLEY: Mr. Chairman, with me is Lew Voytilla, secretary to the Financial Management Board. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Handley. We are reviewing Bill 17, Supplementary Appropriation Act, No. 1, 2002-2003. General comments? Mr. Roland.

MR. ROLAND: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, on the supplementary appropriation, for the record, I would like to state I have some concerns in the matter of the expenditures going over our budgeted items, as we have just passed the budget. It is a theme I have raised on a number of occasions with the expenditures of our government that continue to grow. Realizing this one is a lot of carry-over, so that has helped us out in that matter, so this is not as big as initially anticipated. When you initially look at the number, you think once again that we are well in excess of budget lines. Fortunately, as stated by the Minister, capital carry-overs have helped out the bottom line.

Nevertheless, Mr. Chairman, when we look at the overall expenditures of our government, they are going fast, faster than I think most of us would like to see. Although we have been somewhat fortunate with our revenue in the last couple of years, as we stated earlier in the previous bill about the corporate tax filings in the Northwest Territories that had helped us out, those filings are never a guarantee.

If we are to count on the revenues that we can count on as the Government of the Northwest Territories through our own revenue generation and transfers from the federal government, in no time at all we would be in a very serious situation of having to look at where our expenditures are made and what we could afford to continue to expend our dollars on.

That is where my concern comes from, Mr. Chairman. We have a little over a year left in our mandate. So far, we have been fortunate. Hopefully there will be good news again as we go back to our planning cycle for the next budget cycle, as departments are going to begin to do over the summer and we will review those plans in the fall, with more filings in the Northwest Territories.

I wanted to raise my concern at this level to have a supplementary appropriation so soon after passing our budget. I hope that as we move forward from here, and there has been much comment in the House of the increasing capital projects going over expenditures, that the Minister will take the message back to his colleagues in Cabinet and tell them to start digging from within before coming forward for more supplementary appropriations, and drawing down on the revenue side of the picture. With that, I will end my comments, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Roland. Those were just comments. I did not hear a question so I will go to Mr. Braden.

MR. BRADEN: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. On a similar line to what Mr. Roland has been talking about, specifically in reference to our debt wall, our \$300 million total debt limit, I am wondering if the Minister could advise whether this supp brings us any closer to that debt wall? Does it do it any quicker than the previous forecast or fiscal outlook may have indicated? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Braden. Mr. Handley.

HON. JOE HANDLEY: Mr. Chairman, no, this is within our plans and allowances for supplementary spending, so it does not bring us closer. However, following Mr. Roland's comments, we do have to continue to be watching our expenditures and also our revenues in order to maintain that balance. This is not taking us outside of our planned strategy. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Handley. General comments.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Detail.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Does the committee agree we are ready to go clause by clause?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): We will go to page 5 in the detail book. Bill 17, Supplementary Appropriation Act, No. 1, 2002-2003, Executive, operations expenditures, executive offices, not previously authorized, Cabinet Secretariat, negative \$100,000.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Page 6, Executive, operations expenses, Financial Management Board Secretariat, labour relations and compensation services, not previously authorized, negative \$1,298,000. Mr. Roland.

MR. ROLAND: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Just on this issue, in the past, the federal government has been changing how it deals with us in the public service superannuation plan. I would like to get some detail from the Minister. Does this mean that we have now concluded our research in that area? The government was researching the idea of looking at the plan and bringing it, in a sense, to our own plan. Does this conclude that and we are going to stay with the existing system? Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Roland. Mr. Handley.

HON. JOE HANDLEY: Mr. Chairman, yes, doing phase 1 of this review showed us two things. One, that we would not be able to set up our own plan with a cost advantage, even counting in the \$12.5 million. We are better to stay with the superannuation plan. Second, although not a deciding factor but certainly a message we heard from government employees, was that they did not want us to move off the superannuation plan. However, the deciding factor for us in terminating this was simply that every evidence we had was that we could not do it less expensively. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Handley. Executive, operations expenditures, Financial Management Board Secretariat, Mr. Bell.

MR. BELL: Thank you. I am just wondering if the Minister could tell us what it cost us to carry out phase 1 to determine that it made sense to wrap this up. How much have we put into this before we decided to pull the plug on the reform project?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Bell. Mr. Handley.

HON. JOE HANDLEY: Mr. Chairman, the phase 1 of the feasibility review was approximately \$100,000 for the contract, to have that done. In order to do that, we had, as you will recall, our reform project where we had to update a lot of our data, put our data together on our employees. That goes back a couple of years, but it cost in the neighbourhood of a million dollars. Once we had that done, this phase 1 was roughly \$100,000. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Handley. Mr. Bell.

MR. BELL: Thank you. That is a sum cost. I am just wondering if the Minister could tell us if the compilation of that information from phase 1, that million dollars, will be helpful now and is of use to us now, going forward.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Bell. Mr. Handley.

HON. JOE HANDLEY: Mr. Chairman, no, I think the only money that was -- I do not want to say wasted, but that we do not get a return on was the \$100,000. It told us this and that was a valuable contract. The roughly \$1 million through the reform project was something we had to do anyway, so I think it helped us to have much better records. It is something we would have had to do in any case. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Handley. Financial Management Board Secretariat, labour relations and compensation services, not previously authorized, negative \$1,298,000. Mr. Dent.

MR. DENT: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Since we are not proceeding with this project and we are going to stay in the superannuation program, what is the extra amount per year that is going to cost this government to pay the total amount, the GNWT contribution?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Dent. Mr. Handley.

HON. JOE HANDLEY: Mr. Chairman, if we are not successful in getting a permanent base adjustment to cover the cost, the cost to our government will be about \$12.5 million, but we are negotiating for a base adjustment. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Handley. Mr. Dent.

MR. DENT: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I believe we have a three-year commitment from the federal government to provide that amount to us. What year does that end? Is it the same year as the formula financing deal?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Dent. Mr. Handley.

HON. JOE HANDLEY: Mr. Chairman, that agreement ends on March 31, 2004, the same time as our financing formula.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Handley. Mr. Dent.

MR. DENT: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Has the Minister or his staff had any initial discussions since the decision to stay in superannuation with Finance Canada, to see what their early attitude going into the negotiations is, as to whether or not they will find the extra \$12.5 million a year for us?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Dent. Mr. Handley.

HON. JOE HANDLEY: Mr. Chairman, I have written to both the Minister of Finance and the president of the federal treasury board advising them of our decision. Beyond that, there have not been any further discussions on it yet but there will be soon. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Handley. Financial Management Board Secretariat, labour relations and compensation services, not previously authorized, negative \$1,298,000.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Page 7, Executive, operations expenditures, Aboriginal Affairs, not previously authorized, \$1,674,000. Mr. Krutko.

MR. KRUTKO: I just have a question regarding the negotiation division. We have had people in negotiations in different areas and some of the claims have been concluded. We are moving towards self-government, or we have gone through the agreement-in-principle stage and heading to the final agreement stage. How often do these people move around? Do the people leave after the job is completed? Where do these people go with regard to positions in those different departments? Is there anyone there who can be moved from these different divisions into this devolution negotiation division

with experience in negotiations in the other areas, who have had previous claims negotiations in the government?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Krutko. Mr. Handley.

HON. JOE HANDLEY: Mr. Chairman, I will refer this question to the Minister of Aboriginal Affairs. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Handley. Mr. Antoine.

HON. JIM ANTOINE: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, the negotiations that are currently going on at the different claims tables, the negotiators are all very busy. Even though Salt River First Nations have concluded their negotiations, the negotiator at that table is also helping out at other tables at the same time.

Like I said, they are all very busy. As we conclude, if we do conclude in the next year or so, for example, the Dogrib Final Agreement, if that ever gets concluded, then the negotiators would probably have to be reassigned at that time, so there are no immediate negotiators that are going to be freed up in the next little while. I do not foresee any other negotiators being moved into this area at the present time.

If, in the future, this process of the Intergovernmental Forum is still going on, then certainly the negotiators with that kind of experience could be considered to play a role there. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Antoine. Mr. Krutko.

MR. KRUTKO: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Regarding the Inuvialuit, who have negotiated their agreement where they have a particular section, you talk about participation agreements. Then you have the Gwich'in and the Sahtu agreements, which talk about the subsurface resources chapter of the agreement, which is chapter 21 in the Gwich'in agreement, chapter 22 in the Sahtu agreement.

In there, that is where the negotiations for the devolution of oil and gas and minerals come from. We had people already on payroll who negotiated these particular items. I am just wondering, why are we not using those same people who have had that previous experience or are still in negotiations with the Dogrib and other regions? Why are we not using those negotiators to negotiate the claims process, through the devolution to the transfer of things such as the oil and gas accord, the Northern Accord and what not?

Those sections were negotiated in these land claim agreements. I am just wondering, why are we not using those negotiators that we have at the table right now in the other areas to work with regard to this devolution process? That is where it came from. It came from the 1988 agreement that was signed between Mulroney and I think it was Dennis Patterson back then. Why are we not using those negotiators?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Krutko. Mr. Antoine.

HON. JIM ANTOINE: Mr. Chairman, that is a very interesting question, because the people who were negotiating, either for the territorial government or for the aboriginal groups, many of

them have probably moved on and are doing other things. However, those in the territorial government that were involved at that time are fully engaged, if they are still working for us, at the negotiating table.

As I said, the negotiators are very busy at these tables and certainly if they get freed up sometime in the next little while and they want to participate in the Intergovernmental Forum, then we are probably going to use them. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Antoine. Mr. Roland.

MR. ROLAND: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, in this area of Aboriginal Affairs and the extra request for funding, I would like to get some further detail on the \$100,000 being requested for the Dene Nation for establishment of an intergovernmental relations parliamentary advisor position.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Roland. Mr. Antoine.

HON. JIM ANTOINE: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, in November of last year, the Dene Nation from one of their leadership meetings submitted a proposal from one of the recommendations from their Assembly to myself as Minister of Aboriginal Affairs. They were actually requesting three positions that would provide the Dene Nation leadership with support and expertise in three critical areas. One of them was a parliamentary liaison. The other two were an education coordinator and a language and cultural coordinator. The broad purpose of these positions was to assist them in capacity development in a consistent manner to allow the Dene Nation to work in better collaboration with the Government of the Northwest Territories and other levels of government.

As you know, being in the Legislative Assembly, there is much legislation that we deal with that affects treaty people, Metis people and Inuvialuit people. As such, as much information and support as they need to be able to make informed decisions in a sensitive and positive working relationship. The overall proposed budget was a heck of a lot more than \$100,000. Actually, it was about \$280,000. We estimated that one-third of that would be about \$100,000. The other two positions were not within the mandate of the Ministry of Aboriginal Affairs.

In working this out, we decided that we will act on the request and see where it goes. This position would act as a liaison between the Dene Nation, which is not an aboriginal government but rather a territorial organization that represents the interests of the Dene people, the majority of whom are treaty.

The focus would be mainly on treaty related issues, to provide important information and insight for treaty people who belong to the many aboriginal governments in the Northwest Territories. It goes to all the communities right down the valley where there are treaty people and people who have ancestors of the signings of Treaty 8 and Treaty 11. The Dene Nation also plays an important role in informing and representing all of these people.

This position would act as liaison between the Dene Nation and the Government of the Northwest Territories. It will coordinate and assist in soliciting input from Dene members and leadership on the different policies and different issues that are

affecting us here in the Legislative Assembly, how it affects the Dene Nation, its members and the issues raised from the Intergovernmental Forum. It would also be there to monitor and advise on new policies and legislation that are coming forward and assist in providing advice on the government processes for the purpose of input from the Dene Nation.

That is some background detail of the request for this funding. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Minister. Mr. Roland.

MR. ROLAND: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, the Minister touched on a couple of things that I would like to get further clarification on. The explanation he gives sounds much like what was considered when the Aboriginal Summit was established back in the 13th Assembly, so that this working relationship can be better established, so that this government and all the groups involved in self-government discussions could work in a better atmosphere and have some resources to deal with some of the issues before them.

Initially, it was wrapped around the constitutional side of things. It has evolved since then more to the self-government tables and the position of this government. It almost sounds like we are going another step here for one organization.

My question, and the Minister touched on it, he mentioned the Dene, Metis and Inuvialuit. Having Inuvialuit in my jurisdiction and the community I represent, who right now are part of the Aboriginal Summit, if there are going to be other monies establishing other working groups outside of that for better coordination, would they be able to put in something that would allow them funding for taking part in further discussions and going through legislation?

I have heard on a number of occasions that even though the land claim is settled, there is a lot of concern about implementation and the timing of it, what was agreed to and what was interpreted to be agreed to and does not seem to be agreed at this point.

I would just like to know if that avenue would be available to them to put in something of this nature, and maybe a little more on how this actually is separate from what the role of the Aboriginal Summit would be when initially established. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Roland. Mr. Antoine.

HON. JIM ANTOINE: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. This parliamentary liaison position would be somewhat outside the Intergovernmental Forum and the Aboriginal Summit. It should be noted that not all the aboriginal governments in the NWT opt to participate in the IGF or be a member of the Aboriginal Summit. By providing this assistance to the Dene Nation, it would provide an opportunity for the treaty people and other Dene who are not participating in the IGF process to provide input. In talking with the Dene Nation, that is their role. Again, the Dene Nation is not like an aboriginal government. I guess the loose definition of an aboriginal government is one that would have a land base or a negotiated claim of some sort. They have a land base and a future source of their own revenue to run their own institutions.

In this case, it is an organization that is there that will want to work with us as in government and with this Legislative Assembly to have an opportunity to review the different legislation that has developed here, and work in conjunction through the Dene Nation to the different chiefs and the different aboriginal governments out there.

Similarly, there is the Aboriginal Summit. I would like to say that everybody is very busy there. They have accomplished a great deal. They have many challenges as they work together in a collective, even though there is a lot of political uncertainty. There is a lack of resources, heavy workloads, different positions and competing priorities. In that whole area, the summit pulled together and a request was to have some source of funding from this government to the Dene Nation on behalf of the chiefs in trying to accommodate that request.

In response to similar funding from the other aboriginal groups, the Metis or the Inuvialuit, the only request we have to date was with the Dene Nation and none from the other. We are providing funding for the Inuvialuit Regional Corporation and to the Intergovernmental Forum in related activities through a block-funding arrangement that has been proposed by the Aboriginal Summit.

As well, we are providing funding to the IRC and the Gwich'in Tribal Council through the Beaufort-Delta Political Accord. They are receiving a similar type of funding through these kinds of agreements.

In respect to the Metis, there is actually no longer a territorial Metis organization. As a government, we are proposing to provide funding to both the South Slave Metis Tribal Council and the North Slave Metis Alliance to participate in the Intergovernmental Forum through the related activities, through the block-funding arrangement, and that has been proposed by the Aboriginal Summit. As a government, we also provide assistance for core funding to the Metis locals. There are sources of funding for both of these organizations.

I must tell you that in talking to the national chief, Bill Erasmus, on a couple of occasions in regard to his request to list sources of funding, the Dene Nation does not have any core funding from the federal government nor from our territorial government. He is operating on whatever little pockets of dollars he can get. I just wanted to say that they do not have any core funding at all from any other source. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Antoine. The Chair recognizes Mr. Braden.

MR. BRADEN: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. On the same topic here, if we could get a bit more information and perhaps a bit more succinctly, Mr. Chairman, from the Minister, is there some kind of protocol on the establishment of this position? We are looking for \$100,000 to come in about a third of the way through the fiscal year. That is a fair amount of money for one year. Is the expectation that this is going to be an ongoing position? Do we have a multi-year funding arrangement with the Dene Nation on it? What is the long-term on this particular contribution? Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Braden. Mr. Antoine.

HON. JIM ANTOINE: At this point, it was a request for one year.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Antoine. Mr. Braden.

MR. BRADEN: Given that the kind of thing it is established for is ongoing, never-ending, what is the expectation here? Is this going to be something that the Dene Nation will continue to expect from us almost indefinitely? Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Braden. Mr. Antoine.

HON. JIM ANTOINE: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, the request is for a year. I am speculating to say that it will probably be an ongoing request. Like I said, they are an organization that is operating without core funding, so wherever they could receive pockets of funding to continue the Dene Nation organization -- they are going into their 32nd year, so I am sure that they will probably be coming back to us. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Antoine. Mr. Braden.

MR. BRADEN: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I guess at this point, this particular item will not get my support, Mr. Chairman. This is not a rejection of the work that the Dene Nation does or our government's commitment to assist in that. Rather, I see it as really a lack of planning. It does not have a basis of continuity, of strategic importance. I would say that I would be ready to look at it again, but in the context of a broader, more long-term and more strategic plan.

Mr. Chairman, I have a bit of time left here. I would like to continue on with a couple of questions, and this would be to either Mr. Antoine or Mr. Handley. This is about the establishment of the negotiating division for devolution.

I noticed that there are two, what seem to be almost identical kinds of contributions to the Aboriginal Summit. I support these, Mr. Chairman. I have been fortunate to have attended some of the Intergovernmental Forum political meetings, and the Aboriginal Summit has certainly made its case -- a very believable case -- that they do need assistance in terms of building capacity, coming up to speed to be able to really participate in the Intergovernmental Forum.

I wanted to get some information. What is the difference between, as is noted in detail there, the contribution to the Aboriginal Summit for devolution negotiations of \$500,000 and then a separate line, to assist aboriginal governments in the Intergovernmental Forum discussions, a \$400,000 contribution?

First of all, I will ask, is a contribution an accountable type of funding? Can we see from the Aboriginal Summit how and what and when that is being spent? Just what are the terms under which a contribution is given? Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Braden. Mr. Handley.

HON. JOE HANDLEY: Mr. Chairman, I will just answer with regard to the contribution funding, and then turn to Mr. Antoine for more detail on it. The contribution funding is accountable and we will get an accounting from it. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Handley. Mr. Antoine.

HON. JIM ANTOINE: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, in the supplementary appropriation, it is broken down. The contribution to the Aboriginal Summit for devolution negotiations is for their negotiations itself with their negotiators and their team, and a requirement to try to keep everybody on board.

We are cost-sharing this with the federal government. In some cases, it is 50/50 shared. In the case of devolution, it is 50/50 shared with the federal government, so our share is \$500,000 in regard to devolution, and DIAND's contribution is \$500,000 as well.

The other figure that the Member mentioned, \$400,000, would be to assist the different member organizations, I believe, to travel into their area. I understand each member organization would be going to help each member organization to participate, to offset the travel cost. They will do their own research, administration support services through the Aboriginal Summit. The member organizations are the Inuvialuit Regional Corporation, the Gwich'in, the Sahtu, the North Slave Metis, the South Slave Metis and the Dogrib. This funding does not include an allocation for the Deh Cho, as they have decided to remain an observer and will not participate in the summit. However, the summit and both governments have committed to consider allocations to the Deh Cho if they decide to participate at a later date. The \$400,000 is for these organizations. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Antoine. Mr. Braden.

MR. BRADEN: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The \$400,000 and \$500,000 contributions, is it anticipated that these are going to be base funding, or core funding, which will go on until such time as the mandates are completed? Are we setting up, in effect, a line item here for about a million dollars a year to assist the Aboriginal Summit? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Braden. Mr. Handley.

HON. JOE HANDLEY: Mr. Chairman, yes, this will become part of the core funding for as long as the tasks are underway. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Handley. Mr. Braden.

MR. BRADEN: Could I get a bit of a description here? The Intergovernmental Forum, as I understand it, started out with a job to come up with a framework for negotiating the devolution of resources and the sharing of control of resources among the federal, territorial and aboriginal governments. It has since expanded, I understand, and now includes some interest in the social agenda. There may be some other things there as well.

With these two different contributions here, one for \$500,000 for devolution negotiations and the other for \$400,000 for the Intergovernmental Forum, what is the difference there? It is my perception that the Intergovernmental Forum and devolution negotiations are indeed one and the same. Why are they differentiated? Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Braden. Mr. Antoine.

HON. JIM ANTOINE: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, like I said earlier, the Aboriginal Summit is going to have their own devolution negotiating team, their chief negotiator and their staff. That would include their administration to do the work and the support from the summit, whereas the aboriginal assistance to the aboriginal governments' participation, the \$400,000, each member organization is going to get a share of the \$400,000 to do the work in their own regions. There are seven different groups here that are distinct from each other, so it is an organization that has created for themselves to aggressively pursue devolution and the Intergovernmental Forum.

Ourselves, as the Government of the Northwest Territories, and the feds have agreed to cost share. I have a letter from the federal Minister, Robert Nault, indicating that he is willing to participate in this funding arrangement. We agreed to fund our share of it.

I hope I explained to the Member his question of what is the difference between why there is \$500,000 in contributions to the Aboriginal Summit for devolution negotiations. That is for their own team to get ready. As for the \$400,000, it is going to be shared among the different seven aboriginal governments that are members of the Aboriginal Summit. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Antoine. Mr. Krutko.

MR. KRUTKO: I have a question regarding the cost. I support the dollars that are in here, but my concern is, what about those groups that are not involved in this process? You mentioned the South Slave Metis Alliance, the North Slave Metis Alliance. However, there is also the Mackenzie Valley Metis Federation, which presently does not receive core funding from this government.

I would like to ask, where are those groups that are out there that are not funded through this process? Are those groups going to have the opportunity to apply or put forth an application to your department to see if they can also receive funding to take place? The Northern Accord process has to include as many groups as possible, but I think what we do not want to see is we find out that they are negotiating with a handful of people but forgetting some groups who are sort of observers, sitting on the sidelines. At the end of the day, say one of them decides to file an injunction or a court action against the devolution or transfer of oil and gas revenues to the Government of the Northwest Territories. They have every legal leg to stand on.

I would like to ask the Minister, what happens to those groups that have not had the opportunity similar to that of the Dene Nation? Will the Mackenzie Valley Metis Federation have an opportunity to submit a similar proposal?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Krutko. Mr. Antoine.

HON. JIM ANTOINE: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The Mackenzie Valley Metis Federation has not indicated at any time whether they are going to be seeking any funding. We do provide core funding to the Metis locals, which we do with the members of the South Slave Metis, as well as the North Slave

Metis Alliance. They are members who are locals. We fund them. We core fund every Metis local. They are all the same. We core fund the Metis locals.

As for the North Slave Metis Alliance, they organized themselves here in the North Slave to be an entity. As well, the South Slave Metis are recognized and have worked out with the Akaitcho that they are separate, whereas the Mackenzie Valley Metis Federation are still getting themselves organized. I do not know where their focus is going to be. In the Deh Cho, which I am familiar with, the Metis and the Dene are together in the Akaitcho First Nations organizations. They are pursuing the Deh Cho process together. They are there together.

In the Sahtu, the Dene and Metis have settled their land claims together, so they have a land base and so forth there. The Deline is negotiating their self-government on their own. Up in the Mackenzie Delta, the Dene, the Gwich'in and the Metis have together settled their land claims, and together they are working out a self-government arrangement. I do not even know if they will organize similar to the North Slave Metis Alliance or the South Slave Metis Tribal Council, so it is difficult for me to answer. I will have to wait until they get themselves organized and evolved. If they do form, how they are going to form and why, and if they are going to be pursuing any funding. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Minister. Mr. Krutko.

MR. KRUTKO: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Can the Minister answer the question regarding whether or not the Mackenzie Valley Metis Federation can submit an application to your department to receive funding similar to the Dene Nation?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Krutko. Mr. Antoine.

HON. JIM ANTOINE: They can if they want. We will review their application, similar to the Dene Nation request. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Minister. Mr. Krutko.

MR. KRUTKO: You said they can submit an application. I want to know if they will be getting core funding on a similar basis as the Dene Nation. You said the Dene Nation does not get core funding from the Government of the Northwest Territories. That is the same as the Metis Federation.

At one time, we had the Metis Nation of the Northwest Territories, which received core funding from the Government of the Northwest Territories to fund the locals and to basically be involved in the political devolution process in the Northwest Territories. Those people have not died and disappeared. Those people are still in our communities. I think sooner or later they are going to come out of their shell. I think they should come out sooner than later.

My view is that the Metis have a fundamental right in the Territories. Treaties were signed. People in the Northwest Territories, especially Metis people, signed and they received what they called script payments as part of the treaty payment process where they were entitled to land and other things along with it. My grandmother got script through that process. I would like to know.

It seems like there is a segment of our population that is not really represented in this whole process, yet they are a key political body to be reckoned with.

When you talk about the Sahtu Metis, they have lands. They have an area of jurisdiction. They have control over geographic areas. They have...

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Excuse me, Mr. Krutko, we are getting a little bit beyond the scope of this bill here dealing with these funds. I would ask you to stick to the topic on this page. Thank you, Mr. Krutko.

MR. KRUTKO: Mr. Chairman, I do not believe I am outside the scope. I believe I am talking about funding to a political organization. If you are funding organizations, as a government, you should be fair to all organizations, not just to pick and choose who you want to be at the table. I feel there has to be an allowance for those organizations such as the Deh Cho and those other groups to have an opportunity to opt into this process, rather than strictly saying, "Because you are not at the table you cannot take part."

I would like to know, similar to the \$100,000 that was allocated to the Dene Nation, using the argument that they do not receive core funding from the government and they are receiving interim funding to partake in this process, will that funding be made available to the Mackenzie Valley Metis Federation?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Krutko. Mr. Antoine.

HON. JIM ANTOINE: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, I did answer the honourable Member's last question, which is the same question. I did say that if they decide to put in a proposal, then we would consider it, similar to the Dene Nation.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Antoine. Mr. Dent.

MR. DENT: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, I wonder if we could find out, the \$900,000 that is in this item under Aboriginal Affairs as a contribution to the Aboriginal Summit, are there any other funds that we are providing the Aboriginal Summit or is this the total amount for this year? Is this expected to be the total amount or are we likely to see a further amount in a supplementary before the end of the fiscal year?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Dent. Mr. Handley.

HON. JOE HANDLEY: Mr. Chairman, in addition to the \$400,000 that is shown here there is \$330,000 base funding, for a total of \$730,000. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Handley. Mr. Dent.

MR. DENT: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. There is actually \$900,000 on this page that I see for the Aboriginal Summit, so that is \$500,000 as a contribution for devolution negotiations and \$400,000 that Mr. Antoine has said is for travel and will be going to individual members of the Aboriginal Summit. All together, that is \$1.23 million. Is that correct?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Dent. Mr. Handley.

HON. JOE HANDLEY: That is correct.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Handley. Mr. Dent.

MR. DENT: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. In the interest of getting everybody at the table to talk about devolution, obviously it is in everybody's interest in the North to try and make sure that everybody has the capacity to be there. Just to confirm, I think I understand that the total cost is shared with the federal government on a 50/50 basis, so does that mean that the federal government is also contributing \$1.23 million to the Aboriginal Summit this fiscal year?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Dent. Mr. Handley.

HON. JOE HANDLEY: Mr. Chairman, their contribution is a bit more than the GNWT's because the core funding is shared one-third GNWT and two-thirds federal, and then the balance is 50/50.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Handley. Mr. Dent.

MR. DENT: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. That leads to where I was going with this. In the 12th and 13th Assemblies, whenever we were involved in negotiations with the federal government, aboriginal governments and this government, the cost-sharing agreement has always been one-third/two-thirds. There was the Constitutional Working Group and the Constitutional Development Steering Committee, and before that, the Committee of Political Leaders. I think there were a number of occasions when I remember that funding has always been shared one-third/two-thirds. The argument for that was the federal government has a fiduciary responsibility for First Nations. They have a trust relationship. I am not sure that the Government of the Northwest Territories holds anything in trust at this point. That is why we have always been able to get the federal government to recognize their responsibility to pay for capacity for the aboriginal governments to be at the table.

I am just wondering if we are not overstepping perhaps, because there is a fiscal basis to what we have gotten into here. In the past we were not talking just about fiscal issues but about the whole constitutional make up of the Northwest Territories, what we were going to look like at the end of the day, which at some point would have meant the fiscal side as well. Since there did not seem to be as much urgency to it, we were better able to force the issue and make sure that we saw that one-third/two-third split.

I am wondering if we are starting down a slope where the feds are getting away from their responsibilities in this issue and we are taking it up. We do not have the same deep pockets that they do. I am just a little concerned that if the funding relationship continues to slide, it could change to 50/50 completely and then perhaps we start getting past that. Is the Minister not at all concerned that we have started to change this relationship that was very successfully maintained through the entire 12th and 13th Assemblies, when we were in these kinds of tripartite negotiations?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Dent. Mr. Handley.

HON. JOE HANDLEY: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, certainly we would prefer to have it remain two-thirds federal and one-third GNWT. I expect that we will maintain that on core funding or base programs. There have been precedents set already in other areas where the federal government has refused to participate on a project or have

been successful in negotiating something other than the two-thirds/one-third. In this case, I am not exactly sure of the negotiations, but it ended up being a 50/50 split to get on with these special projects.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Handley. Mr. Dent.

MR. DENT: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I have no doubt the feds saw us as being over a barrel, because it is in Northerners' best interests to try and come to some agreement on the ownership and sharing of resources and the royalties that flow from them. I have no doubt they use that to their advantage.

I hope that we are able to work with the aboriginal governments to force the issue back to where it should be and that the fiscal responsibility remains as it should and that we pay a little more attention to that. This is in our own better interests, all of us, aboriginal governments and the GNWT, to bring these negotiations along. I think it is imperative we watch that we do not allow the funding allocations to slip too much down this road.

One other comment I would like to make, Mr. Chairman, to echo the comments Mr. Braden was making about the \$100,000. I support the issue of funding for the Aboriginal Summit, particularly for the devolution negotiations, but I am less persuaded by Minister Antoine and his arguments for core funding and would prefer to see -- I know that the government wants to deal in a government-to-government-to-government relationship, and I think that is something we have made a strong commitment to do.

I am more easily seeing the Aboriginal Summit as being the government representatives for the First Nations at the table than I do the Dene Nation. That is what causes me some problems. I do not have a problem at all with funding to the Aboriginal Summit, but I have not been persuaded by Minister Antoine's arguments yet on the \$100,000. That is just an issue I wanted to make sure was on the record.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Dent. Executive, operations expense, Aboriginal Affairs, not previously authorized, \$1,674,000.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Total department, not previously authorized, \$276,000.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): We will go to page 8, Finance, operations expenditures, Bureau of Statistics, not previously authorized, \$211,000.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Total department, not previously authorized, \$211,000.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): We will go to page 9, Municipal and Community Affairs, operations expenditures, emergency services, not previously authorized, \$155,000.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Land administration, not previously authorized, \$300,000. Mr. Nitah.

MR. NITAH: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, the \$300,000 identified in land administration, what is the exact intent of that money? Is that to resolve the issues of disputed ownership of land, taxation based on the disputed ownership of land, et cetera? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Nitah. Mr. Handley.

HON. JOE HANDLEY: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, the purpose of the \$300,000 is to make a contribution, or be available as contribution money, to non-tax-based communities for land development. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Handley. Mr. Nitah.

MR. NITAH: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Would those new subdivisions be taxed before land claims are settled and ownership of those said lands to be developed are to be determined?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Nitah. Mr. Handley.

HON. JOE HANDLEY: Mr. Chairman, it depends what housing is built on it, but quite likely it could be taxed. Then we can afford to hire teachers and nurses and so on. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Handley. Mr. Nitah.

MR. NITAH: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Let me rephrase the question then. Who will own those lands? If it is a non-tax-based community, it could be a community that is a band only. Who owns the lands? The question about taxation is still up in the air, Mr. Chairman.

I know we have problems with communities. I have constituents, brothers who are living side-by-side in the houses in the community they have lived in all their lives. One pays taxes and the other does not. Those are confusing situations. We need to resolve those. This may not be related but it is an opportunity for me to make a political statement on this issue once again. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Nitah. Mr. Handley.

HON. JOE HANDLEY: Mr. Chairman, it is hard to determine in advance who would own it. The land could be built on band land and leased. It could be owned by a development corporation and the houses built on it rented. It could be sold as fee simple lots to individuals who want to buy a house and a lot. It is impossible right now to tell who would own it. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Handley. Mr. McLeod.

MR. MCLEOD: Mr. Chairman, I just need clarification. Until now, it was my understanding that subdivisions in non-tax-based communities were requested through the capital planning process. They were approved through the capital planning system that we have in place. I am wondering how this appropriation for \$300,000 fits in. Is this to add money to that pot? Has the system changed? I am not sure what is happening here. I would like the Minister to explain it to me.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. McLeod. Mr. Handley.

HON. JOE HANDLEY: Mr. Chairman, this is just additional money to get on with lot development, subdivision development in non-tax-based communities. There is no change necessary for the current practices. It is simply another \$300,000 to deal with the issues that have been raised with us about the need for lot development in small communities.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Handley. Municipal and Community Affairs, operations expenditures, land administration, not previously authorized, \$300,000.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Regional operations, special warrants, \$205,000.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Not previously authorized, \$492,000.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Page 9, regional operations, not previously authorized, \$492,000.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): We will go to page 10, school of community governments, not previously authorized, \$150,000. Mr. Bell.

MR. BELL: I am just wondering about this. I understand the training and these course materials being developed are over the budget we thought it would cost to develop them. I am wondering why we had not planned that there would be this offset earlier, and therefore show that we were going to get \$150,000 from this. Is this just an accounting exercise that we needed to show this and there is nothing more than that, or did we not recognize that we would collect this \$150,000 in course registration fees previously?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Bell. Mr. Handley.

HON. JOE HANDLEY: Mr. Chairman, in previous years, the funding for this program, the fees for it, would have been collected by the Association for Municipalities. Starting this year, MACA is going to operate the program and collect the fees.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Handley. School of Community Government, not previously authorized, \$150,000.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Total department, special warrants, \$205,000.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Not previously authorized, \$1,097,000.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): We will go on to page 11, Public Works and Services, operations expenditures, asset management, not previously authorized, \$350,000. Mr. Krutko.

MR. KRUTKO: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. My concern with this agreement is most of the communities have what they call operation and management agreements with the Department of Public Works and Services to manage water and treatment facilities. Rae-Edzo is one of them. Fort McPherson, Aklavik, Tsiigehtchic and a handful of our communities continue to have these agreements in place, because they have not either developed the expertise or the human resources to take on the management of these programs, such as the running of the water treatment facilities and the utilidors and maintenance of our buildings.

I would like to ask the Minister of Finance, who can maybe pass it on to the Minister of MACA, in the situation that we find ourselves in again in Rae-Edzo, this problem in Rae-Edzo has come back to this House several times, having to come for supplementary appropriations because of the water and sewage problems that have occurred in that community and also in other communities. Here again we are seeing that the community has devolved that authority back to the Department of Municipal and Community Affairs.

I would like to ask the Minister of Finance or the Minister of Municipal and Community Affairs, what are we doing to review the operational agreements that we have with the municipalities and with the Department of Public Works and Services, along with the responsibility that MACA has? There seems to be this ongoing expense that seems to keep coming back by way of supplementary appropriation.

I would like to know from the Minister, what are we doing to try to eliminate this problem? It seems to keep coming back time and time again. Are we going to change anything or will we continue to see this coming forth through a supplementary appropriation?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Krutko. Mr. Steen.

HON. VINCE STEEN: Mr. Speaker, the \$400,000 that the department has requested is not related to the actual charges that the Member is talking about. The information I have here is that the expenses that are identified by Public Works and Services are due to a lack of maintenance on the part of the community for the infrastructure, for the facilities. This has driven up the cost Public Works and Services is going to have to undertake in order to maintain the facilities. This is over and above what it would have normally cost the community.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Steen. Mr. Krutko.

MR. KRUTKO: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. In the outline of the agreement, with regard to the Rae-Edzo water and sewage system, it says "Due to the cancellation of the custody and control agreement by the hamlet of Rae-Edzo." I am wondering, because of the cancellation of that agreement, that this expenditure, if we had qualified people and people within our municipalities that feel comfortable running these facilities, running that infrastructure in our communities, we would not have this situation where they are basically backing out of these agreements because they either cannot afford to operate them or we do not have the trained staff within our hamlet councils to run these projects.

Again, I would like to ask the Minister, why is it that we see these cancellations of agreements in place? I raised the question today in the House with you, regarding the motion that was passed at the hamlet council in Fort McPherson to pull out of the delivery of the water from the water supply to the water treatment plant in Fort McPherson.

It seems like this is an ongoing process. We either under-fund these projects or we do not allow the communities to build the expertise or have the resources to get people who are qualified to run these facilities.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Krutko. Mr. Steen.

HON. VINCE STEEN: Mr. Chairman, the information I have here from the department is during the three years the hamlet had a care and custody agreement, Public Works and Services was not approached for technical assistance. Issues with the system operations were raised by the water licensing board, DIAND. During this period, there was a turnover in the SAO position and the hamlet was never able to address DIAND's concerns, despite promises to follow up. Further, the hamlet was unable to follow through with their plan to hire a level three operator to train local hamlet operators.

This resulted, Mr. Chairman, in a lot of lack of maintenance on the facilities on the part of the operators. The end result was that the community was in such a state that they could no longer maintain sufficient water for fire protection. I believe it was in the fall of last year that they finally decided by a motion to turn the facilities back over to Public Works and Services to maintain for them.

Public Works and Services has agreed to take it back, but we would do it at the cost identified by the department, and this includes all costs. Due to the lack of maintenance over the past number of years, it is going to cost Public Works and Services more than what the hamlet had budgeted for. The budget from the hamlet was \$250,000, but Public Works and Services has identified that it will cost in the range of \$400,000. Some of this work that we are going to charge back to the community would be covered by the money MACA gives to communities or the communities raise themselves.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Steen. Mr. Krutko.

MR. KRUTKO: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The Minister hit the nail right on the head. Why is it that we give municipalities \$250,000 to run an operation knowing that it is going to cost the Department of Public Works \$350,000? That is \$100,000 difference from the money allocated to a hamlet to run a project, and then a department running a project, the cost is \$100,000 more. That is exactly the argument I am trying to make. We are underestimating the cost of operating these facilities, yet the communities cannot bear that cost. That is why a lot of communities are at the point now of just having to put their hands up and say, "Sorry we do not want it, we cannot afford to continue to operate because the cost drivers running these operations are going up."

As a government, we see this coming time and time again. It has happened in my riding in Fort McPherson with regard to that project, which is an unforeseen situation where you have THMs and other effects to your water system. It seems that we do not have a process in place to address those areas where we know there are going to be unforeseen costs associated with their operation and maintenance. The municipalities with

the latest formula financing arrangement that we have are saying they are not funded enough to operate those facilities.

I would like to ask the Minister to compare that \$250,000 to the \$350,000 from the hamlet, which is \$100,000 difference. What were the cost drivers to give you that \$100,000 difference?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Krutko. Mr. Steen.

HON. VINCE STEEN: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I thought I had already identified the cost drivers that Public Works and Services have identified. They are all related to the fact that the facilities were never maintained properly, so it is going to cost Public Works X number of dollars, roughly \$150,000, to bring the facilities back up to par and then maintain them.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Minister Steen. Page 11, asset management. Mr. Krutko.

MR. KRUTKO: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I think it is pretty interesting that if you want anything done in this government and you do not have the resources within the municipal council, your best bet is to give it back to the government because they are going to get more funding to bring it up to a certain standard. Then you continue to operate it and try to maintain it with the minimum budget that you have. I think that sets a bad precedent.

If every hamlet knows this is the process you can use to get your infrastructure improved on, such as water treatment facilities, sewage lagoons and so on, every time you have a problem, drop the project and give it back to MACA. Let them bring it up to a certain standard. Let them pay for it and then take it over again after they do that. This is the precedent we are setting here. I think this is a bad precedent.

If anything, if we assist the communities, knowing they are having these problems, they did not have the trained people in place, they were not taking water samples, they were not living up to their water licence, and we did not intervene sooner, then we are in a situation similar to today, where it is costing us another \$350,000. This is a cost driver that we have control over.

I think we as a government have to address this issue. We cannot continue to see the communities struggling to operate and maintain facilities with untrained people and unqualified processes, where you have responsibilities under your licences and then, at the end of the day, realize that Public Works comes to you and gives you a take-it-or-leave-it offer, where you have to either give it back to them or they are going to take it away from you. Again, I would like to ask the Minister, exactly what are you doing about changing the way we assist municipalities on running the water and sewage programs in our communities?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Krutko. Mr. Steen.

HON. VINCE STEEN: Mr. Chairman, part of that answer is Public Works and part is MACA. Public Works assists communities with training programs to operate the water facilities. We also supply them with manuals as to what is required to maintain the facilities to standard. Furthermore, MACA works with the communities to address the financial situation. If the situation develops where the expense for maintaining the water treatment facilities in the community puts a burden on the community and they cannot meet their

expenditures through revenue, MACA works with them to see if they can review the water rates or cut expenditures anywhere. Or MACA maybe can come forward with an increase in the Water and Sewer Subsidy Program. We do work with the communities to try to address the specific concern that the Member has raised. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Minister Steen. Mr. Krutko.

MR. KRUTKO: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, it would be interesting to get a report on this particular project, realizing that it has come forward through a supplementary several times already. Sooner or later, we have to nail this down. I think that as a government and as Members of this Legislature, we have to address this issue. I think it continues to go on. It is not only affecting this community but other communities are in the same ballpark.

With that, I will just leave it there. I think it would be good if we can get a report back on this from the department or from the Minister of Finance. For us to continue to address these types of situations where we are finding out that we do not have the capacity in a lot of our communities to take on these responsibilities and we are not carrying out those responsibilities that are in place through different agreements that we have with respect to water and sewage programs, and licences that are in place to ensure that we have trained people and that we live up to those obligations through water licences and what not. I think that sooner or later we as a government are liable as to what happens at the end of the day. With that, I would just like to get some sort of a report back on this and see where we go from there.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Krutko. Mr. Handley.

HON. JOE HANDLEY: Mr. Chairman, yes, we will provide a report on this project. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Handley. Page 11, Public Works and Services, operations expenditures, asset management, not previously authorized, \$350,000.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Total department, not previously authorized, \$350,000.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): We will go to page 12, Health and Social Services, operations expenditures, health services programs, not previously authorized, \$700,000.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Community health programs, not previously authorized, \$356,000. Mr. McLeod.

MR. MCLEOD: I would just like to get confirmation on the rationale for this budget line. I recognize that there is an increase in costs due to the number of placements in the south, but the second part of that sentence states, "...increased costs for services provided by southern facilities." Is that a result of increased costs for medical travel due to the closing of the ICU?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lafferty): Thank you. Minister Handley.

HON. JOE HANDLEY: No, there is no relationship at all, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lafferty): Thank you. Health services programs. Mr. Bell.

MR. BELL: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I just wanted to make some comments again on the funding of the accumulated deficits under program delivery support, the \$3,483,000 to the various boards. There are a couple of boards who were able to manage their funds fairly well in this last fiscal year. I would have to assume the Deh Cho board and the Yellowknife board, I see that they are not in there, but we have debated this back and forth with the Minister. He insists that this 60/40 funding arrangement, where we are willing to erase 60 percent of these figures, is not arbitrary -- I think if you look at Hansard from yesterday, "not totally arbitrary" -- but in fact, he had consultations with the boards and these were agreed upon and arrived-at figures.

I would suggest that although there was consultation and there was agreement and they arrived at some conclusions, that still does not convince me that this is not arbitrary. I cannot imagine that all of the boards had equally justified overexpenditures to the tune of 60 percent being justified, 40 percent not justified. The Minister has assured us that there will be an accountability framework in place going forward. We do not want to see this again. We are going to do everything we can to ensure this does not happen again, but I think the point still needs to be made.

I assume the Minister made a decision that he did not want to continue to fight this issue for months going forward, and he wanted to come to some sort of resolution, wipe the slate clean and start fresh. I see this as a chronic problem in this department over the past few years. That is, the boards end up with these cost pressures and end up spending more than their budgets allow them to. We have not come up with any concrete way to deal with this up to this point.

We are going to suggest that we are going to force boards to come up with deficit reduction plans. We have been doing that all along. The result remains that these boards really have no way to slash services and I do not think we want to see them do that. Their only choice to come up with any sort of deficit reduction plan, really, is to go to the department for a bail out. We use this bail out with all of its negative connotations, but I cannot imagine how else they are really supposed to recover these budgets and I think the boards are aware of this.

It seems to me that we do not have the ability to ensure these funds are properly managed. I am sure that in some cases they are and in some cases they are not, as with everything. The Minister has not done much to assure us that this is all changing and that this is where it stops. We have done this for the last time. I am hoping that possibly Minister Handley will refer the question to Minister Miltenberger and we can get some sort of assurance from him that this is the absolute last time.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lafferty): Thank you. Minister Miltenberger.

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, we cannot look at this issue in isolation. There

were clearly identified issues and concerns with the whole Health and Social Services system.

The Member is right. In 1997 and 1998 they came up with a plan, a surplus deficit retention policy. Since that time, up until last year, there has been a slow accumulation of debt to the point that is resulting in this submission.

There are also a host of other problems. We do not have a common charter of accounts. Our financial systems were not very well coordinated. Our business planning process was out of sync. Boards were planning and doing their business planning process months after the department had done theirs. There was not a meaningful involvement of the boards in the decision-making process.

We are taking steps to address all those issues. It was recognized last year that historically the budgets were not adequate, that there was a rebasing done to the tune of \$4 million, recognizing some of the under-funded areas that the boards had raised over the years. We are very clearly taking steps to ensure that from here on in, we do not go through this, that our systems and our planning is going to be much better coordinated. Connection and coordination of the system is going to be much better.

This is an historic accumulated debt going back about four or five years. As we move forward with the action plan, it is an outstanding issue that has to be dealt with as it is recognized as a shared responsibility.

As the Minister, I am ultimately responsible for the decisions as they relate to Health and Social Services. In terms of the issue of the arbitrariness of this decision, at the end of the day, as Minister, I was of the opinion that the 60/40 split was a way to deal with what had been, up to this point, an intractable issue, something of a Gordian knot, as I referred to some of my colleagues.

I brought forward a decision based on the need to move ahead in a shared, responsible way. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lafferty): Thank you. Mr. Bell.

MR. BELL: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I think the Minister is right. He cannot look at this in isolation. There are some problems that we have had for a number of years now; the fact that systems have not been in sync, there has been no consolidation and no agreement on charts of accounts and these kinds of things is a serious problem for us.

I guess what I am hoping to hear from the Minister is that yes, we are wiping some of this accumulated deficit off, but I am going to Cabinet. I know there is a huge expenditure in IT that needs to be made in order to bring all these boards up to an equal level and sharing the same systems as the department, but I am going to get that commitment from my Cabinet colleagues. I am going to impress upon them that if I do not, we are going to continue to bail boards out. We are not going to have any way to hold anyone accountable if we cannot agree on what these expenditures are and what kinds of forced growth are acceptable and what kinds are not. There is a lot more money that has to be spent in order for us to turn the tide here. It is an investment. It is an investment in our systems to ensure that this does not keep happening.

Can the Minister give us any indication that he will be successful with his Cabinet colleagues in impressing this upon them?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lafferty): Thank you. Mr. Miltenberger.

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, I will be coming forward with the issues the Member mentioned. I would point out that Cabinet has supported the Health and Social Services Action Plan, 2002-2005. Of the 42 action items, some of those issues speak to the systems matters raised by Mr. Bell, the need to have financial systems that are compatible to be able to have the kind of coordination that we talked about.

Yes, I am going to be coming forward. Cabinet has already given the department the approval of the action plan. We have to come back and justify and cost out the action items. We are going to do that.

I have also heard in the last session strong support from the Members to make some of the changes necessary and make some of the investment that Mr. Bell talked about. We will be making that case. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lafferty): Thank you. Page 12, community health programs, \$356,000. Mr. McLeod.

MR. MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I want to commend the Minister for tackling this issue and attempting to resolve this matter. I do not know if I agree with the comparison that he makes with himself to Alexander the Great's ability to cut the Gordian knot, but I have a concern, Mr. Chairman, with the perception of what is happening out there. Also, I have a concern as to how fair this whole concept is to the boards that did not overspend.

I have heard this comment made that the penalty for overspending at the health boards has been new dollars. I want to know, if I could ask, what the discussions were with the boards that did not overspend. Is there any kind of incentive being provided at all with these boards that did not overspend? There are a couple that did not overspend. It just does not seem fair that we are providing new dollars to the boards that did not handle our money properly, or had some reasons for overspending, and not the other ones.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lafferty): Thank you. Mr. Miltenberger.

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, just for the record, when I speak of the Gordian knot, I was speaking more of the difficult problem that was irresolvable at this point, as opposed to Alexander the Great, who split the knot.

The issue the Member raises is a good one. That is a message, an unintended but real message that comes out of this kind of process. I am in discussions with the Deh Cho board as we speak. They have written to me requesting that they be allowed to keep an additional 10 percent of the surplus that they are entitled to under this surplus deficit retention policy. That request is on my desk and we are going to be seriously looking at that. It is not an unreasonable request given the circumstances and the fact that they, in the last few years, have been a paragon of fiscal probity and exemplitude in terms of what we should be striving for. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lafferty): Thank you. Mr. McLeod.

MR. MCLEOD: Thank you. That is good to hear. One more question regarding the base funding. I am assuming, and I think I heard the Minister state, that most of these boards will see their base funding increased. I am wondering, although the Deh Cho board and others have not overspent, would there be a review of their actual need and the possibility of increasing their base also? Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lafferty): Thank you. Mr. Miltenberger.

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, the rebasing occurred last year to the tune of \$4 million, split up across the various authorities. We are currently engaged in the business planning process. As well, like all other arms of government, we are looking at critical investments and areas of priority that require attention. That exercise is being undertaken with all the authorities, as well as the department. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lafferty): Thank you. Just before we go on to the next item, I would like to seek approval for community health programs, \$356,000. Mr. Krutko.

MR. KRUTKO: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Regarding the community health programs, I would like to ask the Minister, could you spell out exactly what some of those forced growth expenditure items were in regard to the southern placement children? Do you have an idea of what those forced growth items were? What was the cost breakdown?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lafferty): Thank you. Mr. Miltenberger.

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, the pressures are two-fold, as indicated. The number of children requiring services that we were unable to provide in the Northwest Territories and the costs of accessing those services has gone up. The per diem rate in most of the institutions has gone up. As we are discovering with the Capital Health Authority contract, which has not been re-negotiated since 1996, those costs are going up as well.

The statistics show that there are increasing children coming into care for different reasons. Some of them require specialized treatment and facilities, support that we are unable to provide, or that they need support but all of our current facilities are full. Those are the reasons, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lafferty): Thank you. Mr. Krutko.

MR. KRUTKO: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I would like to ask the Minister if he has looked at the possibility of investing dollars into the facilities we have in the Northwest Territories, so we may accommodate more of our children in northern institutions. Maybe look at investing in expanding some of these facilities, so we do not have to send our children to southern institutions. They could be placed in the Northwest Territories.

You mentioned the lack of beds in the Northwest Territories, but we do have facilities in the North. In Inuvik, we have the Charlotte Vehus Home, where we have a place for disabled children and what not to go.

I think it is important that as a government, if we are seeing a major increase in the cost of programs and services in the

southern institutions and if we have the ability to provide those services in the Northwest Territories, we should start looking at expanding those services. We should try to take a more made-in-the-North approach of having these services provided in the North so we do not have to send our people to southern institutions.

I would like to ask the Minister, have you looked at that, knowing the cost drivers are there, the per diem costs are going up? If that service can be provided in the North, have you considered looking at maybe making the investment in expanding some of these facilities or institutions we have here so we can house more of our children in those facilities?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lafferty): Thank you. Mr. Miltenberger.

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, that is an issue that is always there. Trail Cross, for example, is just finishing some significant renovations and should be re-opened to full capacity, which will allow us to free up some beds that have been out of commission for some time.

The point Mr. Krutko raises is a good one. We just toured the Capital Health Authority facilities down south. We are checking into some of those facilities, not only for children but for adults who may be able to be cared for up North.

We do it in some cases, but it is something that requires constant review, especially if the numbers are going to stay high. I agree with the Member that it makes sense that we look at the needs requirements of the various clients and see how we can best provide those in the North and wherever possible, service adults and children in the North and keep the money in the North. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lafferty): Thank you. Community health programs, \$356,000. Ms. Lee.

MS. LEE: Sorry, Mr. Chairman, but my question has to do with the next section.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lafferty): Thank you. Community health programs, \$356,000.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lafferty): Program delivery support, \$3,483,000. Ms. Lee.

MS. LEE: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. My input on this line item is very similar to what was expressed by other Members in the House. It is really hard to see how this decision was made to go with 60/40. I said in committee that I cannot see this as anything else but a result of a decision made by a Minister who chose not to make hard decisions, because I cannot imagine that all of these six financial systems had exactly the same 60/40 problem.

I have to ask, what is Stanton Hospital, for example, supposed to do with this 40 percent deficit that they have to find from within? I do not believe they have the means to come up with an extra budget to make the deficit, because they get most of the money from the government, and the only way to do it is to cut spending on next year's budget.

Given what I have been saying in the House and what the Minister has had to deal with in terms of what is happening there, it is not right to ask the hospital to eat \$700,000 from within. I do not know how they can do that without cutting out some services or doing without things that they ought to be able to do. Maybe that is why they closed the ICU. Maybe this is going to give them \$700,000. I do not know.

I know that the Minister's answers in the House that new people are getting trained to get ready for the fall, does not go anywhere near addressing this issue. I am told by the health care workers on the street who I run into, or people who choose to get a hold of me, say that they have had a number of near disasters in OR and other places in that facility that provide acute and serious health care services to the people who may be in life or death situations, or a pretty serious health care issue that they need attention paid to.

I am being hard on the Minister because he is in the seat that has to deal with these questions. He is there and he has to answer to that. I need to know what his answer is to the question, what are they supposed to do with all of this deficit? Secondly, I would like to have information on what is the cause of the deficit? Does he have that information on these six items? Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lafferty): Thank you. Minister Miltenberger.

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, I would suggest to the Member that the proof of what is doable would be in the pudding, as it were, and that pudding is going to be the deficit recovery plans that are being put forward by the authorities after working with the department on how they are going to address their issues and their portion of the debt.

There is a terms of reference that was done. There has been a commitment made to the Social Programs Committee that we will share those deficit recovery plans as soon as they are in and ready to go, which is very nearly the case. Stanton has worked through theirs in a very positive, proactive way and are to be commended. In the terms of reference, there was some clear points raised, one of them being to make sure that programs are not diminished. The reasons for the accumulated debt are many and it is a very complex issue.

You get into the debate over what is forced growth and what are program enhancements. You get down to the discussion of the rebasing that was done last year, upon a recognition that some of the base budgets were not adequate. I will be showing the Social Programs Committee and this House and Cabinet that the authorities have managed to cope with this particular issue. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lafferty): Thank you. Ms. Lee.

MS. LEE: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, I have not been here that long. This is my third year, but I have enough corporate memory to know that the last time we dealt with this last year, before he was Minister when we were dealing with the deficit at Stanton, Stanton was working on a debt recovery plan. I appreciate the Minister has to give that sort of answer, but that has no practical meaning. I am sure the Stanton Board or management there could come up with a plan on how they propose to cut this and cut that, or whatever, and work with the Minister because it is the Minister who is funding them.

Surely the Minister is hearing what is going on out there, that all of the staff are working at full capacity. We have a lot of staff there who are working overtime to the point where they take their phones off the hook on the weekend. Someone said she has had overtime pay on her paycheque since December. There are a lot of them who cannot go on holidays unless they shut down their unit, for example, the CT scan. It is actually costing us more money because they have to work with a shortage of staff who have to work overtime and we have to pay them overtime.

You know, I can only speak for Stanton Hospital. I do not know what the examples are for other facilities, but I can tell you that the Stanton Regional Foundation raises millions and millions from the people in Yellowknife. Surely that should make up for the recovery plan. At some point, the hospital needs the money or it does not. The fact that the Minister can demand, or maybe even work with them to come up with a recovery plan, is really meaningless to me.

If it jives in numbers, what is the meaning of that if everything we hear on the street is that this facility is in crisis? One more thing we are going to hand to them is that they are going through a \$1,766,000 of deficit, for which the government will pay a million but they are going to have to come up with \$700,000. I just do not know, knowing what I know and I am sure what the Minister knows, how we can with a reasonable conscience expect them to deal with that.

I need to know. The Minister did not answer what he knows about what has caused the deficit. I need to know that he is not just arbitrarily saying that he knows they have a deficit problem but he can only come up with 60 percent and they have to eat 40 percent. I know the Minister keeps saying he is the Minister of all the facilities and he has to please everyone, but I believe you have to make a hard decision. You have to look at the details, you have to look at the context and you have to go into the details and see what we can and cannot do. Would the Minister answer that please? Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lafferty): Thank you. Minister Miltenberger.

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, I am quite conversant with the details. I have spent a significant amount of time with the authorities, with the board chairs, with the department on this particular issue. The accumulated deficit of the Stanton Board as of March 31st, 2001, was \$1,766,207. The 40 percent accumulated deficit, their share, was \$706,483.

This year, the projected surplus at the end of 2001-2002 is \$584,358. Stanton, on a budget of \$54 million, has to absorb \$122,125, which is not an insurmountable task. The folks have been working to take the steps necessary to adjust and they are doing that. The numbers I have indicate that this is not going to jeopardize the programs. This is not done without thought, consideration and attention to detail. We have taken the steps that are necessary to resolve this issue. I will put the plans on the table to demonstrate that. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lafferty): Thank you. Program delivery support. Ms. Lee.

MS. LEE: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I appreciate the Minister's answer. I would like to be able to accept that now the hospital will have a surplus of \$584,000 and they can eat the deficit from within and they only have to put up \$132,000, which may

be, I do not know, a couple of nurses or something. There is something very wrong with this picture.

I mean, they look very nice in numbers, but given what is going on, I would think the Minister and the hospital administration are negligent to be able to be finding a surplus of \$600,000, given that they are not able to staff the facility. They cannot keep the ICU unit open because they do not have enough staff. They are going to close the surgery because they do not have enough nurses. What kind of operation are we running?

I really have a hard time seeing all of these contradictions here. If you go to Tim Horton's, I daily get accosted by nurses and health care workers who say the packages are not competitive, they do not have enough staff, they do not want anymore overtime. The closure of the ICU means the new internist they have hired after two years of searching will have no facility to work in.

Now I am being told the hospital has somehow squeezed a \$600,000 surplus. This does not make any sense. I asked for a number. You gave me the number and now I am not happy with the number, but we have to go outside of the box. What is really going on here? How was the board able to come up with a \$600,000 surplus? Does the Minister know that?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lafferty): Thank you. Mr. Miltenberger.

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: I would agree with the Member. She is hard to please. I have committed to put the deficit reduction plans on the table once they are complete. The Social Programs Committee has asked for a briefing, and we will give them a full briefing. We will walk through all of the information they need. We will give them the numbers and we will hopefully demonstrate to them that this process has done what it intended to do.

The Member and I can sit here all night and she is not going to be happy. She throws around terms like negligence, which I think is very serious. Stanton is in fact run by very many dedicated people. It has a good board. They work long and hard to provide a very high class service to the people of the Northwest Territories. Like every other part of the system, they are struggling with resource problems, but in my opinion, we are doing it successfully. Maybe not to the satisfaction of all the Members. We have also been told by some of the Members here "Do not come back. Clean up this debt and live within your costs." We are struggling to do that and this is part of the process. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lafferty): Thank you. Program delivery support, \$3,483,000.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lafferty): Total department, \$4,539,000.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lafferty): Page 13, Justice, operations expenditures, not previously authorized, services to government, \$66,000.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lafferty): Community justice and corrections, \$2,145,000.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lafferty): Total department, \$2,211,000.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lafferty): Page 14, NWT Housing Corporation, operations expenditures, not previously authorized, NWT Housing Corporation, \$226,000. Mr. Roland.

MR. ROLAND: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Just a question on the \$226,000 to renovate a government-owned building into a duplex. It seems that we have just passed our budget for the Housing Corporation, along with all the other departments, and there is a fair sum of money there. Why would this one specifically be coming back in this forum? Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lafferty): Thank you. Mr. Handley.

HON. JOE HANDLEY: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The reason this was coming forward is because it was an emergency situation. We had to deal with staff housing needs, particularly for teachers, so it had to be done in urgency. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lafferty): Thank you. Mr. Roland.

MR. ROLAND: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. So this is staff housing that you are building then? Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lafferty): Thank you. Mr. Handley.

HON. JOE HANDLEY: Mr. Chairman, this is housing that is currently, to the best of my knowledge, rented by staff. The crisis that we had to respond to last year was because of a shortage of housing, I believe it was for teachers. This is not designated as staff housing, as such. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lafferty): Thank you. Mr. Roland.

MR. ROLAND: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The Minister initially stated for staff housing and now his second response, or later on in his response, it is not staff housing. What side is it? Is this for the community? Is it public housing? Is it staff housing? What is it? Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lafferty): Thank you. Mr. Handley.

HON. JOE HANDLEY: Mr. Chairman, let me try again to see if the Member can understand. There was a lack of available housing in the community. The school was only able to staff six out of seven teaching positions. There was a crisis in the sense that there was not enough housing in the community to be able to fully staff the school, unless they bumped somebody in a community out of a house, which they were not willing to do. This project was undertaken on an emergency basis. The crisis was staff who required housing. This housing unit is not just for teachers, or just for anyone else. It is community housing. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lafferty): Thank you. Mr. Roland.

MR. ROLAND: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The repairs, or the renovation, from my understanding, this surplus must have taken place after April 1st, so in fact, the school year is almost done in that community. If the corporation knew that this situation occurred, would it not have been more prudent to budget in the normal manner and have it come forward in that

sense? You are saying this is an emergency to deal with it. The renovations, have they occurred or are they going to occur? Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lafferty): Thank you. Mr. Handley.

HON. JOE HANDLEY: Mr. Chairman, the renovations to this building were completed in 2001 by the Housing Corporation using their own money. The final settlement on the billings and so on came after March 31, 2002. Now, what is happening is the GNWT has to reimburse the Housing Corporation for the money they had spent last year. We did not get the billing in time to be able to do it within the regular appropriation.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lafferty): Thank you. Mr. Bell.

MR. BELL: Just a little more clarification on this. This project, this urgency, this emergent need in the community was an emergent need last year. It went through last year's business plans and it just ended up taking a long time to bill, to finish billing, or it ran over by \$226,000, so this is only a portion of the project, correct?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lafferty): Thank you. Mr. Handley.

HON. JOE HANDLEY: No, Mr. Chairman, this is the full project. What happened is the Housing Corporation built it with their own funding. Once the final bills were tallied up, the GNWT has to reimburse the Housing Corporation for the money they spent on this. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lafferty): Thank you. Mr. Bell.

MR. BELL: I guess I do not understand why the GNWT has to reimburse the Housing Corporation for the entire cost of the project that was planned within the normal means and just ended up being completed a little late. Is this an accounting exercise? It sounds strange to me. It is the first one I have seen. We do not do this on a regular basis. I have to imagine that bills come in late for buildings that we construct all the time. We do have a budget process, we have a capital planning process, and all of a sudden this one is built a little late and the GNWT is reimbursing the Housing Corporation for it? It does not make sense to me.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lafferty): Thank you. Mr. Handley.

HON. JOE HANDLEY: Mr. Chairman, this was not a project that was done through the normal means, as Mr. Bell referred to. This is a project that was built on an emergency basis because of a crisis with the inability to hire and house all of the staff.

Essentially, does the government do this all of the time? Well, the government provides the Housing Corporation with a good piece of their money. What we are doing here is we are providing the Housing Corporation after the fact with money. We are reimbursing them for their costs. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lafferty): Thank you. Mr. Bell.

MR. BELL: Well, the Housing Corporation has a significant budget, and it would seem to me, if they had this urgency, this emergent need come up, they could shuffle and delay some project in order to put this one in when we are only talking about \$226,000 on quite a significant budget.

A few things seem strange about this. I think we have serious housing shortages in many of the communities and that stops us from being able to hire professionals in those communities. I am just wondering why this one was singled out. I would think that in quite a few communities, we have a hard time and do not have the proper staff housing for teachers. I have heard Members up and down this side of the House talk about it for years. For this to come outside of the business planning process seems strange to me. It does not seem to be of an emergent nature that we do not routinely see in other communities.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lafferty): Thank you. Minister Handley.

HON. JOE HANDLEY: Mr. Chairman, first of all, to clarify that the Housing Corporation's mandate and budget is for public housing and there are some very, very tight limitations in terms of what kind of housing they can build. Paulatuk is a community in which there is, first of all, not much housing available. Second, the community was unable to fully staff their school without additional housing.

To build housing for staff is beyond the mandate of the Housing Corporation. The only way to get additional housing into the community -- there was no other alternative except to move someone else out of their house -- was to have more housing built. The Housing Corporation had to go beyond their mandate, use money in 2001-2002 to do it, and now the government is reimbursing them for the cost they had to bear, which was outside of their mandate in order to resolve the problem with staffing the school.

There are other communities that probably have housing concerns too, but Paulatuk is a much more extreme case than anywhere else. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lafferty): Thank you. Mr. Bell.

MR. BELL: Maybe I am way off base here, but it seems to me it would have made sense to approach ECE and say, can you find \$220,000 for us in Education's budget to do this, and then have ECE transfer the money to the Housing Corporation.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lafferty): Thank you. Minister Handley.

HON. JOE HANDLEY: Mr. Chairman, Education does not have a mandate to provide housing for staff. We do not have a staff housing policy. We do not have a provision for Education to be able to spend money in that way. The appropriate way is to have the government reimburse the Housing Corporation for the money they spent from their public housing program. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lafferty): Thank you. Mr. Bell.

MR. BELL: Well, Education does not have a mandate to do this. The Housing Corporation did not have a mandate to do it. It amazingly got done. It is strange. Good government, the Minister is suggesting. Yes, I agree that we need to take care of urgent staffing needs in communities, but this has to fit somewhere. Someone has to have the mandate to do this kind of thing. I guess that is something that we should get clarified. It seems amazing that no one has a mandate to do it and yet we did it. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lafferty): Thank you. That was a comment. The Minister can respond if he wants.

HON. JOE HANDLEY: Mr. Chairman, I think this is a unique way of doing it. We had to respond to a need in a community. In my view, it is a sign of a responsive government. How are we going to deal with shortages of housing in small communities in the future? Well, we have taken a couple of steps in terms of lot development and the revolving fund we have talked about. Other ways would be to change the mandate of the Housing Corporation to enable them more flexibility in the kind of housing and the purpose for which we build housing. This was a way of responding to a situation in Paulatuk where there was not any other reasonable alternative to ensure that they had a fully staffed school. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lafferty): Thank you. Mr. McLeod.

MR. MCLEOD: Thank you. I have the same concerns as my colleague Mr. Bell. Two of the communities that I represent out of the four are targeted as communities that are in a severe need of housing. We have been working very hard with the Housing Minister to access dollars to put towards it. We know the money is very tight. I would like to ask the Minister, can he tell me under what program were these dollars accessed? How were they accessed? Under what program? What housing program was the budget pulled out of?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lafferty): Thank you. Minister Handley.

HON. JOE HANDLEY: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, I will refer the question to Minister Allen, since it is asking about a Housing Corporation program. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lafferty): Thank you. Minister Allen.

HON. ROGER ALLEN: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Perhaps if I can substantiate the rationale for the renovations of the staff housing in Paulatuk. Under the Housing Corporation Act, we have the ability to assist where there is an emergent need. That was the premise of why we cooperated with that request at the time. In general, just to keep on the appropriation, we had to be responsive to the emergent need. In the review of our act, we simply felt that we had an obligation to do that.

A longer, more broader perspective is, in question period I have stated over and over again, our policies are constantly in a state of flux so that we can try to address all of the communities and how they feel we need to address their housing crisis. Again, I go back on record saying that we have met with various constituencies and we have been able to facilitate additional requests. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lafferty): Thank you. Mr. McLeod.

MR. MCLEOD: Thank you. Mr. Chairman, I am a little confused here. The Minister of Housing is stating that he has a legal obligation to provide staff housing to the Department of Education. We have the Minister of Finance telling us that there was no mandate to do this. I am not sure who is correct in this instance. I would like to ask, would the question be better posed if we asked if there was a breach of the Financial Administration Act here?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lafferty): Thank you. Minister Handley.

HON. JOE HANDLEY: Mr. Chairman, no. Clearly there is no breach of the Financial Administration Act here and I do not think there is any inconsistency with what Mr. Allen said and what I am saying. All Mr. Allen has added is that he has the

ability in emergencies to be able to assist in this sort of way. I think it is consistent. There is absolutely no breach of the FAA here.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lafferty): Thank you. Mr. McLeod.

MR. MCLEOD: Mr. Chairman, I do not see where this would fall, even though the Minister responsible for Housing states that there is a legal obligation, I do not see what budget line that we would take this money from. If there is no mandate, then maybe we should be considering removing it altogether. My question is, if we are going to start providing teachers' housing, why does the Department of Education not pay for it?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lafferty): Thank you. Minister Handley.

HON. JOE HANDLEY: Mr. Chairman, we are not providing teacher housing. What we did in Paulatuk, a small community with limited housing, that had no housing to be able to accommodate all the people in the community plus the staff that are hired to provide services, there was a shortage of housing in the community so we had to find a way of resolving the emergency and the crisis. A way was found through the Housing Corporation. It is as simple as that. There is no breach of anything. It is just an ability of the Housing Corporation to do it. For the government not to reimburse the Housing Corporation would mean that somewhere in the Housing Corporation system somebody is going to get less public housing because all that would happen is that we would not give the money to the Housing Corporation. The effect of not approving this is simply taking housing away from somebody else where there is a need for it. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lafferty): Thank you. Mr. McLeod.

MR. MCLEOD: Thank you. Mr. Chairman, I am not sure what the Minister is saying. I want to know one thing though. If this is on the market and there is rent being paid, are we charging full market rent for the accommodations?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lafferty): Thank you. Minister Handley.

HON. JOE HANDLEY: Mr. Chairman, yes, we are charging market rent.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lafferty): Thank you. Mr. McLeod.

MR. MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I never really could understand why this government transferred all staff housing over to the communities only to find out that now we are in a shortage in many different communities. I would like to ask if this building was ever renovated prior to this. Is there any chance that this building could have been a staff house renovated to a government building and now renovated back?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lafferty): Thank you. Minister Handley.

HON. JOE HANDLEY: Mr. Chairman, no, this building had not been renovated before. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lafferty): Thank you. NWT Housing Corporation, operations expenditures, not previously authorized, total department, \$226,000.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lafferty): Page 15, Education, Culture and Employment, operations expenditures, education and culture, not previously authorized, \$2,031,000.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lafferty): Total department, \$2,031,000.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lafferty): Transportation, operations expenditures, special warrants, highways, \$400,000.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lafferty): Community access road, \$174,000.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lafferty): Special warrants, total department, \$574,000.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lafferty): Page 17, Resources, Wildlife and Economic Development, operations expenditures, not previously authorized, corporate management, \$1 million.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lafferty): Total department, \$1 million.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lafferty): Page 18, Executive, capital investment expenditures, special warrants, labour relations and compensation services, \$36,000.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lafferty): Page 19, Executive, capital investment expenditures, not previously authorized, Aboriginal Affairs, \$200,000. Mr. Braden.

MR. BRADEN: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Here we have another cost associated with the creation of a devolution negotiation group. This \$200,000 sounds like quite a generous amount for a renovation. Could the Minister give us some details?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): The Minister of Finance, Mr. Handley.

HON. JOE HANDLEY: Mr. Chairman, with a new addition and realignment within the Ministry of Aboriginal Affairs, there was a need to accommodate nine additional staff. The \$200,000 is within reason, in terms of the cost of those renovations.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Mr. Braden.

MR. BRADEN: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. According to the Minister, nine additional staff. The previous allocation suggested four positions. Where is the difference? Where are the other five people? Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): The Minister of Finance.

HON. JOE HANDLEY: Mr. Chairman, there are three positions that were in the Executive that have been transferred over to MAA. These would be positions with the Intergovernmental Forum. There are three positions and a contract person included in the supplementary request for the devolution negotiations division. In addition to that, Mr. Chairman, the MAA also has three interns that will be accommodated in this new space. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Mr. Braden.

MR. BRADEN: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I recognize that nine or ten people is not a small number, but \$200,000 for renovations? What are we paying for? What are we getting here? Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): The Minister of Finance, Mr. Handley.

HON. JOE HANDLEY: Mr. Chairman, I suppose there was some restructuring within MAA, but a lot of the improvements included partition installation and the associated mechanical and electrical work that goes with putting up those walls. I do not know all of the details. We would have to get that from Public Works, but for the amount of space they are dealing with, it is within what we could reasonably expect.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Excuse me, could I have some order in the House? Mr. Bell.

MR. BELL: So for the \$200,000 price tag to build these nine offices, I am assuming that we took space that was not previously office space and turned it into office space. Is that right?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Mr. Minister.

HON. JOE HANDLEY: Mr. Chairman, the space the MAA is expanding into was occupied by the Audit Bureau, but it had to be reconfigured for MAA's needs. I do not have all the detail of what the changes would be there. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Mr. Bell.

MR. BELL: So we had some office space that the auditors were in. We brought in folks from MAA and I guess we did some painting and some rewiring and it cost us \$200,000. Can the Minister tell me where it is?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Mr. Handley.

HON. JOE HANDLEY: Mr. Chairman, it is on the third floor of the Precambrian Building.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Mr. Bell.

MR. BELL: Well, as far as wiring, I think the auditors were using lights and computers and these kinds of things, so I am wondering if there is some sort of special equipment that required some strange, hard wiring configuration that the MAA folks are now using that these other folks were not.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Mr. Handley.

HON. JOE HANDLEY: Mr. Chairman, I cannot speak to what unique needs MAA may have, but I think every unit's needs in any organization are different and you have to configure the space to fit that need.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Mr. Bell.

MR. BELL: All joking aside, this is office space here. I guess the public wants some assurance that this is not leather couches and cherry-wood desks and on and on. To take nine existing office spaces, to do nothing but change the crew of folks in there, and come up with a \$200,000 price tag in a building we do not own seems crazy to me, but maybe it is just me.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): The Minister of Finance.

HON. JOE HANDLEY: Mr. Chairman, it is difficult to just be able to explain exactly where the \$200,000 is spent. I am not sure that there were exactly nine offices that nine individuals from MAA could move into. That obviously was not the case. There were some partitions that had to be changed around and installed. There was some mechanical and electrical work that had to be done. In addition to that, the furniture had to be purchased and so on, but I do not think it was leather couches and teak furniture.

In addition, MAA will relinquish some of its space on the ninth floor and move some of its operations down to the third floor, which is where these renovations have taken place. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Mr. Bell.

MR. BELL: I guess I will just leave this with two comments. I hope when MAA moves out of this space that they are relinquishing on the ninth floor, or wherever it was, we are not going to spend a bunch of money to refurbish that for whoever else is moving in there. Let's keep in mind that this did not come forward in the business planning process. If we had to shuffle around some partitions and make do for a little while until we could bring it forward and committee could have a look at this, that would have been appreciated.

I think this supplementary budget is for unforeseen things that have an emergent nature. This to me, obviously I have not been in to see the office space, but I cannot imagine it was so brutal that this was an emergency. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Mr. Handley.

HON. JOE HANDLEY: Mr. Chairman, all I can add is, other than to say that it is difficult to sit here and judge what is happening in a building away from here, but MAA had a number of new positions coming in. They looked at the space they were occupying. They reconfigured some of their needs. They are giving up some of their space on the ninth floor and moving some of their people down to the third floor. They are doing renovations on the third floor. It had been occupied by the Audit Bureau. There were some walls put up, partitions. There was some mechanical work done, some electrical work done. I assume there was some finishing work done. There was some furniture purchased, and the estimate is \$200,000. I cannot say anything more than that and I am sure MAA would welcome someone to come and have a look at their new quarters.

We will be giving up, as I said, some of the space on the ninth floor, so the lease for that space has been given up. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Mr. Roland.

MR. ROLAND: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I think we have heard a number of questions on this. This has obviously been discussed for a bit, as plans were put in, proposals were put forward by the groups to have the extra positions in Aboriginal Affairs put in, but again, a concern that I have with the supplementary appropriation in our tight funding situation, we are still not overflowing with money coming into this government, as our continued expenditures seem to be after the fact. This is another one of them.

Aboriginal Affairs has grown constantly since we have come into this Assembly. I can recall the Minister taking heat on it from the committee a while back because the department had come in for increases back-to-back, and at one point said there would be no more increases. We are once again increasing and there are more office renovations.

Again, there are serious concerns about what we are doing. It seems to be a common practice, more and more, that we are going to let these things happen and not try to make do with putting some temporary partitions up until we know for sure who is going to be there and how long they are going to be there.

I do not know, Mr. Chairman, if we have support here to remove this amount of money, but we have to start setting some examples here for everybody to start paying attention. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Are you going to make a motion? It was a comment. Mr. Lafferty.

MR. LAFFERTY: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I have listened to some of the questions and I have a really good question to ask the Minister; why are we renovating more offices when we have the Laing Building almost completed and we have all of these offices that will be available? Are there going to be staff in all of those offices up there that we cannot put MAA in there?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Mr. Handley.

HON. JOE HANDLEY: Mr. Chairman, the information I have is that the Laing Building is full. The Audit Bureau, who were in the space the MAA is occupying on the third floor of the Precambrian Building, are moving over to the Laing Building, but there is essentially no space. We could not put MAA over there.

The other thing we have to keep in mind is that the MAA is releasing some space on the ninth floor as well, but there is no room in the Laing Building to crowd them in there. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Mr. Lafferty.

MR. LAFFERTY: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Will there be any savings upon them releasing these offices?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Mr. Handley.

HON. JOE HANDLEY: Mr. Chairman, yes, there will be some savings. I do not have the amount right now, but when they give up the lease on some of the space on the ninth floor, there will be some savings. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Mr. Delorey.

MR. DELOREY: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I have some concerns that I would like to express on this item. I know that many times since I have come into this Assembly, we have met with Aboriginal Affairs' requests for extra funding. I can remember distinctly asking the Minister at one point if he anticipated anymore growth in Aboriginal Affairs, or if they were going to be coming back to us for more funding. His comments were that this would probably be the last time they would be coming to us because he did not think the department would be growing anymore or needing any extra funding.

As things progressed with the department, there would be people getting freed up from different tables and filling up roles that they needed from beyond. Obviously that has not happened and they keep coming before us for more and more. Now, we seem to be expanding into many different roles and more groups coming on board. This \$200,000 for renovations to office space, I guess it is a way of breaking up expenses, but when we look at the cost of setting up an office for a secretariat for the devolution process, this could just as easily be wrapped up in the same figure.

I have not seen a lot of indication where the department is trying to find money from within. When you look at \$1.2 million for setting up a secretariat for devolution negotiations right off the bat, that is an awful lot of money. Another \$100,000 here for the Dene Nation, and then \$200,000 here for renovations, and the costs just keep going up.

Again, as I mentioned today in my Member's statement, all of it comes here. It is all to Yellowknife. Was there any consideration given to maybe moving it outside of Yellowknife? What would be the reason for having to be in a high-rise building in Yellowknife and renovating buildings that we do not own and spending these huge amounts of dollars? Is there any indication that we are even looking at trying to do something outside of Yellowknife? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Thank you, Mr. Delorey. Mr. Handley.

HON. JOE HANDLEY: Mr. Chairman, I will refer that to the Minister of Aboriginal Affairs.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Mr. Antoine.

HON. JIM ANTOINE: Mr. Chairman, the honourable Member for Hay River North has raised a lot of questions and concerns here. I did say to Members when we were talking about taking on the different negotiating tables a couple of years ago, the discussion and concern at that time was that I was hiring too many negotiators to represent the government at all these different specific tables. That was the basis of debate at that time.

At that time, all the tables started moving and we needed the different negotiators to represent the government at these tables. There was concern by the Members that the Aboriginal Affairs group at the negotiating tables was growing very rapidly. I did agree with the Members. At that time, I was told by the officials, when I asked them if we were going to be hiring more negotiators, they indicated no. I made a commitment here to the Members that I was not going to hire any more negotiators. Since that time, Aboriginal Affairs has been growing.

I think the Finance Minister also gave the information that there was a change in the Ministry of Aboriginal Affairs. The

Intergovernmental Forum Secretariat was in the Executive and it was moved to Aboriginal Affairs, so there were three different positions there which are not new to government. It was Executive positions that moved to Aboriginal Affairs.

At the same time, we also are now seeking funds to hire negotiators for the Intergovernmental Forum. This has evolved over the last few years. There is a need to have these positions included in Aboriginal Affairs, since we are responsible for the Intergovernmental Forum. If the Intergovernmental Forum Secretariat remained in the Executive, these positions would have gone to the Executive. It was a Cabinet decision to move the Intergovernmental Forum closer with Aboriginal Affairs. There is an increase in the PYs.

I must also indicate that the Aboriginal Affairs core group is located on the seventh floor of the Precambrian Building, but two years ago, once the full contingent of the negotiators were on-stream, additional space was found on the ninth floor of the Precambrian Building. With these additional staff we have taken on and are going to be taking on, the office space on the ninth floor was too small to accommodate everyone.

Since the third floor was vacated by the Audit Bureau, and it is also a government lease, as you know there are a number of office buildings in Yellowknife that our government has long-term leases with to try and accommodate all the different government departments. In the Precambrian Building, upon the Audit Bureau vacating the third floor, it is still a government lease. There was a requirement there to configure it to accommodate the implementation sector of Aboriginal Affairs that was on the ninth floor in with the Intergovernmental Forum group that is going to move in there. That was the nature of the request.

As for the possibility of relocating it out into the communities, we have explored that but Aboriginal Affairs, through negotiations, plays a coordinating role at the different negotiating tables. We need to be continuously meeting with the other departments after the session is over and getting ready for the next session. It makes sense to be located in Yellowknife. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Mr. Delorey.

MR. DELOREY: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I keep hearing the ninth floor, the seventh floor, the third floor -- when everything is said and done, how many floors are we going to be occupying and how many offices in total are we occupying with this department? How many offices does this department have? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Mr. Antoine.

HON. JIM ANTOINE: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, we will continue to occupy the fourth floor, which is the core floor that we have in the Precambrian Building, and we will have part of the third floor after this is all said and done. We are going to have approximately 30 offices. I am not too sure right now. I need to double check on that.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Mr. Braden.

MR. BRADEN: Mr. Chairman, something that I try to avoid is getting into micro-managing. Once in a while, something really invites a challenge though, and this is one of them. I would like to move on. I think that we have sent a couple of signals to the

government, one of them that projects such as this initiative, requirements such as this, even though you see it more and more, have got to be kept within reason.

I think this, in anyone's judgment, with the information we have been given anyway, is an extraordinary amount of money to spend on a renovation in a building that we do not own. The message to government is that on anything that is going on of this nature, anywhere, is look at it very carefully to make sure we are getting value for the money.

The other message, as Mr. Bell pointed out, is where is the urgency? Where is the high priority? How is it that this could not have been folded into a business plan or some other kind of longer range or longer term situation? This is not a temporary situation. Devolution negotiation, division, and the Intergovernmental Forum and Aboriginal Affairs are going to be here for years. The place for this kind of project in a supp is really not warranted. Mr. Chairman, that is my comment on this one. Let us move on. I think we have sent a message here. Detail, please.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): We are dealing with the Executive, capital investment expenditures, Aboriginal Affairs, not previously authorized, \$200,000.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Total department, special warrant, \$36,000.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Not previously authorized, \$200,000.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Page 20, Municipal and Community Affairs, capital investment expenditures, special warrants, \$1,872,000.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Total department, \$1,872,000.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Public Works and Services, capital investment expenditures, asset management, special warrants, \$1,125,000.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Petroleum products, special warrants, \$595,000.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Total department, special warrants, \$1,720,000.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Health and Social Services, capital investment expenditures, ministry and corporate services, special warrants, \$369,000.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Health services programs, special warrants, \$561,000.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Not previously authorized, \$1,343,000.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Community health programs, special warrants, \$228,000.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Not previously authorized, \$832,000.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Total department, special warrants, \$1,158,000.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Not previously authorized, \$2,175,000.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Justice, capital investment expenditures, public legal services, special warrants, \$20,000.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Registries and court services, special warrants, \$1,198,000.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Community justice and corrections, special warrants, \$9,338,000.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Not previously authorized, \$100,000.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Total department, special warrants, \$10,556,000.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Not previously authorized, \$100,000.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Education, Culture and Employment, capital investment expenditures, advanced education and careers, special warrants, \$760,000.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Not previously authorized, \$1,194,000.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Education and culture, special warrants, \$1,426,000.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Total department, special warrants, \$2,186,000.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Not previously authorized, \$1,194,000.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Transportation, capital investment expenditures, airports, special warrants, \$2,893,000.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Not previously authorized, \$1,937,000.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Highways, special warrants, \$3,961,000.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Road licensing and safety, special warrants, \$382,000.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Total department, special warrants, \$7,236,000.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Not previously authorized, \$1,937,000.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Resources, Wildlife and Economic Development, capital investment expenditures, resource management and economic development, not previously authorized, \$1,211,000.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Total department, not previously authorized \$1,211,000.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Are Members ready to go back to Bill 17 and go clause by clause?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Clause 1.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Clause 2.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Clause 3.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Clause 4.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Clause 5.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Clause 6.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Clause 7.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Schedule, part 1, vote 1, operations expenditures, total supplementary appropriation, \$12,870,000.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Part 2, vote 2, capital investment expenditures, total supplementary appropriation for capital investment expenditures, \$31,581,000.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Total supplementary appropriation, \$44,301,000.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Back to the preamble. Agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Bill as a whole?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Does the committee agree that Bill 17 is ready for third reading?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Bill 17 is now ready for third reading. I would like to thank the Minister and his witness. Sergeant-at-Arms, could you escort the witness out? What is the wish of the committee? Does the committee agree that we will deal with Committee Report 6-14(5)?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): We are dealing with Committee Report 6-14(5), Report of the Special Committee on the Implementation of Self-Government and the Sunset Clause. Does the chair of the committee have anything to say in response to the report? Ms. Lee.

MS. LEE: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I would like to thank the Members for considering this committee report. Mr. Chairman, this committee report was read earlier in the session. I am ready to read the motions for debate, if that is the wish of the committee. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Does the committee agree?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Ms. Lee, please continue.

Committee Motion 29-14(5): To Repeal Subsection 2(3) of the Legislative Assembly and Executive Council Act (Carried)

MS. LEE: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman,

I MOVE that this committee recommends that the 14th Legislative Assembly amend the Legislative Assembly and Executive Council Act to repeal subsection 2(3). Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Ms. Lee, your motion is in order. To the motion. Question has been called. All those in favour? All those against? The motion is carried. Ms. Lee, do you have another motion?

Committee Motion 30-14(5): To Enact Electoral Districts Boundaries Commission Legislation (Carried)

MS. LEE: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I would also like to thank one lone journalist sitting in the dark over there at this late hour. Mr. Chairman, I have a second motion;

I MOVE that this committee recommends that the 14th Legislative Assembly enact Electoral Districts Boundaries Commission legislation similar to that previously in force, but with such changes as may be desirable to maximize public involvement and to ensure the effective representation of all communities.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Thank you, Ms. Lee. The motion is in order. To the motion. Mr. Roland.

MR. ROLAND: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Just one short comment regarding this establishment of an Electoral Boundaries Commission. Hopefully this would be just to establish the act, but it would not be an automatic every four years or something like that. I would have concerns.

Since this government has come into force, and after having to deal with the last boundaries commission report and the challenge that we faced, and then establishing new seats, I was reminded on different occasions of the size of our government. I can only see an Electoral Boundaries Commission establishing more seats in the future, not less. That is a concern, unless we start to grow by population in leaps and bounds. I think that is something we have to keep in mind.

For example, a lot of the supplementary appropriation we passed tonight had to do a lot with bureaucracy and not with new programs and services to people, so I think that is something we must keep in mind. The more we add here, the

more we take away from other places. I just hope that if this is going to be considered, when it is developed, it is not an automatic every four years, but legislation would be there for future governments to decide at some point to kick this into place. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): To the motion. Mr. Lafferty.

MR. LAFFERTY: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I support this motion, but I would like to add something to this motion, that maybe we have to put a boundaries commission at an earlier date, like this session, because we have seen what happened here in the House yesterday where Cabinet and Yellowknife voted together as a block. It is not fair to the rest of the communities when this happens. Maybe we should have a boundaries commission and make it so that Yellowknife does not have so many seats so they can have all the power with the Cabinet, like something that happened in this session. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): To the motion. Ms. Lee.

MS. LEE: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. If I may, I just want to respond to Mr. Roland's comment, as he was not able to take part in some of the discussions. I just want to tell him that the concern he has raised in that comment was raised in our public hearings in many of our travels. The body of the recommendation, the explanation in the committee report, there is no indication there that says an Electoral Boundaries Commission should be created every Assembly. We are simply recommending that this Assembly addresses the vacancy in legislation at the moment.

With the dissolution of the 13th Assembly and post division, there is no Electoral Boundaries Commission Act, so there is no legislation in place right now to address any future consideration for an Electoral Boundaries Commission. The committee is also advising and would recommend, or is suggesting by this recommendation, that it is probably too late for the life of this Assembly to be able to establish that legislation and then create a commission in time for the next Assembly. We foresee that during the life of this Assembly, if we agree to that, we will be able to have a legislation in place and leave it to the next Assembly to decide whether or not they want to give it a go, to have a commission in place and look at the district boundaries.

Also, I would just like to advise the Members that we state in detail some of the latest judgments in the country. We believe that a lot of decisions, some important decisions, were made in the Yukon Territory, for example, where the decision allowed that the drawing of the boundaries does not have to specifically refer to a 25 percent average, that special consideration can be included when drawing the boundaries; transportation arrangements, distance, number of communities, and so on.

Let me just conclude by saying as much as possible, we tried to listen to the people who have told us about what is wrong with the current make-up of the district boundaries, such as there might be too many seats in Yellowknife, or there are some ridings with too many communities. We are recommending that all those points be considered by the next Electoral Boundaries Commission. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): To the motion. Question has been called. All those in favour? All those against? The motion is

carried. Does the committee agree that Committee Report 6 14(5) is concluded?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): What is the wish of the committee? Mr. Dent.

MR. DENT: Mr. Chairman, I move we report progress.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): There is a motion on the floor to report progress. The motion is not debatable. All those in favour? All those against? The motion is carried. We will rise and report progress. At this time, I would like to recognize Mark Miltenberger, who has been keeping an eye on his little brother here, just keeping him in line. At least somebody is watching over the Minister of Health. We will rise and report progress.

MR. SPEAKER: The House will come back to order. Item 20, report of the committee of the whole. The honourable Member for Mackenzie Delta, Mr. Krutko.

ITEM 20: REPORT OF COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

MR. KRUTKO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, your committee has been considering: Bill 8, An Act to Amend the Nursing Profession Act and the Pharmacy Act; Bill 13, An Act to Amend the Income Tax Act, No. 2; Bill 17, Supplementary Appropriation Act, No. 1, 2002-2003; and Committee Report 6-14(5), and would like to report progress with two motions being adopted. Committee Report 6-14(5) is concluded. Bills 8, 13 and 17 are now ready for third reading as amended. Mr. Speaker, I move that the report of the committee of the whole be concurred with.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Krutko. Do we have a seconder for the motion? The honourable Member for Great Slave seconds the motion. The motion is in order. All those in favour? All those opposed? Thank you. The motion is carried. Item 21, third reading of bills. Mr. Clerk, orders of the day.

ITEM 22: ORDERS OF THE DAY

CLERK OF THE HOUSE (Mr. Hamilton): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Meetings for tomorrow at 9:00 a.m. of the Standing Committee on Accountability and Oversight and Cabinet House Strategy; at 10:30 a.m. of the Standing Committee on Social Programs; and at 12:00 noon of the Board of Management.

Orders of the day for Wednesday, June 19, 2002:

1. Prayer
2. Ministers' Statements
3. Members' Statements
4. Returns to Oral Questions
5. Recognition of Visitors in the Gallery
6. Oral Questions
7. Written Questions
8. Returns to Written Questions
9. Replies to Opening Address

10. Petitions
11. Reports of Standing and Special Committees
12. Reports of Committees on the Review of Bills
13. Tabling of Documents
14. Notices of Motion
15. Notices of Motion for First Reading of Bills
16. Motions
17. First Reading of Bills
 - Bill 20, Legal Registries Statutes Amendment Act
 - Bill 23, Miscellaneous Statutes Amendment Act, 2002
18. Second Reading of Bills
19. Consideration in Committee of the Whole of Bills and Other Matters
 - Minister's Statement 46-14(5), Social Agenda Working Group Report
 - Minister's Statement 47-14(5), GNWT Response to the Social Agenda Report
 - Tabled Document 35-14(5), Social Agenda: A Draft for People of the NWT
20. Report of Committee of the Whole
21. Third Reading of Bills
 - Bill 5, An Act to Amend the Adoption Act and Family Law Act
 - Bill 8, An Act to Amend the Nursing Profession Act and the Pharmacy Act
 - Bill 13, An Act to Amend the Income Tax Act, No. 2
 - Bill 17, Supplementary Appropriation Act, No. 1, 2002-2003
22. Orders of the Day

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Clerk. Accordingly, this House stands adjourned until Wednesday, June 19, 2002, at 1:30 p.m.

-- ADJOURNMENT

The House adjourned at 10:48 p.m.

